Making the Right Impression

“We never have a second chance to make a first impression.”

How many times we’ve heard that expression! And perhaps we’ve heard it often because it’s true. Although we can often eventually overcome a poor first impression, it’s difficult – so why risk it?

Make your first impression a great one – one that will always be remembered in a very positive, uplifting way.

This is a good time to think about why you choose to coach, to align your desires and vision with the attitude and behaviors you will have with your client in a first session. Perhaps you want to help others discover – or rediscover – their greatness. Or to give them support during their painful times. Or to teach them some important skills so they can be more effective personally and professionally – and feel good about themselves in the process. You may wish to share your vision with your clients during your first session or have it in the first materials they see.

This Essentials of Coaching: A Practical Guide for Coaching Others to Their Potential is just that – practical! In my years of coaching, I have discovered that for my clients, there is always a need for very basic fundamentals: learning to know themselves and others better and therefore enhance their relationships; how to communicate more effectively both personally and professionally (work goes home with us, home goes to work with us); discovering that there are skills to reduce stress and handle their time just for starters.

And then, to put their thoughts to words, their words to action. Very powerful!

The following pages are my Creative Communications Center’s 7 C’s for Competent Coaching to help you get started – or to enhance the existing skills you already have in your coaching.

Also, to make it easier for you to teach/lead the individual modules, you will see that there is a section that precedes each one. You will notice that there is the designation of Leader’s Guide on the side so that you can easily recognize this distinction from the main text of the module content.

Best wishes for success as you embark on the insightful journey that this Essentials of Coaching Guide can bring to you and your client/s – excellent relationships and exceptional results. It has done so for me and my clients – I hope the same for you and yours.

© 2007 Creative Communications Center.
Creative Communications Center’s
7 C’s of Competent Coaching
Creative Communications Center’s 7 C’s of Competent Coaching

We all know that an Olympic athlete flourishes under the keen eye of a coach – they discover the potential of the athlete, build on their strengths, celebrate victories, lift spirits when the athletes are discouraged, they guide, cheerlead, provide mentorship and on the occasion a good morning wake up call. They believe in the athlete – even when the athlete doesn’t believe in themselves.

As a mother of two ski jumping Olympians, I applaud coaches, be it sports or life in general.

Every person needs someone in their corner, cheering them on and guiding them to their highest potential. Coaching is for those who have high aspirations and who like an Olympian, know they are more likely to achieve superior results with a coach than with out one – those who want to be a champion in all aspects of their lives.

Your client/s have chosen you to be such a coach.

So what does that mean?

Having been certified and/or attended four different coaching models over the years, I have learned many key essentials to what being a successful coach really means. What it comes down to for me is to be both Caring and Competent. To just be caring is probably not going to get you the results you want with your client; to just be competent is probably not going to enable you to have the relationships you want. I think it’s important to have both – the integration of the intuitive, free-flowing heart with the skillful, focused mind.

These are my 7 C’s:

1. Care

As mentioned above, I do not believe there is anything more important that a coach can give a client than to genuinely care – to have faith in them and let them know you believe they can do far more than they probably currently think they can. Go the extra mile. Be available. We know when someone genuinely cares – and how differently it feels when they are just going through some skill steps but you know their heart isn’t in it. A Caring heart builds the foundation for every other coaching competency.

I have been blessed in having coaches who I know care about me. I have been working with Mark LeBlanc as my coach for over a decade and not only does he continue to give me excellent ideas, helping me to refine my own, but he is always available. And I mean Always. No matter his travel
schedule, I know he’s there for me when I need him, whether by a phone call or an email. He has believed in me when I’ve had my own doubts. He is to me the epitome of someone who integrates mind and heart.

And Terry Levine, also a masterful coach, believed in this Coaching Guide from the very beginning, encouraging me to publish it when that thought hadn’t occurred to me. As a result, I’ve done a lot of refining to it – but it never would have happened without her seeing such potential for how useful it could be for coaches. It was Terri who gave me the idea of my Olympian Coaching Program where clients come and spend a full day with me – because that’s what Terri did for me. It made a huge difference for me – and now, I can make that difference to others.

Both Terri and Mark have been great models for me not only because of their expertise – but because they care.

Story:
Recently, a client and I just concluded our year long Olympian Coaching program (where, as mentioned above, someone comes to me for a full day and I then coach them once a month for the remaining 11 months). She was in tears that this was the end of the year, though we will stay connected forever – perhaps still in a coaching relationship but now as friends and colleagues as well (she is a fabulous coach herself). There were many things she said about how she had valued my coaching but probably what meant the most to me was when she said “I never would have accomplished all that I did this year without your support. You believed in me when no one else did – even when I didn’t believe in myself. I always knew you cared.”

That’s what coaching is all about in my opinion.

2. Connect
The first step in coaching is to connect with your client. Find something in common – a hobby, children, volunteering opportunities. If you’re coaching a group, one way of having people connect with each other is to ask them to share one thing about themselves that others probably wouldn’t know without their doing so. It then gives people a way to connect at breaks when they find the common (or different) interests among themselves.

When I do that, I start with myself to model how they can share. “I love animals, I’ve taken an animal communications class and I volunteer at the Humane Society. I ask the dogs and cats there what their story is and though I’m no pro at knowing the answers, I know enough to know that it is not a happy story or they wouldn’t be there.” And then on to the next person to share.

It’s enough for others to know how they can connect with me but not a long story. And more to the point, as others share their interests, I know how to connect with them – a mutual benefit. You can also do this with just one client as well.
Hold your sessions in a mutually comfortable environment if you are physically coaching. My own preference is for them to come to my home office – it gets them out of their own hectic environment into one that is calm and physically as well as emotionally comfortable. Also, I have easy access to resources that might be helpful for them that I might not have thought about before our coaching session. But whatever works for you both – works!

If you’re coaching on the phone, the importance of connecting is more challenging since you only have the capacity to utilize 30% of your communication cues – which, according to Professor Birdwhistell, University of Pennsylvania, consist of words (7%) and tone of voice (23%). Some studies show that tone of voice is even a higher percentage. The other 70% of communication cues are made up of facial expressions (35%) and body language (35%). But the important thing is to know that you’re not dealing with a full deck of cards when you’re on the phone. Smile when you are talking; your smile will resonate in your voice. Match the pace of your client’s voice – fast/slow for example.

Build rapport. Show interest in them. “Did your son make the team? I know how important it was to him.” “Have you had a chance to get out and do some gardening?” …or “go skiing?”

One way to create rapport is to match their body language, lean forward, have good eye contact. If we breathe at the same rate as another person, we create rapport without their even knowing it. You can also do what is called Pacing and Leading in NLP language (NeuroLinguisticProgramming). For instance, if your client has a closed body language as in crossed arms, you can initially match the same but as you begin to feel there is some connection being made, uncross your arms and you will find they will do the same. You are “pacing and leading” them to an openness – both in body language as well as to the whole session.

Story:
In 1984, I attended Tony Robbins’ “Mind Revolution” in Bolton, Vermont. The first night we walked on hot coals, one of the most awesome experiences I’ve ever had. I asked myself “What in the world will we be doing on Sunday if we’re walking on hot coals Friday night?!?”

Well, on Sunday, Tony got us in groups of 3. One person was given a feeling word, a second person (me) was asked to match my body language as perfectly as possible. A third person was refining my body language even more specifically than I could do. The person with the word was a lot younger than I, I didn’t know her at all and I was hoping I could cheat a little – that she at least would look mad, bad, glad or sad. She didn’t. If I were to put a word to her, it would be severe. That is not my usual way of looking (I hope).

So, using my attending skills, I matched her severe look – at the same time I found myself getting the picture of when my son, Jeff, was born in Mountain Home Hospital 26 years before. I pictured holding him in the hospital, seeing the pale green walls behind me and, knowing she had been given a feeling word, I identified my feelings as “love” and “warmth”, knowing that I must be flunking since I hadn’t even thought of this for probably 25 years.
When I asked her what the word was, she said “joy”. Joy? Why was I going back 26 years? Jeff had done very well as a ski jumper in the Olympics and gotten married to his high school sweetheart that year – why was I going back 26 years?!

She then said (and this is a direct quote): “Well, it wasn’t so much joy as it was feelings of love and warmth. I just had a baby a few months ago and I was remembering holding him in the hospital.” True story. I had goose bumps – and still do when I reflect on that experience. Her experience had happened a few months ago, mine 26 years ago but by matching her body language, I matched her experience.

It sure made a believer of the importance of good “attending” skills!

3. Collaborate

Refer to the Model for Coaching Module for more specifics. This is based on Dr. William Glasser’s Reality Therapy, one of the models in which I am certified – and my favorite because it is both simple in application and profound in results.

I suggest taking notes – and that you encourage your clients to do the same thing. Record the “aha’s”, the challenges, the next steps that show up for you as you go along.

Look for themes – and track them. What information keeps showing up one way or another – the same relationship issue, perhaps not listening, whether it’s at home or work? This can be very useful feedback information for you to share with your client.

Begin with the end in mind.

Ask:
“What do you want to get out of this session?” “Really want?”

Or .. “If this session accomplished just what you wanted, what would it be?”

This is an opportunity to collaborate with your client to help them become focused on what they want – really want. Often people do not know what they want – they just know what they don’t want, which is to stop hurting. There is a tendency in human nature to try harder at what isn’t working. Helping them to know where they are in their lives (current reality) and where they want to be (vision) gives them – and you – important information. You can then collaborate on how to close the gap. Otherwise, it is like being in an airport (where you are), going up to the travel agent who asks your final destination (where you want to be) and you answer, “I don’t know.” Chances are you’re going to go somewhere you don’t want to go! And not a very desirable place either.

