

THE EXCHANGE

HOW TO GET PERMANENT & POSITIVE CHANGE THROUGH TRAINING

I bet you have a great looking pair of shoes in your closet that you seldom wear. You don't wear them because they hurt your feet. But they sure look good. Shoes that don't fit need to be given away, otherwise they just clutter up your space. Never buy them again.



People skills training is a lot like shoes. We know we need it. After all, 85% of people who leave their job do so because they don't get along with someone. Yet most corporate closets are filled with training that did not fit their needs. Maybe it was informative, or fun, or out-of-the-box thinking, but nothing changed. The people who attended soon returned to their jobs and their old ways of doing things.

So, how do you ensure that your training dollars will give you the results you need? You need a plan. Make a list of your people from whom you want input. Tell them in advance of the meeting that you want to know their opinions of the company's strengths and areas that need improvement. It is important for them to come to the meeting prepared. During this brainstorming meeting,

- ASK the right kinds of questions that get your people verbalizing the strengths and areas that need improvement such as, "What are we doing right?" and "What needs improvement?"

- LISTEN thoroughly to their answers. Do not interrupt. If you disagree or do not understand, ask for more detail. Everyone does not need to agree. Different departments may perceive different needs.
- DEMONSTRATE that you understand their concerns by restating in your own words the needs they have described.

The second step is to take your list of needs and determine the priority. Which one is most important? Be specific. Don't just say, "I want people to have a positive attitude," rather state, "I want people smiling and humming and demonstrating a 'can-do attitude' when we address change."

The third step is to partner with the organization that has the expertise, willingness, and guarantee to bring about the changes you have on your list. In order to acquire permanent (meaning forever, not just a blip on the screen increase in knowledge) and positive (meaning the change will result in an uplifting and good for you/good for the organization alteration of behavior) change, be sure to ask how they (whether it is your training department or an outside company) will help you to accomplish your goals. Don't just accept their promise of customizing their program to meet the needs of your people. To make sure they know your people, look for their willingness (hopefully at their suggestion, not your insistence) to:

- TOUR YOUR FACILITY to get a look/feel for the environment in which your

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What Our Clients Are Saying

"TLC and Beverly Inman-Ebel have helped me learn to communicate more effectively with my peers, my team, and even my family. I now understand that different people require different types of communication. I gained so much from the program that I had a DISC assessment and communication session for my team. It has helped them work together more effectively and helped me better understand my team."

Ann Dozier, Atlanta GA

"TLC and Beverly Inman-Ebel have made important contributions to the improved interpersonal and communication skills at all levels of Textile/Apparel Business of The DixieGroup. Our restructure and successful turnaround was clearly impacted by the organization's enhanced communication abilities."

George Smith, Chattanooga TN



MAY 2000

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LOOKING AHEAD:

Are your meetings disorganized, boring, and too long? Next month's issue deals with *Meetings that Matter!*



If we don't change the direction we're going, we're likely to end up where we are headed.

Chinese Proverb

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

John F. Kennedy



To learn more about it, click here!

- people work and interact.
- CONVERSE with upper management and with managers of the people to be trained in order to get a complete and close look at the needs (using the ask, listen, and demonstrate approaches mentioned above).
- EXPLAIN their training approach for permanent and positive change.
- HOLD INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES with the participants before training begins. This may include behavioral style profiling, discussing their perceived strengths and weaknesses, and setting specific goals for each participant to accomplish during the training.
- TRAIN IN SMALL INTERACTIVE GROUPS which is important to ensure that all participants will join in discussions. Small groups are generally no more than 10 people with 2 trainers so the ratio is no more than 1:5. The training needs to be very interactive with the participants receiving the information in a safe environment.
- SPACE TRAINING in order to teach in small doses and then allow time for practice in the classroom and, most importantly, the real world before receiving the next portion of training.
- OBTAIN CONTINUOUS INPUT by having the participants access the trainers by phone, fax, or email in-between their training days when questions arise.
- EXPECT ACCOUNTABILITY beginning the first day of training. For example, assignments are given and will be completed. Participants learn from each other as they share their experiences of the real-world assignments. Participants are also accountable to each other. A system is formed that requires each participant to communicate weekly with a partner to support and mentor each other during and after the training.
- CONDUCT POST TRAINING as an essential part of assuring permanent and positive change. Following the group training, participants are seen at least quarterly for review and continued training. Manager updates, given quarterly or at a schedule requested by the managers of participants, ensure communication and carry-over of skills.
- GIVE MONTHLY FEEDBACK AND ENCOURAGEMENT that can be in the form of an informative newsletter or e-zine. Participants may also receive cards to encourage and articles that might move them closer to their individual goals.



