



October 2015

Volume 20, Number 10

Canadian Thanksgiving marks the moment in time when we shift from living on Prince Edward Island, Canada to Scottsdale, Arizona. It also gives us an excuse to cook a turkey dinner – twice! Once in Canada in October and again in the US in November. It’s also the perfect opportunity to give thanks for what we have.

But why wait for Thanksgiving to be grateful?

I was listening to Mark Scharenbroich, a master storyteller, sharing a story about his teacher who asked him, “How are you today?” When Mark answered, “Great!”, the teacher coached him that “Great” was a partial response. That he should be “Great-full” each and every day.

I am great-full for you, to be able to share our ideas in this newsletter, work with great clients and live a happy life with friends and family.

So let’s not wait for Thanksgiving to come and go, but to be grateful each and every day.

Kristin

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CREATE HAPPINESS WITHIN YOURSELF BY MAKING OTHERS HAPPY – BY, JOE SHERREN

Many years ago, when Richard Nixon was president, there was a U.S. senator who was receiving an award at the White House.

As per protocol, the senator’s wife ended up seated between Nixon and Dr. Henry Kissinger. When she got back home, the press wanted to interview her. One reporter asked, “How did you feel sitting between two of the most powerful men in the free world?”

She replied, “When I spoke with President Nixon, I thought he was the most interesting, nicest, intelligent, witty, individual in the room. But, when I spoke with Dr. Kissinger, I thought ‘I’ was the most interesting, nicest, intelligent, witty person in the room!” Kissinger had the remarkable ability to lift people and make people feel good about themselves.

A rich life is all about relationships with the people you meet and spend time with.

Additionally, developing positive relationships is the best thing you can do to enhance your own self esteem, happiness, and health. In fact, every part of our personality is tied up in our relationships with others.

The best way you can create happiness within yourself is to engage in activities of personal growth and making others happy. However, to like somebody enough to make them feel good about themselves, you have to sincerely feel good about yourself first. Studies show that a person cannot like anyone else more than they like themselves.

And here's the magical secret: By making others feel important, you actually end up feeling better about yourself at the same time.

So how do you do this?

- Listen. People will pay attention to what they value and ignore what they do not. By just listening to people you are actually showing they are important to you. Give that person your undivided attention.
- Praise People. Let people around you know how much you appreciate them. In fact, just by saying "thank you, you are wonderful" whenever possible wins people over.
- Look for the Good in Everyone. Many view others and their actions with suspicion. We now realize that the healthiest of people look for the good in every situation or person they encounter. Those who look for the good will find good. Those who look for bad will find the bad.
- Stop being Critical. By eliminating destructive criticism from your regular communication you will automatically feel better about yourself. In fact, when you criticize others you actually create chemicals in your brain that brings you down.

My friend and best-selling author Brian Tracy, who is one of the kindest people I know, says: "The more you give of yourself without expectation of return, the more that will come back to you in the most unexpected way."

It would certainly be a brutish world if you could only build yourself up by putting others down. Luckily, we know it works exactly the opposite way.

My suggestion for managers this week: Pick just one person in your staff and tell them one thing that you really appreciate about them. You might even want to practice this at home - and see how good you feel!

3 STEPS TO AVOID THE FEEDING FRENZY OF IDEAS AT YOUR NEXT MEETING

Your team meets to discuss an important topic or question. One person comments, another person adds another comment that may or may not support the first comment. Then a naysayer chimes in and says, "We can't do that!" and then takes the conversation in a different direction. There appears to be no rhyme or reason and the team usually settles on the idea with the most agreement (the majority) or the loudest voice in the room. And it could happen that the best idea(s) got lost in the discussion.

Do you really want to settle for a mediocre agreement? Probably not.

I call this the "feeding frenzy" when the team just starts talking, plopping and piling on random ideas.

I was observing a client who was discussing the possibility of partnering with another company. They had identified six potential partners - and that's where the feeding frenzy began. Two people lobbied for one partner because they had experience with them, someone had a bad experience with different partner, another person commented on

the credentials of completely different partner, and so the conversation went. The two people who had great relationships with the owners seemed to "win" the discussion.

I couldn't take it any more. So I hopped up out of my chair and said, "Before we select this company as our partner, let's step back and identify the key criteria, and then go through each potential partner and discuss what's good about partnering with them, and what would not be so great."

We went through this process and sure enough, the company they were going to partner with was not as desirable as another company that didn't even hit the radar screen in the feeding frenzy.

The lack of integrating good ideas into the conversation is technically called "process loss." Which is a great name because there wasn't a *process* for discussion.