Example:
“When you get stuck in a snow bank (or sand), what is the first thing you do?” Answers will be to
“Put the pedal to the metal”. “And what will happen? That effort of trying a little harder will either get you out – or, more often, will get you deeper stuck. So instead of trying harder at what isn’t working, perhaps it would be wise to get some sand, some ashes, a board – or call a tow truck!”

Another/similar approach when you’re working with teams: ask your clients what their Vision and their Current Reality are. Then you can collaborate with them to look for ways to Close the Gap. This is also an excellent format for any kind of Visionary Planning you/your organization may do.

**Story:**
Recently, a new client came to me saying she was trying to find more balance in her life, that her family was suffering from seeing her so little because she was so busy, she wasn’t eating right or exercising, therefore gaining weight. After taking some time to connect (her recent trips) and listening to her frustrations, the conversation went something like this:

Me: If you could have your life be just the way you’d like it to be in 6 months, what would it look like? (Vision)

Client: What a great question! I’ve never thought of it like that…I would…. (And she listed 6 things she would have)…. challenging heart and soul; fully staffed department; regular exercise; eating well and losing weight; time with her husband and kids; planning ahead/shopping for right food

Me: What’s happening now? (Current Reality)

Client: I eat trash food because I’m in a hurry; I’m not exercising; some of my staff are leaving and I’m hiring new people – the staff I have now feel they’re lacking information from me; I almost never eat with my family – I usually don’t even get home until after they’ve all eaten.

But last night I took an hour’s walk with my daughter and that felt great!

Me: So what are some steps you might take to help close the gap between the way you want it to be in six months and the way it is now? (Closing the Gap)

Client: Well, I could continue my walks with my daughter or my husband – that’s both exercise and time with my family; I can make it a priority to get home earlier to eat with my family; I can shop more carefully and plan my meals ahead, including the lunches I’ll take to work with me instead of getting fast food at the end of the day when I’m starving; the hiring is taking place now and should be in place by the end of the summer.

Me: Sounds great – send me an email in a week and let me know how it’s going, OK?

Client: I sure will – when can we have another session? This was so helpful!

The above took about 20 minutes because that’s all we had – my client went from a rather reluctant person who had been told she needed coaching to someone who is very enthusiastic and is looking forward to the next session … soon!
The process is very simple – and very effective...if there had been more time, I would have taken more of the steps listed below but it shows how much can be accomplished in a short amount of time if that’s all you have.

4. Communicate

Ask:
What are you doing now? Is it working?

Communication skills are key to being a good coach! In this Guide, there is a very comprehensive section of communication skills for your clients – as well as a refresher for you if you want it. In my experience, practically all issues of the people I coach have a bottom line of poor communications. You have the opportunity to model exceptional communication skills. What does this mean?

Being totally conscious and present to your client. Put your own concerns and distractions on the shelf for now. They’ll probably still be there after the session if you want them again.

Listen to discover what not only is being said – but what is not being said as well. What are the underlying issues that you know need to be uncovered? Where is your client being congruent? And not? What just isn’t adding up?

Is there anything else that would be helpful for you to know? What do you think have been some obstacles that have held your client back from getting what they want? Ask if they are open to your feedback of what you’re thinking, feeling and observing right now? Make your feedback positive – what you can see that is working for them, what might work better (not what they are doing wrong).

What is your client’s behavior style? And what is yours? Look at the section on DISC; it will give you the information you need to know if you don’t have the opportunity for them to take their own assessment. In that section you will discover how to recognize – and communicate with – each style. I highly recommend that you at least know your own style really well. Where are the similarities with your client that will make it easy for you to coach them? Where are the differences that you will have to modify to be more effective? We tend to communicate with all the people in the same way and that can be up to 75% ineffective based on the different styles – and how they want to be communicated with.

Create safety. Let your client know you are not judging, you are wanting to understand. One of my own coaches makes comments like “Anyone in your situation would feel the way you do...” or “I’ve felt the same way in such situations.” It makes me feel understood, that I’m not the Lone Ranger, that I’m accepted just as I am. And safe.

You can only get to those “underlying issues” when your client feels safe. It really is like unpeeling an onion, layer by layer.
Ask questions for clarity – but only for clarity. Be careful not to ask too many questions – that can make others feel that their privacy is being challenged. Great alternatives are discussed in the *Communications Leaders Guide* section:

*Door Openers* “Say more about that….”

*Alternatives to Advice* “I have a thought that might be helpful. Would you like to hear it?”

*Directional Questions* “Have you considered …?” The last two should only be asked when the client is stuck.

Stick to “What” and “How” questions. “What made you come to that conclusion?” “How did you handle it?” Stay away from “Why” questions – it can make people feel judged and therefore create a defensive response. Chances are that if they consciously knew why, they wouldn’t be asking you – and/or they may be in denial.

**Recheck** – Is the desired outcome clear? Have you stayed on target? Are the priorities clear to your client – and to you?

If yes, affirm with them that they’re ready to take action. Is there anything else they need before you move on?

### 5. Challenge

Once there is clarity on the issue, the next steps can flow quite easily. You have gone through “What do you want? Really want?”

At this stage, ask **“What are you doing now?”** followed by **“Is it working? If not, do you want to make a plan for change?”**

This is often a moment of truth for people. They usually can get the cause and effect of their actions and choices. Are their words and actions congruent?

Develop new ideas and solutions with them – elicit their ideas and wisdom. Encourage them to stretch – you believe in their greatness. Help them to believe in themselves by letting them know all the potential you see in them.

They know their own truth – it is your opportunity to help them uncover it. And act on it.

Again, this is a great opportunity for you, as their coach, to **Collaborate** and **Communicate**. Remember, you are always drawing on any of the 7 C’s as you need to throughout the coaching process.
At any time, ask “How is this session going for you so far?”

**Example:**
You are head of a new team that has been formed. Sally comes to you and says: “I can’t be on a team with John. He drives me crazy.”

You: Tell me more (door opener). What’s going on? (clarifying question)

Sally: Well, two years ago he took all the credit for a project that I did and I can’t stand him. I just don’t trust him.

You: (after you’ve listened to let her vent – you know it’s time to move on when Sally starts to repeat herself). Sally, I understand that you don’t want to be on this team with John. It’s really tough to have someone else take credit for something you’ve done. (active listening). However, unfortunately, that’s not negotiable. My boss has set up the teams for the diversity he wants, and says there are to be no changes. So, since you have to be with John, what do you want? Really want in this situation?

Sally: Well, if I have to be on team with John, I guess I’d like to get along with him.

You: *What are you doing now?*

Sally: I’m ignoring him. I just don’t speak to him.

You: So, if you want to have a better relationship with John, is not speaking to him helping? (seeing the cause and effect)…

Sally: Well, I guess not.

You: *Do you want to make a change to get along with him better?*

Sally: I guess so.

Explore all the options you both can think of, starting with the ideas of your client. Then:

You: What do you think could be the positive results of that option? The negatives?

This is when you draw again on your **Communication** skills as you listen carefully, helping her to conclude the best that could happen, the worst that could happen. Is it worth the risk? If so, then it’s time for actions. If not, go back to exploring another option that might be less risky, safer.

You want Sally (or any client) to come up with her own solution. Why? Because then your client/s will have the buy-in. “If I give a man a fish, I’ve fed him for a day. If I teach him how to fish, I’ve fed him for a lifetime.”

The two main challenges that coaches – or anyone – have in this process is not giving advice (as
someone in one of my workshops noted several years ago “unsolicited equals unwanted when it comes to advice” and/or being self-referential “I know exactly what you mean – just a few years ago, Jim tried to take credit for my project and this is what I did ….”

Even though you may come up with the exact same advice as they come up with for themselves, let it be their “aha!”

And, if you get stuck, acknowledge and accept what you don’t know. And if possible, do whatever you can to find out the answers – for your client as well as for yourself…

6. Create

Now comes the time for creating action. You want your clients to be accountable and to get the results they want. Creating Action Plans – and following up with them – is an excellent way to do it.

Help create a plan that is measurable, short, specific and timely.

What are the timelines? The deadlines if there are any? What are they going to do to support the change? And what is it going to take for you to support their changes? What is it going to take to make sure they won’t sabotage their changes and do the same thing again?

What steps can they take? How specifically would they go about them? Challenges? Risks? Obstacles? How will they overcome them?

Going back to Sally:

You: Since you’d like to get along with John better, what might you do to have that happen?

Sally: I guess I could ask him if he would be willing to get together for lunch to see if we can mend some fences. I’d like him know how his actions affected me and I suppose I can listen to what he has to say.

You: Sounds great – when might you be able to set that up? (measurable, short/specific)

Sally: Well, since he’s in the next office to mine, I could ask him right after we meet.

You: And when will you suggest that you get together? (timely)

Sally: I’m free tomorrow or Friday.

You: OK – let me know how it goes, OK?

Sally: OK, I’ll do that.
See the back of each module for a very comprehensive action plan. Go over it with your client, again having them do most of the work on it. Here are some possible scenarios.