The bottom line is to take the time to make sure the training fits your needs, and that it is structured to accomplish your goals, while keeping you, the decision maker, informed. Don't waste any more resources on training unless it will achieve permanent and positive change.

P.S. You'll find no "Wish we hadn't done that training" in your corporate closet when you partner with TLC. We guarantee it. We will give you permanent and positive change! So clean out your closets and get ready to run toward your goals with the most comfortable pair of shoes you've ever owned!



CONGRATULATIONS!
to Ben Cairns for receiving
First Place in the
Toastmaster's International
Speech Contest for
Chattanooga Area 13.



Spring Creek
Retreat

Send a key person to Spring Creek Retreat this summer for week-long training that will result in permanent and positive change in people skills. This is a life changing seminar. The cost, including individual conference, 30+ hours of small group training (limited to 10 people), workshop interactions, materials, and room and board for 4 nights/5 days is only \$2,775.00. Call 1-888-BECAUSE for detailed information and to reserve your week. <http://www.springcreekretreat.com>

MIDDLE OF THE ROAD



In 1912, Dr. June Carroll lived in a California community that had a highway strip notoriously

known for its head-on collisions, because drivers drove in the middle of the road. To prevent unnecessary accidents, she decided to implement a "*permanent and positive change*." On that single highway stretch, she painted an almost mile long stripe down the middle of the road to help keep drivers on either side.

The California Highway Commission heard about her "*change*" to their roads and instead of taking disciplinary action, they incorporated her idea to every major road in the state. As word caught on, other states began painting stripes down their roads too. Even today, most major roads, highways, interstate, and streets in the world now practice this change, instituted by Dr. Carroll.

Perhaps at first, she did not know what impact her idea would have on public ground transportation. Who knows how many thousands of lives were saved because of her concern for only a few? Only when you decide to take action can permanent and

positive change have both immediate and long-term advantages.

In what areas do you find yourself in the **middle of the road**? Make a decision to change – permanently and positively. Who knows how many lives you can impact by taking action now!

By Vincent Ivan Phipps, B.S.



Quick Tips:

- Tell everyone when you are giving up a behavior. They'll keep you honest.
- Tell only a trusted few when you are going after a new goal. Tell those who will support and encourage you.

CHANGE, FOREVER?

Robert was a client who wanted to reduce his heavy southern dialect. He was in the position for a promotion, which would mean traveling to different regions of the country. He and his manager felt his accent could be a hindrance to establishing credibility.

Before any training began, Robert shared that he did not mind sounding "*lika suthner*," and he only wanted to know how to adapt for certain types of people. After several hours of training, he received positive comments from his co-workers. Before breaking for the holidays, Robert was reminded that continual practice was vital to retaining his current method of talking.

After returning to training, he confessed that within minutes of being with his family (who spoke with the same "*way of talkin'*" he grew up hearing), he was tempted to talk the way



he used to. He held strongly to what he had learned, thought about the techniques he practiced, and remained focused on saying his words clearly. Even though his siblings accused him of "soundin like a Yankee," he said he felt good about sticking to his goal of reducing his accent. He made his manager, and most importantly himself, proud. He accomplished permanent and positive change. Robert admitted that while it was tough, it was the most rewarding change he had experienced.

Remember that if something comes fast, it probably will not last. The things worth appreciating sometimes take the most time to acquire. What aspects of communication would you like to have impacted by permanent and positive change?

Yes, you can improve your life --- forever!!



If you have no will to change it, you have no right to criticize it.

Anonymous

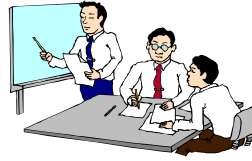
REMEMBER TO...

- Partner with another person to practice new skills that you both learned in training.
- Set a communication goal each week and focus on successfully accomplishing it.
- Get feedback from others. Ask them specifically how you are doing in a particular area. Be ready to calmly receive constructive criticism.



