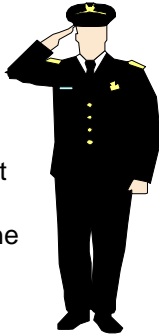


# THE EXCHANGE

## BECOME AN "ALL YOU CAN BE" ORGANIZATION

As a civilian, have you ever watched a movie about the military and been amazed by the focus on discipline, or seen a police show and wondered about the discipline required to have an entire organization work "by the book?" Have you ever felt in awe of the ability of these organizations to achieve such discipline (and amazed by the consequences of discipline failure)?



If it is essential that these organizations operate with a strong focus on discipline, how important is discipline to yours? True, the risks are clearly high in military and police operations because lives are at stake. Is there enough at risk in your business to make discipline important? Of course there is. Your products and services affect the lives of people, your operations affect the lives of your employees and community, and the business performance affects those with a financial stake in it. Clearly, the risks of failure are also high in your business.

Unfortunately, if your business is like the vast majority, discipline is a problem and is probably equated with punishment (with all the negative connotations). Fortunately, it does not have to be this way. A disciplined organization can be achieved and result in greatly enhanced morale and business performance, when it is pursued as an integral part of the culture and business operations.

To develop a disciplined organization, we need to correct those aspects of the business that promote negative behaviors and restrain the conversion to the new culture, for example:

- Absence of or poorly defined policies and processes
- Procedures that are difficult to use or understand
- Reward systems that fail to promote the desired behaviors or continue to promote the old behaviors
- Vague or subjective feedback about job performance, or no feedback at all
- Leaders that fail to consistently demonstrate firm principles
- Absence of systems thinking (ability to see each decision/action in relation to the impact on the whole enterprise)
- Weak or inconsistent interpersonal communication and behavior
- Weak or inconsistently used communication systems.

Conquering these weaknesses is not difficult, but must be accomplished over an extended time frame in a systematic manner. Of course, the best place to start is with the communication and interpersonal behaviors of the leaders and other key personnel. With improvement in these areas, the rate and impact of change within the organization can be significantly enhanced. This effort should include the development of a standard of behavior that is documented and shared with the individuals as they are trained, and with the organization as a whole when the leaders and key personnel are beginning to demonstrate the standard. Also, the training must be accompanied by periodic coaching of the individuals and small groups over an extended

*Continued on page 2*

## What Our Clients Are Saying

*"I just read your March 2000 Newsletter and I was most impressed with the content. I've found your tips to be right on the money. I hate to keep yet another piece of paper around my office or home, but I'm inclined to keep this one. Good work!"*

Michael Warren, Atlanta GA

*"I would like to thank you for presenting informative information on communication to my elementary prevention group students. They were very attentive, and I know they attained a lot of pertinent information."*

Winona Jarrett, Chattanooga TN



## APRIL 2000

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### LOOKING AHEAD:

PERMANENT & POSITIVE CHANGE:  
MAY ISSUE

*Every fool knows to be leery on April 1st. We hope since it occurred on Saturday this year you were spared some pranks!*

**Discipline is the soul of an army. It makes small numbers formidable, procures success to the weak, and esteem to all.**  
*George Washington*



What we do upon some great occasion will probably depend on what we already are; and what we are will be the result of previous years of self-discipline.

H.P. Liddon

**On the Air Again!**

Beverly has been the feature guest on talk radio programs across the country, Canada, and Europe this last month discussing "The Real Reasons Women Nag." It's taken the media by storm. If you would like a copy of her "reasons" contact us by phone or email and we'll send them to you!!

If I don't practice one day, I know it; two days, the critics know it; three days, the public knows it.

Jascha Heifetz

BECOME AN "ALL YOU CAN BE" ORGANIZATION *Continued from page 1*

time to ensure that change does occur and is permanent.

Once the interpersonal and communication behaviors have begun to improve, the communication systems should be enhanced. This enhancement should, as a minimum:

- Ensure that all personnel are regularly informed of the organization's vision and objectives, and progress toward achieving these.
- Provide frequent reminders and tips regarding appropriate interpersonal and communication behaviors and techniques.
- Recognize individuals and groups for their accomplishments.