For Sally:

**Area:** what is the issue? Her relationship with John and how it affects the team

**Today’s Date** … Target date for Completion … Date Achieved

**Goal:** (Specific, measurable, realistic, tangible)
1. a good relationship with John
2. feeling comfortable on the team with him
3. healing hurt/angry feelings

**Benefits:**
1. feeling of relief to have old issue resolved
2. letting go of hurt and anger
3. feeling like myself when I see John/on the team
4. more productivity as a result

**Action Steps:**
1. talk to John to get together for lunch to find resolution

**Affirmations:** (positive statements to raise your confidence) See Goal Setting Module for more details
1. I am ready and willing to meet with John
2. I feel comfortable being on the team with John

Does this goal support my values in this area of life? Yes

Is it worth the time, effort and money required to reach it?

Yes_________ No_________ Yes, but later _______________

**Visualization:** (Visualizing yourself in possession of your goal reinforces your belief and keeps you excited)
1. I am visualizing myself confidently asking John for lunch
2. I am visualizing us having a comfortable lunch together
3. I am visualizing us resolving and healing past issues
4. I am visualizing joyfully being on the same team with John

**Story:**
Many years ago when my son, Jeff, was getting married, I decided I wanted to lose 7 pounds for the wedding. Three weeks before the wedding, I began affirming my perfect weight and visualized...
myself on the scales displaying that ideal weight. I pictured and affirmed that vision three times a day for three weeks.

Two days before the wedding, my weight continued to be the same. It hadn’t budged – not surprising since I hadn’t done anything differently. That Thursday night there was a party and I ate a lot. Friday morning, when I stepped on the scales, I had dropped the 7 pounds and was my ideal weight, having lost weight literally overnight. Even as much of a believer as I am, I was stunned. I got off the scale, I got on the scale. Same ideal weight. I got off the scale, I got on the scale. Same ideal weight. I did this four times. Amazing!!

On the day of the wedding – ideal weight. On Sunday – 2 pounds back on. On Monday – the 7 pounds were back up.

What had I done wrong? I had only visualized it for the day of the wedding, not for it to continue. A great learning for me. But that incident made a real believer for me of the power of affirmations and visualizations!

**Potential Obstacles:** (what stands between you and your goal?)

1. John is on vacation so I couldn’t see him
2. John is not available for lunch when I am
3. John refuses to see me – (he doesn’t like me either)

**Solutions:** (how can you overcome those obstacles? What resources can you draw on?)

1. for # 1 and #2 – look for other times
2. #3 – just because I want and am ready for change, doesn’t mean that John is. I will remember the Serenity Prayer to change what I can, accept what I can’t, wisdom to know the difference
3. I will make the best of it, continue to reach out to John and hope, over time, he will respond.

Review with them. What did you learn? What worked for them with your session? What might have worked better? Anything you’d like us to do differently next time?

What are the clear agreements? Are they clear on what they’re trying to accomplish? How will they communicate with you about the actions they are taking?

I usually give assignments, mutually agreed upon. If I’m not meeting with a client every week (and I seldom am), I often ask them to email or fax me their progress – or their perceived lack of – each week. It helps keep them focused – and me as well.

Again, let them know you believe in them, that they can accomplish everything on their action plan. Let them know that you **Care**. Make sure that is true and that you are in your own integrity and congruent in your **Collaboration** of what they can accomplish – with a stretch.
Recap the conversation to make sure that their expectations – and yours – are the same.

7. Commitment

The Action Plan is in place. Hopefully Commitment is next.

Returning to the scenario with Sally.

You: (end of the week)…So how did it go with John?

Sally (possible scenario 1): It was a good start. We aired our differences and were able to see it from each other’s point of view. We mutually decided to let go of the past.

Sally (possible scenario 2): I just haven’t had time to talk with John. I’ve just been too busy.

You: Does not making the time to talk with John help you have a better relationship with him? (cause and effect).

Sally: No, I know it doesn’t. I’ll keep trying.

Don’t give up – help your client see the importance of making the change and committing to it.

Definition of Insanity: Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Support them – continue to show them you Care, that you believe in them even if they don’t believe in themselves. Go over the Action Plan with them and have them review for you what they learned, what steps they are committing to.

Conclude by asking: Did you get what you wanted from this session? Anything else that needs closure before we end?

Set a time for the next meeting and what needs to be done before then. I ask people to fax or email me their action plan, with the actions they’ve taken, before we meet again – and what they want from the upcoming meeting. Congratulate them for all the positive attitudes/choices you’ve noticed over the session.

And congratulate yourself for all you did to make it such a successful session. What did you do that worked well? That could have worked better? What did you learn that will help you for the next session?
I’d like to share the following poem:

Until one is committed, there is hesitation, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans:

The moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence acts too.

All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one’s favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance which no man (or woman) could have dreamed would have come his (or her) way.

Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.

– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
1749-1832

You’re off on a great journey – see your client as someone who is special who is a human being who has strengths and weaknesses like you. Like everyone. And you’re there to be their coach, their support and their reality check, as they live out more and more of their greatness.

Refer to the “Before You Begin” pages for specific ways to use this guide – you will want your clients, for example, to fill in the “Getting Started” pages and get them back to you before your first session. That alone will give you lots of information that can be helpful with the above suggestions.

Have fun! If you do, they will, too – and your coaching will not only be more enjoyable, it will be more effective and get you/them the desired results including a higher sense of life/professional purpose and more effective relationships.
A Model for Coaching

As a coach for many years, I have experienced many coaching models, attended a variety of coaching schools/programs and this model is my favorite. The reason? It is simple and it is profound. A great combination in my opinion – and in my experience. As mentioned in the Communications module, this is based on the work of William Glasser and his Reality Therapy and Choices.

Refer back to the 7 C’s in the Getting Started and Communications Modules because this same model is a very effective way to not only coach your clients in general but also to help people when they have a problem – for them to be their own problem solvers with your asking the right questions to have them gain their own insights.

In this Module, there are some sample questions you can ask as you coach your client/s to achieve what they want without their, often unconsciously, sabotaging their efforts… (i.e. say they want one thing but do something that doesn’t support what they say they want).

One of the reasons I like this model so much is that it helps people see if they are being congruent about what they say they want and what they are doing. Often we don’t even realize that we’re not “walking our talk”.

**Story:**
Many years ago, as I was learning this powerful model, I asked myself the question: am I doing what I am saying my priorities are? And I realized that there was an area that I was not.

I always maintained that my family was my top priority and work was second. But as I looked at it, was that true? My sons were all grown with families of their own so it was only appropriate that I was spending more time with my work than with my family. At the same time, one of my greatest blessings is that my family all lives nearby but I wasn’t taking advantage of seeing my grandchildren as much as I could/would like to do.

**What did I want? Really want?** I wanted to have a close relationship with my grandchildren.

**What was I doing now?** I was only seeing them at family gatherings for the most part – and occasional babysitting.

**Was that helping me get what I want?** No

**Did I want to make a plan for change?** Yes.

**Make the plan specific, timely and measurable.** I started having special outings with them; for the girls, Brit and Tira, we would have lunch, do something after school, shop for special occasions – for Sam, we’d go to McDonald’s and then bowling after school; I sent them cards when I was traveling; I saved special things for them that I would see or read that I thought they would enjoy. And
when at all possible, I changed anything so I can be with the family for get-togethers, for the grandchildren’s sports events, a concert – whatever. I still do.

**The results:** A fun, close relationship with them. As Brit and Tira became teenagers with many outside events after school, there have not been as many opportunities to have outings with them. But recently, Tira said to me “Suz, you know what we haven’t done in awhile?” I was delighted that she asked me – and we have one planned soon. And right after that, Brit said she’d like an outing as well. Times change – that’s the journey of life – but showing love and caring doesn’t.

**Next Step:** Outings with my youngest grandchildren – Jack, 4, and Olivia, 2. I’ve begun with Jack, and I want to do it more often – and time to begin them with Olivia. Plans are already in progress. The result? Even more closeness and fond memories, I am sure.

**Challenge:** Is my family really my top priority or is my work? Recently I had the opportunity to have that tested. I had told American Management Association, for whom I teach seminars, that I would teach a three-day course in June. I then discovered those dates conflicted with Brit’s high school graduation. What was more important? The money or celebrating Brit’s graduation? Could I use the money? You bet! But it was a no-brainer: I called AMA and withdrew from teaching the course, giving them plenty of time to get someone else to teach for me. I – and Brit – will always have her special day be a memory that I was there to share.

Yes, my family is my top priority!
DISC Behavior
Part I: Introducing the Assessment

This section is fun, leads to many “aha’s,” and is experiential if you’re coaching groups. (i.e. participants practice!).

I’ll offer you some template language and background information on DISC to use when introducing this assessment to your clients.

Introductory language for your client:
Do you ever feel like you’re not quite on the same wavelength with someone and you’re not quite sure why? Perhaps you tell a story and you don’t feel like they’re listening or you make a request and they seem to get angry for no reason, or you’re nice to someone and they don’t give you the time of day. Perhaps the reason is because their style of interacting with people is different than yours. We tend to communicate with all people the same way without considering that different people have different needs and hear and interpret information differently. People like different food, different television shows, different cars to make them happy. It follows, therefore, that they prefer and need different kinds of communication? Research says if we communicate with everyone using one style, we can be up to 75% ineffective. So you only have a one in four chance of getting through if you don’t consider whom you’re talking to and what their theory or style is before you communicate.

You may want to begin by asking them if they have taken the DISC or any other personality assessment before and if so, what they discovered.

