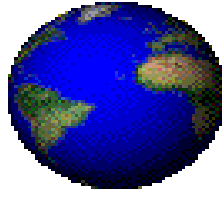


AUTHORITY



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Does Your Training Encourage Your Employees to Fly?

Mary Beth Fedyna

So many vendors are coming to organizations and “selling” their training expertise. It is very difficult to know as the buyer which training experience will be the best for your company.

As a professional trainer, I would like to share a story with you to remember the next time you are choosing a training program.

A group of turkeys at Turkey Inc. were going to attend training where the objective was to teach them to fly. They had been provided with pre-work on the “Science of Flying.” On the day of the appointed training, a trainer who was flying around the room when they entered greeted them. They engaged in an icebreaker activity about the pros and cons of flying. As the agenda unfolded, they divided into groups, identified causes and concerns, and spent the bulk of the program learning about and practicing the art of flying.

They discussed case studies of “Turkeys in Flight.” There was even videotaped role-playing during the afternoon session, with systematic feedback sessions. The end of the day came with a high level of energy being maintained. Turkeys completed the evaluations, thanked the instructors, said their systematic good byes, and then they WALKED out of the room!!!! Was this training a success? Were the objectives met?

The goal of training is to share new ideas and practices that will enable a behavior change. Truly, training attains the maximum benefit if your employees leave the session implementing the “flying” that they were just taught.

The next time you are meeting with a training vendor, make sure that they will give you a program whereby your employees will “Fly Out” of the room at the end of the day and continue to fly thereafter!!!

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Making Peace With Conflict

Patreece Thompson

“If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.” This quote from Nelson Mandela is not my recommendation for our current foreign policy, but for an attitude and approach for dealing with conflict. In order to manage conflict, we must make peace with it, embrace it and work with it.

One of the frequently expressed wishes of the attendees of our conflict management training is the desire to eliminate conflict. It is no wonder. Many of our associations with conflict are negative. *Conflict* comes from the Latin, meaning “to strike together.” Merriam-Webster’s dictionary carries several definitions of conflict from fight or war to “competitive or opposing action of incompatibles (as of divergent ideas, interests or persons),” to the mental struggle resulting from internal opposing needs, drives, wishes or internal/external demands. The bottom line? Conflict emerges in situations where there is a connection, relatedness or interdependence.

“We don’t see things the way they are, we see things the way we are.” The Talmud gets at the heart of all conflict, that is, conflict is a clash between individual or collective views of reality and our mistaken belief that our reality is the whole truth.

Two tools used to understand conflict styles, the MBTI (which describes direction of energy in how we gather information and make decisions) and the Thomas-Kilmann instrument (based on the degree to which one is motivated by one’s own interest vs. the best interests of the other) both reflect what *motivates the individual* and also gives indications as to the differences in language and thought processes of people who employ the different styles. In addition, there are differences in time focus (some people are concerned with past, present or future concerns). The more that we can appreciate and value what energizes the other person, and seek common understanding, the more we can attain buy in and decrease the hostility and rancor that result from miscommunication and misaligned values.

“Honest disagreement is often a good sign of progress.”- Ghandi

So how do you make peace with conflict? First, reflect on the last time you were in a conflict-filled tense situation and the outcome turned out positive either with improvement or progress in the relationship or with a learning that was significant. Look at the factors that contributed to the experience and intensify the moment. Anticipate the next opportunity that you will be in conflict and use these seven tips:

- Actively listen for cues that your partner uses, visual, auditory or kinesthetic imagery, which will help you to speak in that language. Listen for what motivates the person. They’ll tell you.
- Watch the body language especially for points where the person appears most enthusiastic and upbeat.
- Seek first to understand the other person and get clarity around your understanding.
- Use “I” language and take ownership of your thoughts, feelings, behavior and reactions.
- Focus initially on areas of agreement and then on areas where your opinion diverges.
- Never assume: always check out your interpretations and assumptions.
- Use words that create togetherness and inclusiveness like: “we,” “us,” “collaborate,” “yes.” Minimize use of exclusive words: “they,” “me,” “mine,” “you,” “should,” and words that you know historically will push the wrong buttons with the other party.

Here’s to your discovery on making peace with conflict!

Tracking to Success

Our latest tracking statistics are in and the survey says...Networking is still the most effective means of finding your next job. Overall, about 70% of the 500 job search candidates we tracked networked their way to success. That number increased to 72% for the higher incomes. Recruiters were most helpful to those less than 40 years old and making in the \$60,000 to \$100,000 range. Use of classifieds and the Internet had the least payoff and was most useful to the less than 40 year olds, making less than \$60,000. As expected, income plays a big role in how quickly one reemploys. The average search for those making over \$200,000 was 190 days, while for those making less than \$60,000, it was 113 days. Age plays a factor in reemployment, but is not as startling as most think. Those over 50 took about 5 months on average, under 40, 3.4 months. We also tracked income increase by pre-job loss income. For incomes in the \$60,000 to \$100,000 range, job seekers saw an average increase in salary of 8%. For those in the \$200,000 income, there was a 4% decrease.

HR Opportunities

Our search division has been very active recently with a number of strong corporate clients asking for our assistance. We have been selected to conduct either “retained” or exclusive searches for key talent to fill high visibility positions.

We pass on these opportunities and ask for your help as we network to the best individuals to fill these and many other positions we are currently sourcing. Should you have any referrals for us, please send them to Anita Gardner, Search Practice Manager, at agardner@cconcepts.org. We certainly appreciate it.