ACHIEVING PERMANENT CHANGE IN BUSINESS

We all probably have heard and experienced the same: "change is the status quo." For years we have known that if we are not getting ahead, we are falling behind. After all these years of change, it seems like it should be easy by now (isn't the status quo the easy way?).



Why is change perennially difficult? After all, most of what we have been changing is equipment, software, and business processes. These projects take financial and human resources. For some reason when we get them in place, there tends to be an ongoing battle to get them to work as we had planned. Why?

It is true that most of the changes that are undertaken in business have to do with changing "things." Unfortunately, every time we change a thing, it also means that we must change a behavior. People have to learn how to operate the new equipment, use the new software, follow the new procedures, — to act in a different way. All of these changes involve changing behavior.

If you have raised a child, think back to your child in diapers and how much effort it took to get him/her to learn to use the commode. If you have ever gone on a diet to reduce your weight or cholesterol, think of how much effort and focussed concentration it took to change your behaviors to accomplish those goals. And when you had reached those goals, did you find yourself reverting back to your old behaviors?

It is clear that the ongoing difficulty with change has to do with failure on our part to address the behaviors that are required to make the change beneficial and permanent. Fortunately, it does not have to be an ongoing battle. Whenever we begin to pursue a change, we can address the behavioral changes that must occur. Consider your last project:

- During project startup, was there an effort in place to gain buy-in from the people who would be affected by the change, to gain their involvement, to make it their change?
- After the change had been planned, was there a testing period with the people involved to find out what worked well and

what didn't, what improvements could be made to enhance ergonomics and ease of use, and what the obstacles were to effective implementation?

- Was the change designed to motivate the employees, make their work easier and more rewarding, and give them the drive to fully and effectively implement changes in their own behaviors?
- During implementation, was hands on training, coaching, and mentoring provided? Were real-time measures put in place to determine when and where the failures occur, with immediate constructive feedback to the individuals involved?
- Did the project include identifying trends in the failures, determining additional training needs, enhanced training methods, and process improvements?
- Were reward systems put in place to encourage people to follow the new procedures and effectively use the new tools?
- Was an effort made to develop project leadership, create a real productive team, and alter communication patterns and approaches?

If your experience agrees with most people in business today, then your answer to most of these questions is "no," behavioral change was not a priority during the change process. If most of those questions were answered yes and you still struggled following implementation to achieve a positive outcome, you need to reconsider the approaches that were used. Find other ways that are more suited to the culture of your organization.

Change is not easy and will never be easy because changing behavior is a difficult task. Fortunately, permanent and positive change can be accomplished. As we learn to motivate behavioral change within our organization, our people and leadership skills become more effective and change becomes easier. Changes begin to occur at a more rapid pace with less frustration and expense, and the results become more and more rewarding.

Yes, permanent and positive change can be consistently achieved when we remember that every business is a people business. It's up to you!

Kenneth E. Ebel, CQE/CQA/QS-LA

After you've done a thing the same way for two years, look it over carefully. After five years, look at it with suspicion. And after ten years, throw it away and start all over.

Alfred Edward Perlman

To improve is to change, to be perfect is to change often.

Winston Churchill

CHANGE HOW OTHERS SEE YOU

Simply mentioning the bulging veins in his neck and red face is enough to give you an initial idea of how incredibly intense and argumentative Fred was when he started training. He certainly didn't want to be here; he had been sent because he created fear in the people who reported to him. Intensity and drive had brought him this far, improved people skills and finesse would be needed to go any farther.

Two months after our initial meeting, the people who worked with Fred painted a completely different picture of him. The man who sat in front of me had eased into his chair and spoke in calm, even tones. Instead of a confrontation, Fred and I had a productive discussion. Quite a change!

What had happened to create this change in Fred and the way that other people perceived him? Fred was willing to acknowledge his weaknesses and apply what he had learned in his personal and professional lives. Fred learned to:

- Set his own attitude
- Destroy negatives and create positives

- Listen more effectively
- Open up quiet communicators to get important information
- Ask the right kinds of questions at the right times
- Reduce defensiveness in himself and others
- Deal constructively with confrontation and rejection
- Adapt his communication to different styles of people

It takes at least two people to create a communication exchange. Even though you cannot control the other person's perceptions and reactions, you can influence them. By changing one variable in an equation, you can change the entire outcome. That's how Fred changed the perceptions of other people. You can do it, too! What would be gained in your life if people saw you differently?