Technical Background on DISC:
This DISC instrument is based on the work of Dr. William Marston, the author of Behaviors of Normal People, the creator of the comic strip Wonder Woman and the founder of the first lie detector test. Dr. Walter Clark and Dr. John Geier developed the DISC in the 1950’s. It is based on 15 years of research and tested on over one million people to enjoy the reliability and validity of over 99%. More research results are available on request.

DISC helps reveal four basic behavior styles:

- **Dominant** – those who want to be in control, are good at taking charge and getting bottom line results, fast paced and task oriented
- **Influencing** – those who are motivating, enthusiastic, make people feel good about themselves and included, fast paced and relationship oriented
- **Steadiness** – those who are the team players, good listeners, want to work behind the scenes, slow paced, relationship oriented
• **Conscientious** – those who are detailed, diplomatic, do things right the first time, perfectionists, slow paced, task oriented.

**Purpose of Assessment:** (again, to share with your client)
This is an opportunity for me to have a clearer understanding of whom you are, how to best communicate with you in our coaching together, and help me make the best coaching recommendations for you. Discovering your preferred communication style will help you improve your rapport, increase communication and develop closer relationships – both personally and professionally.

In addition, knowing your behavioral style will give you the opportunity to:

• discover and understand your behavior style as well as that of others
• learn how best to communicate with those of different styles
• know your strengths and learn how to modify the behaviors that don’t work well for you
• get the results you want from people without force or manipulation
Disc Behavior
Part II: Scenarios that help make the case for DISC

Language you might share with your client:
You may be asking yourself: So what? What can DISC really do for me?

First of all, since we tend to communicate with all people in the same manner, we are setting ourselves up to misunderstand and be misunderstood. Knowledge is power; knowing what our styles are and learning how to read the styles of others, we are setting the stage for excellent rapport, excellent relationships – and excellent results.

Make the point with a story for your client: (note to coaches – feel free to share mine, printed below, or one of your own; stories to illustrate points throughout the coaching/client relationship can be very effective, regardless of anyone’s communication style!)

Background:
Harry was someone who was a family friend, I knew him well, our families spent a lot of time together as our kids were ski jumpers and we’d go to meets together. I liked Harry and I thought he liked me but sometimes, something just felt a little off. I wasn’t sure why – his wife, Barb, was one of my best friends, but Harry and I just didn’t seem to click.

Years ago, when I was first learning this model, (but not putting it into practice yet!), we invited Harry and Barb for dinner. At the time, we had two Cocker Spaniel dogs; one or both of whom occasionally had “accidents” on our wall-to-wall carpet. This happened shortly before they arrived.

My way of dealing with this was not consistent: I would vacillate between bringing one of them to the scene of the crime and saying (loudly): “Are you the one who did this?” And promptly put her outside. Sometimes I would bring them both to the spot and ask, “Which one of you did this?!” and put them both outside. And sometimes, I would simply perform my usual ritual: absorb as much as possible with a paper towel, clean with soda water and sprinkle with salt. The latter is what I had done that day.

Scenario in the kitchen as I’m getting dinner ready:

Harry: Suz, what’s the white on the rug?

Me: It’s salt… and then I went into my tirade about my dogs and how I handled it (see above)

Harry: Pause. …. All I did was ask you what was the white on the rug. I really didn’t want to hear all the rest of that.

Me: Harry, you ask the questions the way you want to ask them and I’ll answer them the way I want to answer them.
Not a very skillful response on my part... I had not yet integrated the different behavior styles and clearly Harry had no idea how to handle my approach either. Imagine how much better if, knowing that Harry was a High D (Dominant/Direct style – bottom line results, no extraneous talk) and that I am a High I (Influencing/Interacting style – expressive, loves to talk), it had gone like this:

Harry: Suz, what’s the white on the rug?

Suz: Salt. (period)

Harry: What does the salt do?

Suz: It picks up the urine. (period)

I would save my lengthy explanations for:

• Another High I (expressive, helps people feel good about themselves) who probably has an emotional story to tell me about some situation with a spouse, a co-worker, a child or a friend.

• High S (Steady, Stable – calm, best natural listeners) who might say: “That must be tough having two dogs ruining your wall to wall carpeting”.

• High C (Cautious, Conscientious – perfectionists, detail oriented) who might say: “I recently read in Eloise on page 67, paragraph 4, sentence 5 that a better way to handle this would be…”

How does the story turn out? Did I change my behavior with Harry? You bet. Did it work? You bet.

Barb told me that shortly after I was being more skillful with applying what I knew, Harry would say “Let’s ask Suz to…” That hadn’t happened before.

Whether we call it the Biblical law that we reap what we sow or the Universal law of cause and effect, both are in effect all of the time. If we change, the chances are very high that the other will change as well in response to our way of being.

**** Incidentally, Harry has told me I can tell this story ...as he says, like Dragnet, “Just the facts, ma’m, just the facts.”

As you study this module, you’ll see where the lesson is with this story.

Above All Remember: different equals different, it does not equal wrong!

Every style has its strengths; every style has areas to modify. Refer to the page Four Behavioral Tendencies that has more specifics on that.

As you and your client explore deeper:
You will see Descriptors in the following pages that will bring clarity to the different styles – whether high or low. We all operate out of all 4 styles but for most people, there will be a primary and a secondary style – that will show because you will score above the midline.

Any score below the line can be described by saying you can visit there but you don’t want to live there – i.e., you can modify your style to match another person’s style, if needed, but it’s not comfortable to stay there. For example if you have a client who is a Low C (meaning they don’t like
details) and they are working with a High C (who thrives on all the details, maps, graphs they can find) and needs to get a report to them, you, as their coach, can help them know that they will need to give more details than they might want to (or certainly need for themselves).

The pages on How to Communicate with the Different Styles and The Quick Sales Strategy Planner give very specific information.

Also of interest is the Work Behavioral Characteristics, which gives a compatibility chart. What this shows is, for example, two High D’s playing together are on the low end of good for Human Relations and only fair with Work Tasks. Why? Because two High D’s can get into power struggles, but when the territory is defined and there is mutual respect, there can be a higher degree of compatibility.

Two High I’s, in contrast can get along beautifully in Human Relations. Why? Because they’ll talk about what makes the world go around. But they can be poor with Work Tasks. Why? Because they’ll talk about what makes the world go around instead of getting the job done.

S’s and C’s tend to get along well both in Human Relations and Work Tasks.

This whole module is rich in possibilities for you to examine with your clients. Help them identify the style/s of the people they are having trouble with. There are several pages to help them with this. After they have identified the style, work with them on the pages of how to communicate with that style.

And finally, have them fill out the Personal Action Plan and What Did You Learn sections located at the end of this Module.
DISC Exercises
Part III: Guiding your group toward DISC

If you are coaching/leading a group, these exercises are both fun and insightful. Allow about 30 minutes if possible, though it can be done in 20.

**Exercise one:**
Get people in groups according to their DISC style, preferably with a flip chart/markers – i.e. all the D’s are together as are all the I’s, the S’s and C’s.

Say:
“In the next 3 minutes, write down all the positive characteristics that your style has.” (You can make this subject specific as in a team member, leader, friend). After 3 minutes. “Now, please circle the three that you think are the most important”.

Have them report out – look for differences and be light-hearted. Examples, the D’s are apt to have get results, fast pace, driven, (sometimes non-caring!) on their lists; the I’s are apt to have motivating, enthusiastic, make people feel good about themselves; The S’s are apt to have such words as patient, steady, good team player; the C’s may have do things right the first time, detail oriented, organized…

You can “ham it up”… “Do you see anything that says the High I’s are organized or that the S’s are driven or that the C’s are fast paced or that the D’s are patient? ” etc…It’s a real eye opener and again, stress that “Different equals different, it does not equal wrong.” We need each other – and every team needs every style or they will be missing an important contribution.

**Exercise two:**
Do the same as above, only this time, ask them to look for what they need to do situationally change/modify to be even more effective. I say “situationally” because we are not looking for huge changes, only to modify as appropriate. Examples that may be stated: D’s – be more patient; I’s – be more organized; S’s – take more risks; C’s – chill out. Again, look for the differences in each chart – have fun with it. And they will, too.

**Exercise three:**
Same groups, same exercise – this time, ask: “How do you want others to communicate with you?” Again notice the differences. Examples: D’s – get to the point – fast; I’s – be enthusiastic; S’s – show you care; C’s – make sure you can support your opinions with data.

**Exercise four: (if you have time)**
Ask them to draw a logo and create a slogan for their style.

All of the above will result in great enthusiasm as well as insights. Draw their attention to the Styles graph in the Guide – D’s and I’s have in common that they are both Fast Paced and Extroverts; C’s and S’s have in common that they are Slow Paced and Introverts; D’s and C’s are both Task Oriented; I’s and S’s are both Relationship Oriented. The styles that have nothing in common – and therefore, are apt to have more conflict – are a D and an S, and a C and an I.

**Ask:**
Do you now have a better understanding of the people you are having trouble relating with – and why? Discuss.
Although the above exercises are meant for groups, you can have a rich discussion just processing the aforementioned graph. For example, a primary/secondary D/C combination (quite common) that is task/task trying to be in a relationship with a primary/secondary I/S person (relationship/relationship) has its challenges.

Practically all coaching situations, whether personal or professional, have relationship issues. This information is rich in discovery.

**Story:**
(note: as with previous examples, feel free to use mine or substitute one of your own)

I have a client who is a High I/C combination (likes to talk and likes lots of details) who came to see me about her challenges with her boss. It was obvious to me that he was a High D (very results oriented, brusque, shut her off) and I explained the differences to her.