Although there are innumerable communication methods that can be applied, taken as a whole, they must be consistently applied and each seen as part of the overall

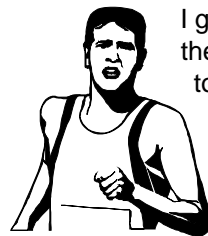
system for accomplishing the above objectives. Some examples include: monthly newsletter, weekly notices that are posted or emailed, "town hall" meetings, executive meetings with small groups of employees, project performance summary updates, etc.

With this foundation in place, the more tenuous issues can be addressed such as evaluation and redesign of the reward and behavioral corrective systems, and the business processes.

Is your organization ready to become a truly disciplined and effective organization, or do you need help leading the organization into its future? If so, let TLC help create permanent and positive change in the interpersonal and communications behaviors, enhance the communication systems, improve the business processes, maintain the systems view, and ensure consistent focus on your future.

Kenneth E. Ebel, CQE/QSLA

**"FIVE MILE MOMENTS"**



When I think of discipline, I go back in my mind to the nightly runs that I used to take along the Mississippi River levee in New Orleans. At about the fifth mile out of the usual eight, I'd get some pain in my abdominal area and the strong urge to slow down. What did I do? I'd speed up. Even though I wanted to walk, I was doing the opposite because it was hard. Discipline is hard, and it builds character. That's why I sped up. I wanted to be better.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, discipline has several meanings. The first definition is "training that is expected to produce a specified character or pattern of behavior, especially that which is expected to produce moral or mental improvement." I am reminded that doing the difficult thing is often important in communication, too. There are lots of times when I think that I already know what the other person is going to say. I begin formulating an answer or response while they are talking. It's at that moment that I realize that I need to have the discipline to withhold my judgement and response long enough to concentrate on what is being said, and to listen thoroughly.

Discipline in communication comes at those times where the easiest path doesn't build knowledge or character...

- ◆ It's when you're piping hot angry and there is a better way to say what is really important, as opposed to what you want to just blurt out.
- ◆ It's when someone is being painfully detailed, you are bored, and you have the strong urge to just cut them off and get on with it.
- ◆ It's when you're doing the taxes and your child asks you to look at something she just made.
- ◆ It's usually when you're not paying attention to communication.

It's at those daily "five mile" moments that you have the opportunity to build your character and improve your mind. Think about it. Have the discipline to be aware of what you want to say, and find a better way to say it. Contact TLC for expert evaluation and feedback on the areas where you are not paying enough attention. Build self-discipline and character that makes you a better person!

By Ben Cairns, M.A.

## TO KNOW THE ROPES

This month's theme of discipline can have several meanings, especially as it pertains to the business world. Whether you were formally educated and trained, or self-acquired your knowledge and expertise from hands-on learning, it can take a great deal of commitment and dedication to "know the ropes" of your job.

If you are familiar with the idiom of "knowing the ropes," you know it means to be knowledgeable about something or skilled in doing a task well. So where could this term have come from and what does it have to do with discipline?

"Knowing the ropes" is a nautical (sailing) term dating back to the 17th Century Royal Navy. Deckhands (people who worked on the ships) were in high demand but most lacked the knowledge to perform the required duties properly. A rigorous training regimen was required to prepare the soon-to-be sailors for the rigors of competently handling an open sea voyage. Extreme discipline was



needed to take a novice and teach him to properly tie knots and safely secure cargo.

To many landlovers, it was overwhelming how many different knots were used for different things: 4-crossed knots, straight knots, slip knots, etc. Sometimes for ease of tying or for a more secure fit, different ropes were used for different knots. To get someone who knew which knots and ropes to use was a great find. Those individuals were immediately given a higher position on the ship! The term, *know the ropes* is still used today to give emphasis to someone who demonstrates great knowledge in a specific area.

To learn the ropes of anything, whether speaking in front of people, being a good manager, learning to program new software, or tying knots, it all takes **discipline**. When you discipline yourself for success, you not only *know the ropes* of your career, you master the ropes of life!

*By Vincent Ivan Phipps, B.S.*

### New Audio Training Tape Released!

Our new tape, "Reflections," is both hilarious and motivational. In it, Beverly tells her true story of getting locked in a hotel bathroom for hours and the lessons she learned. While you will learn, this tape is not instructive, rather it is reflective - thus the name "Reflections." It makes a great gift! \$10 plus \$3 shipping/handling. Order yours today!