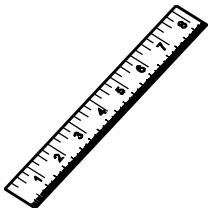
By Ben Cairns, M.A.



When patterns are broken, new worlds emerge.

Tuli Kupferberg

HOW DO YOU MEASURE CHANGE?



In 1995, a newly appointed Divisional Vice President of a failing manufacturer with the responsibility of seven plants wanted permanent and positive change in the

communication and leadership of his people. He sent the first group of plant managers to extensive training to begin the process. This first group came kicking and screaming. They insisted they knew how to talk and listen. What they needed was new equipment, qualified people and a higher budget to support both. What kind of crazy fool wastes money on 30 plus hours of communication training?

Over the next few years, these plant managers were so excited about effectively communicating that all of their department heads and then their supervisors received the "crazy" training. The fifteen groups also received quarterly check-ups to keep them progressing.

With all that time and expense, how did they measure the positive change? The plant managers reported that, because of the focus on listening and communication, the employee satisfaction survey rating had increased by an average of 13%. Employee turnover was down 12%. Written complaints had decreased an average of 38%. Managers who received the training received reviews from their plant managers with an average of 6% increase over the previous year. The division had become one of the most profitable in the industry, and the Vice President had been promoted to Group President.

How do you measure change? You look at where you are before the change is put into effect. Goals for improvement are determined. People are motivated and supported. Behavior is changed. Then you collect data to see the effect of the change. Investing in your people can yield tremendous return on investments. Make sure your investments are netting you a measurable return!

The human tendency prefers familiar horrors to unknown delights.

Fred Woodworth



It's never too late- in
fiction or in life - to revise.

Nancy Thayer

CHANGE YOUR CAREER BY GETTING NOTICED

If you want to jump start your career, there is no faster way than delivering a quality public presentation. If you're already wanting to know the second fastest way to advance because the thought of making a fool of yourself is a legitimate reality, please know that you can change your presentation skills.

Ruby was in the Information Technology department in her large company. Her goal was to convince the business leaders of the importance of a new computer program. She realized she wasn't as experienced as some, or as personable as others; yet she was determined to succeed. Ruby realized the fastest way to accomplish her goals was to make public presentations to the various plants across the country. There was only one problem: She was scared to death.



She came to her first training session with a neatly typed script complete with overheads brimming with information and charts. The first thing the trainer did was to rip up the script. To be an interesting speaker, it is important to show your personality to the audience. She had her information down pat; knowledge was not holding her back – getting the audience to listen was.

Ruby was encouraged to lighten up. Appropriate slides with art relief and content of no more than 6 lines became part of the visual presentation. The audience became participants in a survey that demonstrated the need for quick and accurate data. Instead of using a boring pie chart on the overhead, she demonstrated what percentage of the divisional budget would be vaporized by not having the correct information immediately accessible. She accomplished this by having a pizza size cookie cut into the respective proportions – and then letting the participants eat the cookie!

Most of all, she did it over and over – each time making refinements and gaining confidence in her ability to reach the audience. She felt silly at first – after all, Ruby was learning to make technical information non-technical. Did Ruby accomplish permanent and positive change? You bet! By the end of the year, she was formally recognized, by her CIO, as the leader in bridging the gap between her department and the business field.

What will it take for you to make a difference? Set your goals and identify in what areas you need to make changes. Then do it. And remember, if you feel a little silly or uncomfortable at first, you're probably on your way to living your dreams!

By Beverly Inman-Ebel, CEO



In the News:

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

Vincent Ivan Phipps was the expert on "time management" for a Chattanooga FOX 61 News segment.

TLC, Talk Listen Communicate, LLC

842 S Germantown Road
Chattanooga, TN 37412

Phone: 423-622-8255
Fax: 423-624-4365
1-888-BECAUSE

Email: tlc@talklisten.com
www.talklisten.com

LET US KNOW

If we have helped you or if you believe our approach to change would work for someone you know, please communicate with us by email tlc@talklisten.com or phone 1-888-232-2873. TLC establishes long-term relationships with our clients. We work with individuals and groups on the following subject areas: attitude, listening, body language, voice, leadership, compliments and corrections, behavioral style, teamwork, effective meetings, public speaking, accent reduction and much more!