We were very fortunate in that he was willing to do an assessment – she had already done hers – and to meet with us.

After an hour, going over these differences with them, they came to a solution that, months later, is still working. And now her boss is not only supportive of my client, he wants to get her more involved with upper management.

The solution? She would only give him the executive summary, both in writing and in person. She would keep all the details in writing and filed so that she could access them if he needed them.

Both needs were met: his not to have his time wasted on what he thought were extraneous details; she that he acknowledged he had confidence in her, knowing that she had easy access to anything he needed. She would have been anxious if she couldn’t get all the details (High C) and he would have become (and had been) very impatient with having to listen to what was unimportant to him. And since she had everything in writing, she didn’t need to talk anymore about them unless he asked (which, PS, I don’t think he ever did).

Two assessments, one hour of debrief, a whole new relationship based on understanding— which has lasted.

**Ask:**
“What examples do you have to share?” And share some of your own.

Have fun!
Coaching to DISC

You will already have gone through the DISC styles so you are familiar with the differences. Knowing and appreciating that can be one of the most important skills you can have when you coach. Once you have integrated that information, it will come naturally for you to know that the way you will coach a High C (wanting and needing all the details and time to feel secure) is different from a High D (get to the point – fast), is different from a High I (wanting to talk, express feelings), is different from a High S (“if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”).

You will find that the pages with “Problems” on one side and “Solutions” on the other can be very helpful in determining what approach to take when coaching your client/s.

Refer back to the DISC module for more specifics about each style.

The section on “How to Coach and Esteem DISC Children” will have great interest for any of your client/s who have children. Recognizing that all children have strengths and encouraging your client/s to build on those strengths rather than to demean their weaknesses can make a huge difference.

It is my opinion that this information of the different behavior DISC styles should be available – and understood – by every teacher, every administrator and certainly, every parent.

These pages are meant for an added resource, you need not do any exercises with them. However, the opportunities are great for discussion: what do they most appreciate about their own children? What annoys them the most? Can they see how esteeming their children will not only raise their self-esteem but enhance their relationships as well?

**Story:**
Several years ago when I was a counselor and after I had gotten trained in the DISC model, I was struck by how helpful this information is for children as well as adults.

One of the students who came to see me was “Connie”. She had very low self-esteem; she had no friends, an abusive family. There was not very much in Connie’s life that was happy. Her teachers were exasperated with her because she was a perfectionist, very slow in getting her work done as a result. This, of course, only added to making her feel she wasn’t good enough or fast enough or smart enough.

Connie was a High C – which stands for Conscientious, Cautious, Complying to her own high standards. As such, she could not go on to Roman Numeral II until Roman Numeral I was perfect or Capital B until Capital A was perfect. You get the picture. Her teachers were excellent teachers, very well meaning. But how it could have helped her with some of the comments listed on “How to Coach and Esteem DISC Children”!
“Connie, you don’t need to be perfect. It’s OK to make mistakes. That’s how we learn.”

….as just one example.
Workplace Motivators

Although this module is the only one that is dependent upon an assessment, it is included because there can be some value in just recognizing that people not only have different behaviors, they also have different values.

Behaviors tell us **what** we do; values tell us **why** we do it. There are six major values:

- **Theoretical** – people who want to learn about a wide variety of subjects; they may not do anything with what they know, but they have a keen desire to keep discovering.

- **Utilitarian** – people who want a return on their investment whether it’s their time, money or energy. Usually the best sales people have a high utilitarian value.

- **Aesthetic** – people who are very aesthetic and often are interested in personal growth. Not all aesthetics are artists but probably most artists have a high aesthetic.

- **Individualistic** – people who want power. Having a high individualistic value gives extra strength to the other highest value they have.

- **Social** – people who want to make a difference in the world with their time and talents. Often teachers and social workers have high social values, for instance.

- **Traditionalists** – people who take a strong stand on issues such as politics, religion. They see such issues in black and white, not gray.

**Story:**
Usually, in my experience with Workplace Motivators/Values, Aesthetics is very low – and often the very lowest – of people’s values. This is true with the literally hundreds of managers who have gone through my Leadership Institute so I was very surprised when one manager had a very high Aesthetic. But when I inquired about why he thought that was the case, he responded that he had been a jeweler and designed jewelry before he became a manager in a storage company. Then it made sense.

**Ask:**
What values your clients have and how they have influenced their lives.
Communications

I have found that this Communications Module is one of the most important, most needed and most appreciated in this Guide. Over and over, I find that the issues my clients deal with most often boil down to poor communication – with a boss and/or peers and/or direct reports. This leads to poor relationships and unproductive results. If it isn’t at work, then communication is poor in their personal lives – again, poor relationships and poor results.

I have learned, developed and taught communications strategies and techniques since the 1970’s (from Dr. Thomas Gordon’s Parent Effectiveness Training, Teacher Effectiveness Training, Leadership Effectiveness Training, to Dr. William Glasser’s Reality Therapy). Much of the information I am including here helps you teach/coach your client/s in areas essential to building warm and workable relationships -

- listening so others will speak,
- speaking so others will listen,
- confronting effectively to express needs and not damage relationships
- resolving conflicts in a win/win not a win/lose way.

For some of you, this mini-treatise on communication components may be more than you want or need in your work with others at the moment. For others, you may decide to use it as a step-by-step guide or refer to particular sections as they become relevant in your coaching. As with anything in this Guide, take what works for you, leave the rest.

Use this introductory section to correspond with relevant pages in this Module. For example, if you are teaching Active Listening skills, take the suggestions on how to teach that section from here, and combine them with the text pages on listening in the Communications Module pages that follow.

There are also some extra pages for your client/s to fill out or to have discussions around that are self-evident. For example, the Listening Assessment page is one where your client will fill out their own assessment of their skills, and then you can have some discussion in pairs, small groups or as an overall group, looking for similarities, differences. It is my experience that this section works equally well for individuals as well as groups. All you need to do as the coach is change the language in the descriptions.
Page-by-Page Overview of Communications Module

(Because the page numbers of my guide typically change with each revision, I have titled each section below to correspond with the appropriately titled page in the Communications Module that follows; they are ordered in sequence, as the pages appear in the Module, for easier reference.)

Exercise: Communications – A helpful hint as you approach this exercise: consider the PEEST format (defined below). It helps keep you organized as the facilitator and can be adapted to every exercise and activity (role plays, paired or group) in this guide, if you choose.

PEEST

- **Purpose:** State clearly the objectives (what they will gain from the experience, how they will do the rules and roles everyone will follow)
- **End Results:** Tell them what you want them to be able to do or say
- **Example:** Do a dry run, a demonstration, or an example so they can see, hear, and feel what the activity looks like
- **Say:** Say it again, repeat it briefly
- **Time:** Time allotment and tracking – allow time and give them a tracking method.

Ask each participant to write ten words in response to a word you give them. For example, the current season. (Spring is particularly good – though do state that you’re talking about the word as a season, not a ‘spring in your step’ or a ‘spring in the door’). Have participants form groups of five or six. Ask group members how many words they think will be on all lists in their group (usually the estimate is between three and six), and then have one person read their list to see if there are any common words. After it has become apparent how few words are in common on that one list, have each member read their list to the group. Usually there will be no common words, or at most one or two; almost never is there one word common to a roomful of people.

**Discuss:**
What do these results mean? There are several appropriate answers, but most important is that each person has their own perception, their own unique picture of what a word means based on their own past experiences. Is it any wonder people do not communicate well when they do not even have the same perceptions of one word? Also, the 500 most commonly used words have 14,000 different meanings.

**Four Levels of Learning Development:**
Make the point that these four levels (listed below) apply to any skills – tennis, driving a car, for examples, but in this Module, you will apply them to learn critical communication skills:

- **Unconsciously unskilled:** if it’s true that “ignorance is bliss”, this is it! We just don’t/didn’t know how to do any better.

- **Consciously unskilled:** this is probably the hardest level of all as it’s very painful to know the mistakes we’ve made without even knowing it!

- **Consciously skilled:** here we know what to do but may feel like a phony since it’s a new skill and isn’t integrated into who we are yet.

- **Unconsciously skilled:** at this final level, we will still make mistakes at times but the difference is that we will know it right away and can correct them immediately.
Problem Ownership:
Refer to the diagram.

Ask for various scenarios from their work and ask the client/group to decide who owns the problem, i.e. whom does it most affect? What are cues and clues that you or others do have a problem?

Unacceptable behaviors of another might require confrontational skills, while another person’s problem might require good listening skills. If the problem is shared between two or more people, then its resolution will involve techniques for conflict resolution.

The goal is always, through good communication skills, to be able to identify problem ownership with the intent to expand the “No Problem” area, since that is the only area in which one can communicate with a natural give and take.

We will address skills for each of the areas – listening, confrontation and win/win problem solving.

Communication and behavior depend significantly on personal perceptions and environmental factors. Consider that behavior is defined only by what is seen (you could take a picture) or heard (you could tape record it) – not by what your perceptions are of the behavior.

Acceptable/Unacceptable Behaviors:
See diagram in this module and explain the three factors that determine whether a behavior is acceptable or unacceptable.

1. How do you feel about yourself? That will affect how we interact with others.

   Example:
   If you wake up feeling sick or you look in the mirror and know it’s a bad hair day, the chances are that you’re not going to feel as optimistic as on the days where you start off the day feeling “Yes!”