### QUICK TIPS to make a new behavior a habit:

- Attach the new activity to something you are already doing.
- Remember it takes approximately 70 consecutive acts before it becomes a habit.
- Share your "give up" goals with everyone; share your "get" goals with a precious few who can support you.
- Start Small.
- Give yourself rewards along the way.
- Realize it's a journey; not a destination.



## Get The Exchange Delivered Right To Your Computer!

*The Exchange* is now available in colorful PDF format. You'll receive an e-mail every month with a direct link to the PDF file. Sign up to receive our e-newsletter at:

<http://www.talklisten.com/newsletter.html>

You will need Adobe's Acrobat Reader 4.0 to read the PDF file. You can download the software for free at Adobe's website: [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)

TLC will continue to send you a hard copy through Spring while you get accustomed to the new delivery method.



**There is no such thing as great talent without great willpower.**

*Honore de Balzac*

**Not being able to govern events, I govern myself.**

*Michel de Montaigne*

### NEED A SPEAKER?

Last month, Beverly Inman-Ebel was the keynote speaker at the Women's Conference at Dalton College and for the Atlanta Association of Legal Administrators. Vincent Phipps was the featured speaker for Hamilton County Schools, while Ben Cairns addressed students at The University of Tennessee.



Many people have the ambition to succeed; they may even have a special aptitude for their job. And yet they do not move ahead. Why? Perhaps they think that since they can master their job, there is no need to master themselves.

*John Stevenson*

#### REMEMBER TO...

*discipline yourself to think positive thoughts every day, especially in the morning. Spend the first ten minutes seeing what a great day this can be!*

**I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it.**

*Stephen Butler Leacock*

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## HOW WOULD YOU LIKE FOR ONE OF YOUR KEY PEOPLE TO HAVE PERMANENT AND POSITIVE CHANGE IN COMMUNICATION AND LEADERSHIP?

TLC is offering a special opportunity for you to send one or two of your people for in-depth training that we normally offer for large company in-house training only. The get away package includes 30 hours of small group training, individual coaching and goal setting, countless hours of conversation and break away sessions, plus room and board for 4 nights and 5 days. What will your person gain?

- Increase positive attitude
- Improve listening skills
- Prevent miscommunications
- Give compliments that increase productivity and morale

- Give corrections that change behavior and leave the self-esteem in tact.
- Dissolve conflicts
- Make and fulfill commitments
- Handle people's needs with ease and confidence

All of this within the beautiful setting of Spring Creek Retreat. See [www.talklisten.com/retreat](http://www.talklisten.com/retreat) Enrollment is limited to 10 people. The financial investment is \$2,775.00 per person and includes training, materials, lodging, and meals. Each course begins on Monday morning and ends Friday afternoon. Call 1-888-BECAUSE now to check availability and reserve your week!



*Spring Creek  
Retreat*

## WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

I bet you know at least two things that you need to do in order to be a better you. What's stopping you? Could it be a lack of discipline? I don't think so. Discipline is merely taking action regularly. When we don't do what we know we should do, discipline is not the problem, motivation is. Once you know what's in it for you, doing what it takes is much easier.



Discipline is important, yet it doesn't stand a chance without the underlying motivation. The correct order to accomplishing what you want is:

- Identify what you want/need
- Understand what's in it for you
- Develop a plan
- Apply daily discipline

I had a client who was very creative and successful at getting things accomplished. There was just one problem. A picture of his office would certainly win a "Need a Maid Contest" at the local radio station. Not that the mess bothered him. Until he was told he didn't look like upper management material, that is. Suddenly, the need to tidy up was important. I saw him again last year and his

larger office was still organized. He explained with a wink that being the president of the bank was "neat."

Perhaps you know someone who had terrible health habits – overeating, smoking, drinking – and whose only exercise was the digital manipulation of a keyboard until a heart attack gave them a new perspective. The discipline of counting calories and walking daily was "a piece of cake" considering the alternative.

The key is to apply the discipline daily. Start small in do-able doses. For instance, let's say you have identified that you need to be a better listener. What's in it for you? You'll learn more and be better able to lead. Start by preventing yourself from interrupting even if it means you sit with your hand clasping your jaw shut. When you're comfortable with that, ask more open questions. Then hold your opinion until you've heard the whole story. Keep at this and one day you'll hear someone exclaim, "You're such a good listener."

The next time you are struggling with discipline, stop and think. When you know what's in it for you, the discipline will logically follow. Then you begin to live your dreams.

*By Beverly Inman-Ebel, CEO*