To prevent a feeding frenzy follow these three steps:

- **Tee up the topic.** Be clear about what the topic you want to discuss or the question to be answered.
- **Clarify the process** you will use. Typically, you'll want to get all the ideas out on the proverbial table without any criticism or evaluation. Feel free to build on each others' ideas. Once all the ideas have been explored, *then* evaluate the ideas in order to create a path forward. (I call this approach "serving up a sandwich")
- **Follow the process.** Once you get agreement on the process, then follow it. Assign a "process observer" or "facilitator" to make sure your team stays focused and on track.

Not only do you need someone to ensure the process runs smoothly, but you need to actually assign someone that is not afraid to jump in and interrupt when they recognize a feeding frenzy is about to form in your meeting, and kick off the three steps above.

Sure, it takes a bit more time, but the quality of the discussion and the decisions are well worth the investment. Not to mention your employees may be more satisfied knowing that their ideas have been heard. What are some ways you fight the feeding frenzy at your office?

HOW TO GET YOUR PANEL DISCUSSION APPROVED BY CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

I was having a great conversation with Mark Milroy, CAE, Vice President of Learning at ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership. He has seen ALOT of panel proposals come through his office - most of which say, "I'll put great people on the panel and make it interesting for the audience. We'll use humor, stories, and have audience Q&A."

That's not enough. If you want your panel proposal to be approved, take the time to develop your game plan:

- **Topic.** What's the topic? Why is it relevant to the audience and why now?
- **Time.** How much time do you require and how are you going to distribute the time? A bunch of presentations with five minutes of audience Q&A won't cut it. Provide an agenda or timetable that shows how you are going to spend your time.
- **Takeaways.** What will the audience learn, discover or apply as a result of attending this panel? It has to be more than a lovely conversation among friends.
- **Talent.** Are you bringing up the usual cast of characters or are you going to bring some fresh faces to the panel? Bring in subject matter experts and practitioners with diverse viewpoints whom you have *personally* vetted not only for their knowledge but their ability to share that knowledge verbally. Include video links that show them in action.

- **Technique.** How are you going to engage and invite the audience to participate? Don't just say you're going to do it; explain precisely and *specifically* HOW you will use those stories, case studies, visuals, crowdsourcing technologies, Q&A, etc. to engage the audience.
- **Promotion.** What are you going to do before and after the event to promote your panel discussion within the membership, attendees or online communities? Meeting planners are recognizing the value of social media tools to publicize their event and reinforce the value. Offer to help them spread the word! (Too bad I couldn't come up with better word that starts with a "T"!)

The legendary SXSW conference has a ton of panels. So many, they created the "Panel Picker" where they say, "The more specific a proposal is, the better. Seriously. We mean it. Specificity demands a lot more thought and planning — and pre-event thought and planning are the two biggest keys to a successful session. For example, a topic like "How Free Downloads Hurt Radiohead" would work better than the more general "Free Downloads and the Future of Music."

It all boils down to uniqueness and specificity. No one wants to see the same old boring white table panel discussion with microphones and tent cards. What are you going to do to stand out, be noticed and deliver amazing value to the attendees? And the more specific you can be, the better.

FROM THE BOOKSHELF: Think Big, Act Bigger: The Rewards of Being Relentless

Think Big, Act Bigger: The Rewards of Being Relentless by Jeffrey Hayzlett is a tiny book. Clocking in at 165 pages (sans credits etc.), it packs a wallop! I first thought it was about helping the David's conquer Goliath-sized companies, but I was wrong. It's really a primer for any C-suite executive who wants to achieve gargantuan results.

I retired from the US Coast Guard a few years ago, and when officers were promoted to be an Admiral (aka "C-suite Executive), they were sent to Admiral "knife and fork school" to learn how to be an admiral. This book should be required reading.

Think Big, Act Bigger is about how to lean in to being an effective executive. How to grow your company by leaps and bounds. How to serve a bigger purpose than just your own ego.

The author, Jeffrey Hayzlett peppers the book with applicable stories and anecdotes that bring his principles to life. It's a quick read and I kept underlining the key principles. Pay particular attention to the Katelyn Rule where, "The people who work for you need to be empowered to create and own what they do in support of you, your team, and your customers or clients." You'll want to read exactly how he made that concept "real" for Katelyn, one of his employees. To get a 40% discount on the book [click here](#).

UPCOMING WEBINAR

10 Life Hacks to an Amazing Presentation

Thursday, December 10, 2015

Life-hacking refers to any trick, shortcut, skill, or novelty method that increases productivity and efficiency. In this webinar, award-winning author of the book Boring to Bravo, Kristin Arnold shares her shortcuts to preparing for an extraordinary presentation.

If you ever give a presentation, then this webinar is for you!

Register here today at www.ExtraordinaryTeam.com/webinar-series/

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