2. How do you feel about the other person/s? A behavior that is judged acceptable for one person may seem completely unacceptable for another. Some people are harder to get along with than others.

   Example:
   When I was a counselor, I noticed the same behavior would sometimes get entirely different reactions from teachers: “If Johnny does that one more time, I’m going to send him to the principal’s office” vs. “Isn’t it nice that Mary is finally coming out of her shell?” Same behavior, different students, different reactions.

3. How do you react to the environment? Some environments are more conducive to acceptable behavior; these are “feel-good” environments where people are generally at ease both with themselves and others.
Example:
Do you ever notice that you walk into one restaurant and you just like the atmosphere whereas another one, you may want to walk out as quickly as possible? Or this scenario where I witnessed a family of children: a little girl of about 4 or 5, picked up the napkin and asked “Mommy, what is this?” The mother was clearly embarrassed. Different environment - different experiences.

Ask for acceptable/unacceptable behaviors of others. Show how the position of the dividing line moves up and down the rectangle according to self, others, and environment.

Exercise: Twelve Roadblocks to Communication
(This exercise works best with a group) Ask each person to say “I feel chilly in this room.” Give them a “roadblock” answer (one of the twelve examples below), using their name as you do. Ham it up!

1. Orders: (name), stop thinking about the temperature and pay attention to me. Do you understand me?!!

2. Threats: If you don’t stop complaining about the cold, I’m going to ask you to leave. (Not that you may want to, but you’ll have no choice!)

3. Moralizing: You should be so grateful that your company is so environmentally conscious by keeping the room cool.

4. Logic: You may be interested that the latest research indicates that the optimum learning temperature is 68 degrees and it is exactly 68 degrees right now.

5. Advice: Let’s see …is there someone who can loan (name) a coat? Or at lunch, perhaps you can go out in the sun/in your car to get warm…

6. Criticizing: I want you to know I’ve had several whiners in my classes but you are the worst I have ever had, bar none!

7. Praising: You’re always so perfect; you never do anything wrong!

8. Name-Calling: Oh, so we have a Grandma (or Grandpa) Snowtoes in our midst. Isn’t that just so cool!

9. Reassurance: Oh, don’t worry, poor dear. Everything’s going to be just fine.

10. Analyzing: So… how’s your love life? Have you seen a shrink lately? I think you’ll find there’s a correlation between your love life and your metabolism and that’s what’s making you feel chilly.

11. Probing questions: So tell me what you did yesterday after work (or any such time). Stop and interrupt them every second with questions.

12. Ignoring: Oh well, cold hands, warm heart.
Discuss:
Which ones are the ones they use? Most will say all of them. Make the point that some of them are fine in the “No Problem” area but they are not fine when there is a problem. Participants will ask about advice (unsolicited usually equals unwanted!); reassurance (all right when you can be specific but general comments such as “everything will be just fine” are not), logic (again fine when in the no problem area but not fine when someone has a problem etc.). You can also ask “How do you feel when someone says you “shouldn’t” feel the way you do?”

Listening

Listening Assessment, Active Listening, A Model for Listening and Ten Skills for Good Listening: Refer to those pages in this section. Have your client/s take the Listening Assessment. How did they do? What are their strengths? Areas to work on?

Make sure they understand A Model for Listening. This is where they learn the specific skills of Listening and then moving on to Action – and where I have combined the models of listening (Dr. Thomas Gordon) and Action (Dr. William Glasser). I have found that the combination of the two is more effective than either one of them alone.

Exercise: Listening Activity
This is a good time, after discussing the skills and concepts, to practice with your group or client. Begin by role-playing a participant’s real-life problem, modeling the skills of active listening and reality therapy. If in a group, participants then role-play in triads of speaker, listener, and observer: speakers describe a frustrating situation at work; listeners actively listen and use reality therapy; observers watch how well the receiver uses these skills and note any roadblocks. Stop after five minutes, discuss the process, and then switch roles so that everyone has a chance to be a listener.

Discuss:
At the end of each round in the activity above, take time for feedback. First, the speaker gives feedback, then the observer, and finally the listener. Start with the speaker’s feedback first because they’re the one affected the most.

1. This is how you listened that worked well for me
2. It would have been even more helpful if you had…(i.e. stating what would have worked better, not what didn’t work)

Debrief:
Ask them the above questions followed by “What did you learn?”

Remember:
- Nonverbal language should match verbal messages.
- Thoughts and feelings as well as content should be addressed.
- Do not use the same phrase repeatedly to acknowledge the speaker’s words.
Discuss: Common Listening Errors
Have group members discuss the common listening errors shown in the diagram: analyzing, rushing, omitting, overshooting, undershooting, lagging, adding, and parroting. Are there any that they do? Awareness is the first step to change!

Ask your client/s to review the Listening Observer Sheet and the Iceberg Theory. They will serve to affirm the exercises and discussions you are already having.

Confrontation
Ask how “confrontable” are you? If someone is unhappy with you, whether personally or professionally, do they come directly to you so you can take care of their concerns or do they talk behind your back? How safe is it for them to share their thoughts and feelings with you?

A study done by an organization, TARP, in DC revealed that when a customer spends $100 or more and is unhappy with a product or service, 96% of people will say nothing to anyone who can do any good about it but will have something to say to between 11 and 15 people (in some industries, it’s much higher). And yet of the 4% who did express their feelings, between 54% – 70% were more loyal customers than ever before when the issue was handled well. (Those figures are not recent but my opinion is that they would be the same today).

Discuss:
This leads to some great discussion about confrontation. Share that usually there are two reasons that people don’t share their negative feelings:

1. they don’t want to hurt another’s feelings
2. they are afraid of the consequences

Ask for their experiences. Are they speaking up to their boss if they think something is unfair – or to their peers? What happens if they do? If they don’t?

Stress that open communication is key to good results and good relationships. If we don’t speak our truth authentically, the chances are we will get into one of the three: fight, flight, submit.

Problems that are owned by the speaker require an assertive form of communication best described as the Confrontive “I” message” (further explained in the next section, below). Confrontation is sometimes necessary to meet personal needs; however, it will not be effective unless it is undertaken in a manner that preserves the other person’s self-esteem and the relationship itself. In other words, successful confrontation avoids blaming statements; the person with the problem takes responsibility for their feelings about the situation and communicates their desire for change without alienating the other person.

Say It Directly: Effective Confrontation Using “I” Messages” Section
An “I message” is a confrontive statement that lets the other person know three things (explained below).

Effective confrontation is that which produces helpful change, preserves self-esteem, maintains the quality of the relationship and promotes independent problem-solving. It may be described as a three-part “I message”:
1. **Nonblameful description of behavior** – What specific behavior is causing the feelings? (Remember that a behavior is something you can either hear and/or see)

2. **Feelings.** Most people are not accustomed to declaring their own feelings and thereby taking responsibility for them. “I feel..” is a verbalization that can initiate successful confrontative problem solving.

Often people will say, “I feel angry.” However, anger is not a primary emotion; it is typically triggered by some other feeling, such as fear, rejection, embarrassment, or sadness. What really is the underlying feeling?

3. **Tangible effect of the behavior.** Many people do not realize that a specific behavior is causing problems for another person; they will probably remain completely unaware unless confronted with a statement of its effect.

**Exercise: “I” Messages**

Ask your client/s to develop three-part ““I” messages” first individually and if in a group, then in pairs and/or triads, switching so that everyone has an opportunity to practice. Components can be in any order – it doesn’t matter if someone starts with the behavior, the feelings or the effect.

My own personal preference is to start with the feelings since immediately I am conveying that I’m taking responsibility.

“‘I” messages” have the highest likelihood of promoting change, self-esteem, a solid relationship, and problem-solving. If the recipient of an “I message” responds defensively, shift to active listening, and then again confront. For example, saying, “You feel that’s unreasonable?” often will reduce the other’s defensiveness.

**Discuss:**

Anger and other feelings:

- Let the other person know how strongly you feel about the unacceptable effects of a behavior. It is more powerful when this person can see the direct result on you.
- The other person also has feelings, and can probably empathize with yours.
- Feelings need to be discharged, or the result will be unclear communication.
- Anger is not a primary emotion. It is triggered by another feeling such as fear, hurt, embarrassment, frustration, or rejection.
- It helps to identify and express the primary feeling. People tend to reduce their “feeling vocabulary” to mad, bad, glad and sad; thinking more specifically can reveal the real feelings behind a problem.

“I” messages have many advantages. First, others cannot argue with how you are feeling. Also, an “I” message lets someone know the cause and effect of a behavior. People do not want to be disliked; they are engaging in unacceptable behavior simply because it meets their needs. Expressing
your needs gives them the opportunity to help you out, and it establishes a model for honesty and openness. Importantly, it helps you identify the real problem.

What are their thoughts about anger not being a primary emotion? What do they think may underly some of their angry feelings?

**Story:**
I will always remember the following incident: a woman who had been in my classes and had always been very friendly, all of a sudden was becoming quite cool. The dialogue went something like this:

Me: Jean (not real name), I have the sense you are upset with me.

Jean: No, no. I’m fine.

Me: (persisting) – It just seems to me that you’ve been cooler lately and I haven’t understood why... (This dialogue continued for another minute ....and then...)

Jean: (very tentatively)... well, I heard you say a disparaging remark about a handicapped person.

Me: (shocked ... that is absolutely not in any level of my consciousness to do that). Tell me more – when and where did I say that?

Jean: I can’t believe you’re asking me to say something about you that is negative.