Director of Comp/Benefits/HRIS—to \$100K
Major “financially sound” healthcare network is seeking a strong Compensation/Benefits professional to lead this function for an employee population that exceeds 5,000. Reporting to the SVPHR, this individual and his/her staff will insure that the system retains its competitiveness in the marketplace. Individual will work closely with all levels throughout this “Best of” environment.

HRIS Sr. Professional-to \$100K

A division of a pharmaceutical giant has asked us to source and hire a top notch HRIS professional. This position demands someone who has HRIS knowledge and experience, and more importantly, the communication skills and presence to consult with key players within the organization. Ideal candidate will have PeopleSoft knowledge and experience, with SAP familiarity a plus. Extraordinary benefit package.

Training & Development Specialist- \$65-70K

A well known pharmaceutical subsidiary is seeking assistance for an outstanding technical training specialist to support a host of initiatives. Ideal candidate will support new employee orientation (develop and deliver) as well as design training programs for delivery by SME’s (Subject Matter Experts).

Five years of experience in training with a focus on technical training. Demonstrated skill at designing and implementing technical and corporate training programs using adult/instructional design learning theory models and processes.

A Story of Personal Inertia

Sharon Imperiale

I received a voice mail from a client who was also a friend. I could tell from the tone that something was not right! Here is the story...she said, “I’ve lost my fire, my passion, my ability to do anything. I cannot move off the dime. My team has little if any faith in me right now. Several staff members quit. I think it is because I cannot get the organization mobilized. I am on a merry-go-round with the executive team. I have gotten both the worst and the best feedback of my career within the last few months. What is wrong with me? Should I be looking--you know, really looking?” My answer was, “Yes you should be looking, but not for another job--at least not yet!” Let’s first look for some answers.

Q: *Given your capabilities, what’s holding you back now? What’s keeping you up at night?*

A: Lack of energy and fear. Our team was on a roll and progress has stopped. I don’t have the energy to keep up the momentum and create sustainability for the things that need to happen. If I start, I’m afraid I’ll revert, it won’t last and I will lose credibility.

Q: *Are you confident in your team members?*

A: Yes.

My reply, “Then demonstrate it! Why is it that it is just you who is worried about the lack of progress?”

Q: *Who within the organization is your sounding board?* (Having an internal Jiminy Cricket has always been my salvation.)

A: Um...

That was a dead give away. We all need mentors and champions, especially those who give us the “KITA’s” (Kick In The A..) we need. All of us have had times within our careers when we feel inert and failed to execute sometimes the most basic of tactics. The thought of strategically leading anyone is a nightmare. The thought of hiding in the office and hoping no one will notice is comforting. So how do we reenergize ourselves? How do we sustain momentum and performance?

To really effect and sustain change we need to ask, “Why is it that we do it this way or the problem exists in the first place?” Asking these tough questions truly provides improvement and innovation to the processes, practices, and the culture of the organization. At the same time, we are probing for the answers to process issues, we need to be developing the people within the organization. The formula I have quoted in the past to my team is “40% of your time should be spent on staff development.”

I remember when “my friend” was putting together her team. She was quick to make a decision, making selections based on the ability to hit the ground running, making immediate impact, etc. In retrospect, the team was not built for the long haul. Well-seasoned, experienced recruits were quickly put in place and set in motion. But was the team built to sustain the test of time? And were they focused on the right things?

The team made quick operational improvements, regained service, increased productivity, etc. However, to sustain progress and create true organizational learning, we need to accomplish more than quick hits. In most organizations when we encounter a problem we ask, “How do we fix it?” focusing solely on the short-term action.

This team of qualified managers went for immediate impact, did not get to the heart of the problems and did not spend enough time on developing the organization so that it could change. They worked hard and burned themselves out. At best they put a Band-Aid on a hemorrhage.

SO, what were my recommendations?

First, she needed to quickly remove the barriers that had formed between her and her team. We called this “building emotional resilience.” No excuses: pick yourself up, flesh out the issues and build consensus for the new strategic imperative--LEADERSHIP.

Then we put the following plan into effect.

“Let me tell you where the action is!” Sounds familiar as a song perhaps but as leaders we are reluctant to get to the places and be with the people associated with the organizational action. Action happens on the front line and where there is action there are successes and failures. As leaders we better get to know them both.

“Creating the Problem Solving Team!” Turn the issues inside out. Ask the tough questions and get to the root of the issue. Asking these tough questions truly provides lasting improvement and innovation to the processes, practices, and the culture of the organization.

“Paint the Picture!” Set goals and priorities. Be realistic in terms of how much can get done. Focus more on true problem solving. Quick fixes were not and are not the answer.

“Discipline.” Failure to follow through is the crux of inertia. Motivate yourself and others to remain accountable for the goals and priorities put into place. Recommended reading: *Execution: The Discipline Of Getting Things Done*.

“Develop and Coach.” How does the saying go, “Give a man a fish and you’ll feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you’ll feed him for a lifetime.” Empower and motivate. Teach! Recognize victories and celebrate the wins.

“To thine own self be true.” You cannot hide from your weaknesses, you must deal with them. Accept who you are and have the courage and fortitude to open up and accept opposing points of view rather than avoiding conflict. Have the courage to act.

“Avoid the Knowing-Doing gap!” Quoting a friend, “Military leadership doctrine is built on a trilogy of ‘Be, Know, Do’ – the recognition that the right people must have the knowledge and skills as well as the initiative to act.” So put a little military wisdom in your leadership style.