Me: I’m a believer that I can’t deal with what I don’t know about. Please, what else?

More clarification as the conversation continued with her continuing to say “I can’t believe you want me to keep talking about something negative.”

What actually happened: she was in the beginning stages of MS and very self-conscious about the outward symptoms that were now showing. Because of this, probably, or least partly because of this, she was ultra-sensitive. After she told me the when/where/how this conversation allegedly took place, I could tell her exactly what I had said which wasn’t even close to what she thought she had heard.

The next morning: Jean arrived with a big bouquet of pink roses and a hug, thanking me for pursuing her non-verbal behavior and later, her words, to come to the conclusion we did. “I am so relieved – it seemed so unlike you to say what I thought you had.”

If I had not pursued my perception of her coolness, I would never have known why she was upset and she would always have had the perception that I was prejudiced towards handicapped people.

The moral of the story: what do you think?
Appreciative “I” Messages and Preventive “I” Messages Section

Exercise: Appreciation “I” Messages
Ask people to think of 5 things that others have done that they have appreciated in the last week or so – a few at work, a couple at home. Or, if they are a manager/supervisor, things they have observed others doing for each other. Then ask: how many of you who have written down at least five situations, can say, other than a perfunctory “thank you”, that you have affirmed every person on your list to let them know you have appreciated what they have done? Almost never has anyone affirmed all five. It’s never too late.

Isn’t it interesting that we so often try and get positive results with negative conditioning? Fear will never work as a long time motivator.

Study of Interest:
There is a study that was conducted with a pike fish in an aquarium, surrounded my minnows that were the source of his food. At one point, they put a shield between the pike fish and the minnows; the pike kept hitting its head against the shield, trying to get to the minnows. At the point that the pike gave up trying, they lifted the shield so that the minnows were swimming around the pike once again but the pike was so conditioned not to eat the fish that it ended up starving to death.

Discuss:
What is the meaning of the study? Teach the point that how often do people emotionally starve to death because they don’t have the support they need?

Discuss:
What Motivates the Worker Grid

Note the difference of how workers and managers rated the importance of appreciation. Surprised? Why or why not? How do these results compare to their own work place? I have watched this study over decades and the results always make the same point – most people do not feel appreciated at work. What could they do to make others feel appreciated?

Discuss: Preventive “I” Messages:
How much conflict can be prevented with letting someone know ahead of time what is needed (i.e. “I need to have the report in on Friday at 3 pm” (spoken in the beginning of the week, for instance” or “I’d like to have your rooms picked up by tomorrow noon.”).

When confrontive “I” messages” are ignored, there is conflict. Conflicts are inevitable in any close relationship; unresolved conflicts are destructive but effective conflict resolution can strengthen and facilitate growth in the relationship.
Discuss: the four reasons that “I” messages are ignored:
1. the other person doesn’t care – relationship repair needed
2. it’s a disguised “You Message” …(I feel you’re a jerk!)
3. the other person doesn’t “buy” the effects you are saying you’re having
4. the other person’s need to get their needs met are as strong or stronger than yours

Discuss:
What do you think are the causes of the conflicts you have? Do you think they are because of behavior style differences?

Win/Win Conflict Resolution

Discuss:
Control/Power Diagram.

The more control/power we pull, the less influence we have. Who do you want to follow that you resent?

Ask:
How many of you like to lose? No one!

Story:
After asking this question literally thousands of times and having everyone acknowledge that they didn’t like to lose, I was in for a surprise. One man raised his hand.

Me: So you don’t mind losing?

He: No, I love to play tennis, I love the exercise and I don’t care if I win or lose.

Me: Ok, so I hear that you’re not competitive in tennis and maybe not in other sports as well, but let me ask you: if someone pulls power on you and makes you do something you don’t want to do, how do you feel?

He: Oh, I hate that.

My record stands even now, after tens of thousands of people answering that question. No one likes to lose but how often are we put – or do we put others – in a losing situation?

Discuss: Authoritarian, Submissive, Negotiation Methods of Resolving Conflict

Authoritarian “I win/You Lose” Method
This method may work short-term but only at the expense of self-esteem and the relationship. People do not like to have power and control exerted over them. The authoritarian technique usually causes the power-user to feel guilty; moreover, this person is apt to be avoided or disliked, and he must take on the unpleasant role of enforcer.

Submissive “You Win/I Lose” Method
People who may outwardly submit are inwardly subject to migraine headaches, ulcers, and deep anger. As a result, they usually do only what is demanded, and work only for rewards. Their needs are not met, and they feel resentful. Loss of self-respect is accompanied by a feeling of failure. The “loser” may want to retaliate, and he certainly will grow to dislike and resent the “winner”.

6.x © 2007 Creative Communications Center.
Mutually Beneficial “I Win/You Win” Method

This method is far preferable to these two traditional approaches because both sides get their needs met. This method attempts to answer the following questions: What are your needs? What are my needs? How can we resolve the situation to meet both sets of needs? In win/win conflict resolution, it does not matter who has the power because the goal is mutual satisfaction.

Ask for examples of conflict and then discuss the second set of diagrams in the Guide: Authoritarian, Submissive, Negotiation. Note which ones cause resentment, which ones result in respect. Why is that? What examples do they have?

Discuss: Win/Win Checklist

The steps for win/win conflict resolutions may seem time-consuming, but in fact the technique can save time in the long run. Go over each step with your client/s. The hardest ones, by far, are not to evaluate as you go along and not to jump to solutions before thoroughly brainstorming all possibilities.

Exercise: Win/Win Conflict Resolution

Role play or use as an example of confrontation that has led to conflict. The one I use is someone who is consistently late to Monday morning 8 am meetings. Give confrontive I message such as “I feel frustrated (feelings) when you are consistently late for meetings (behavior) because it holds up the whole meeting. (tangible effect.) Then, using the steps in the Win/Win Checklist, go on to a resolution.

Advantages of Win/Win Conflict Resolution List:

Additional advantages to those in the Guide:

- Win/Win deals directly with the issue, rather than focusing on peripheral symptoms of the problem.
- Win/Win eliminates resentment by giving everybody a part in the decision-making process.
- Win/Win conflict resolution is a motivator because people who have helped develop a solution are more willing to implement it.
- Win/Win technique is very creative and is very democratic. People are encouraged to be imaginative; to exceed the traditional boundaries placed on decision-making. Creativity and the absence of any manipulative power play combine to promote an atmosphere of warm feelings which in turn fosters further exchange of ideas.

Conflicts are inevitable, but resolving them in a healthy way can improve relationships. Often a relationship is better after a conflict has been resolved in a mutually satisfying way than it would have had that conflict never occurred. Thus, conflicts can be very positive.
Resolving Values Collisions

Go over the options from least risk to the relationship to most risk to the relationship. If we have the power, we can pull it but at a real risk to the relationship. The strongest way to influence someone is by modeling the behavior. If you say you value honesty, don’t talk about cheating on your income taxes – or do it for that matter.

“What you say, what you do, who you are influences others in ways you may never know. Your influence, like your shadow, extends where you may never be.”

Discuss:
Ask what’s more important, the value or the relationship? If it’s the value over and over again, it will affect the relationship. This is a wonderful opportunity for some in-depth discussion.

Discuss that the difference between a conflict of needs and a conflict of values is that in the latter, there is no tangible effect. You don’t like it because you don’t like it and therefore, others are less apt to want to change. How many of us want to change just because someone wants us to if we can’t see how our behavior is affecting them?

Example:
You may disapprove of someone’s life style outside of work but unless it affects you tangibly in the workplace, it is a conflict of values.

Conflict of values are much harder to resolve than conflict of needs because of that difference.

Team Feedback Form:
If you’re working with a team, utilize the form that follows. This can be very effective in building warm and collaborative relationships in a very skillful manner.

Principles of Angeles Arrien from The Four Fold Way:
Communication is a skill and as such requires practice. Changing distinctive ways of behaving is difficult but possible. Success requires motivation and commitment to improve relationships. This means that people must make an effort to identify and acknowledge their true needs and problems.

Angeles Arrien is one of the most amazing women I have ever met; she is one of my mentors and I share with you her Principles that, in my experience with my clients (and myself!), greatly enhance communications and relationships.

Angeles was brought up in the Basque community; her father was chief of the community and, as eldest, it was passed down to her. She has to go out in the wilderness by herself three times; the first time was at the age of seventeen for one year as a rite of passage. And I thought I was brave to go on a vision quest, under her tutelage, for 4 days and 3 nights!

Discuss:
Ask for your client/s thoughts about the Principles. Would their communications be better if they lived them? How?

“Ohly with the heart can one see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye.”

The final pages – What Did You Learn and Action Planning Worksheet are standard for all Modules. Use these to help your client secure their learning and continue to progress.
Final Communications Quiz

I developed this survey for a training I did with hospital secretaries. Feel free to use/modify it if you think it would be useful. Answers are on the next page.

Which is the most appropriate skill for each of the following situations?

a. active listening
b. “I” message
c. win/win conflict resolution

1. You are having a break in a no-smoking area of your building and you find a co-worker there smoking. You feel strongly that you should not have to put up with this infringement.

2. A coworker tells you she is feeling depressed for personal reasons and she can’t concentrate on her work.

3. You have to share office space. You feel that your coworker has more space and you’ve told her of your displeasure. She’s ignored your concerns and has not offered to share any of her space with you. You feel it’s unfair.

4. Your boss loads extra work on you at 4:30, telling you he needs you to stay after hours to get it done. You need to leave promptly at 5:00 because you are expecting out-of-town guests.

5. Your boss comes to work visibly upset by her workload that day. She has just received an important call that is going to put her way behind schedule.

6. A coworker keeps interrupting you during the day. You don’t have the time to chat with him and still get your work done.

7. You keep getting calls from a customer because your secretary has not returned his calls. What skill would you use with the customer? With the secretary?

8. Your boss says he needs the conference room at 10:00 on Tuesday morning. When you call to sign up for the room, you are told the room is already reserved for a volunteer organization.

9. You have been so overloaded with work that you have not taken any time for lunches or coffee breaks for two weeks. What skill would you use with your boss?

10. A coworker tells you she is being transferred to another department. She sees it as a step down for her, both in status as well as financially.
Answer Key
1. b
2. a
3. c
4. c
5. a
6. b
7. a,b
8. c
9. b
10. a
Time Management

Does anyone ever feel there’s enough time in their day to accomplish all they want and need to do? Not just what they want to do but what they need to do?

In this day and age of so many people having more than one job, whether it’s a man having a day job as well as a night job to make ends meet, or a woman who works a full day and then comes home to a full roster of family responsibilities until she finally falls into bed, exhausted – and often wakes up feeling almost as exhausted – there never seems to be enough time. Where are the 24 hours?!

There is a correlation, I believe, between time management and stress management. The two are inter-related. The more we can get control of our time, the less stress we will feel. The more we can get in control of our stressors, the more control we will have with our time.

This module begins with Personal Time Management: Behavior Continuums which correlates time management with DISC styles. For example, High I’s tend to be the most disorganized and have the greatest challenges with time deadlines. On the other hand, High C’s tend to be the best. You can see the various categories and where the DISC styles correspond to each one of them.

In addition, there are several pages on Tips for Managing Common Time Wasters which includes many helpful tips for any time management problem. For most people, time management is usually not a matter of not knowing what to do – it’s a matter of not doing what is needed to have control of time.

Top 10 Most Important Tasks, Tasks or Relationships That Needs Higher Priority are two forms which can be helpful in writing down needed actions and, in order to do that, to recognize what priorities are. One of my favorites is the page divided into four sections: Urgent/Important; Not Urgent, Important; Urgent Not Important; Not Urgent/Not Important.

I am also including another of my favorite forms – Daily AM/PM Questions – that my own business coach, Mark LeBlanc, (Small Business Success) created. He maintains – and I agree – that starting our day writing down the top three priorities of that day, and checking at the end of the day to see if they were accomplished, is the most important tool for success that he knows.

My own experience with it is that it keeps me focused and I like having a feeling of accomplishment – checking off the priorities that I have completed at the end of the day (and I don’t like it when I haven’t). An important point: at the end of the day, set the meter back to zero. The next day is a new day.
Ask:
What are your client/s time management challenges: Procrastination? Distractions? Multi-tasking? (mine). Suggest they read the corresponding information and tips and check which ones are pertinent for them.

Discuss:
What are their strengths in dealing with their time? What are their obstacles? How can they overcome them?

As always, have them fill in their Action Plan and review what steps they are going to take to manage their time – and not have their time manage them!
Stress Management

Is there anyone who isn’t dealing with stress these days? I don’t think I know anyone who isn’t, and the chances are very good that the people you coach are just trying to keep as even a keel as possible in their every day lives. Many people are doing all they can just to make ends meet financially, sometimes working two or three jobs; many are trying to balance home and work lives and not feeling they’re doing a very good job; many are dealing with relationship problems. Many are dealing with feeling they’re not enough – period.

This module is meant for you, as the coach, to review the various exercises and/or ask your client to determine which ones would be most meaningful for them.

The Energy Blockers are often an eye opener for people as they acknowledge, sometimes for the first time, the negative messages they give themselves. Encourage them to replace them with positive ones. Our subconscious mind is like a computer that says “yes” to everything we say. You can have them practice saying, “YES!” to positive messages! Suggest that they put a rubber band on their wrist and that they tweak it every time they give themselves an Energy Blocker.

What Do I Value? is a very significant exercise for many reasons. One of the best ways to reduce stress is to do things we love to do. Writing down 10 things that brings them the most enjoyment in their lives and answering the questions that follow, helps them see for themselves whether or not they are actually doing the things that bring them pleasure. In addition, often it’s an eye opener for many to see that the things they love to do often don’t cost very much money. It is also interesting for some to see whether or not they modeled after either parent with their top ten. This is a great exercise either individually or to share in groups after filling out themselves….

What was such an eye-opener for me – and a good one – was that the 5 things I love to do the most cost little if any money.

The Simplification Exercises speak for themselves. So often, people say they want to simplify their lives but they don’t take any steps to make that happen – here is the opportunity to put thoughts to pen, pen to paper, paper to action. It might be such things as accepting that the house doesn’t have to be immaculate; not checking email over the weekend; having family dinners on a regular basis. (A study has shown that the most significant success factor for teenagers/early adults was having a family dinner together). It means looking at priorities to simplify, and then taking action – or deliberate non-action to “walk the talk”.

© 2007 Creative Communications Center.
Play Your Winners Exercise is another stress reducer. It is a well known fact that one of the best ways to beat stress – and depression – is to surround ourselves with positive conditions – people, environment, work, activities. It will take years off our lives.

Supporters and Confronters in our lives are important. For all the reasons already mentioned, we need positive influences. At the same time, we need people who are willing to be honest with us in a loving, caring way. They are often our “reality checkers”. As Ken Keyes states in his book, The Handbook to Higher Consciousness, everyone in our lives is either a lover or a teacher. The lovers are easy to be with – the best of us comes out with them and we like being around them. The teachers may hit some raw edges but this is how we grow. With these two graphics, the idea is that the more influence they have, the closer they are to the center.

Strategies for Coping with Stress is a list of some proven methods to reduce stress. Ask your client/s which ones they already do, that they would be willing to try. Add some new ones.

Example:
One of my personal favorites? An adaptation of “Will it matter a year from now?” That one came from my brother. I have factored it down to “Is this really going to matter a week from now? A day from now?” And if the answer is “no”, then I tell myself to chill out. I find this very helpful when a flight is delayed significantly or cancelled, or the plane is sitting on the runway for quite a while. Since I travel a lot, this is very helpful for me and I can literally feel my body relax.

Empowering Yourself and Others is a form you can use to help your client look at ways they may be holding themselves back, what they need to do to change and become more empowered. It is also a good exercise for partners.

Develop a Supportive Culture is taken from a course that I co-authored with Bernie Linnartz. It was designed initially for teachers but, as you can see, is appropriate for any environment. The point is that the environment is important. What can they do to make it a supportive, nurturing, and healthy – physically and emotionally – place to be? At home? At work? A home that is picked up (not immaculate but one that doesn’t feel chaotic), flowers perhaps, happy people who listen and support each other – and have fun! A workplace that represents what’s important – pictures/plaques are on the wall or desk that are representative of that, high morale, employees from the CEO to the janitor enjoying each other and showing interest and caring for each other.

Ask:
for their examples.

Helping people reduce their stress is a great contribution to make as a coach! Share your own experiences, ask for theirs and as, always, ask, “What did you learn?” and have them fill out their Action Plan.
Vision – Mission – Values

Vision

“The vision is a future focus, and enables the leader to rise above the mediocre and to stay centered on a possible and desirable future state. By definition, a vision is always farther out on the horizon than you can grasp. It is something to strive for. Though it is not here now, it quite possibly is the way things could be...The vision is a dream, an ideal future, a lofty mental picture that engages the spirit! It comes from the heart, not the head. The vision doesn’t have to be practical. It can be pious and idealistic.”

– Elizabeth Jeffries, The Heart of Leadership

It is important that any organization, any team, any department, even any individual, know what their Vision, Mission and Values are. Why? Because if those three are all in place, it will be a good check to make sure that goals, actions and attitudes are in alignment with them.

Story:
Many years ago, I received a call from a CEO of a company who told me that his company was in dire straights. He said that 1/3 of his employees were leaving, 1/3 had recently been hired and the 1/3 in the middle he thought would leave soon as well. Morale was at an all-time low.

When I asked him if he had a vision for his company, and whether everyone in the organization knew it if he did; he was quiet. He had never considered one, as it turned out.

“So, in other words, when you hire someone, they don’t know what your vision is and whether they will fit in with that vision, is that right?”

“Yes, I guess it is.

“And then, you don’t know if any new hire will be a good fit for them or for your company, either…?”

The above conversation was an eye-opener for the CEO and he intended to take action to have his company have a vision, mission and values so that in the future, his hiring would be more effective – and the morale would be much higher.

Note the Pyramid that shows the importance of alignment of Vision, Mission, Values, Goals, Actions and Attitudes. How is it in their company? Where are they in alignment? Not in alignment?

Draw their attention to the Three Arrows: Without Vision/Alignment; With Vision/Alignment; Empowered Vision/Alignment. Can they plot their alignment or misalignment where they now work or with a former place of work?
Ask:
As you look at the three arrows, representing different teams (or companies/departments), which one do you think will have the most conflict? Most people will think it’s the top one where arrows are going in all directions. It’s possible that would be true.

However, equally possible, if not more so, would be that organization might have people just going off in their own directions, not paying attention to others, everyone leaving everyone else alone.

The arrow that represents the most conflict is the bottom one where people not only are going in the same direction, they are empowered in doing so. There might be a lot of conflict, but the difference would be that any conflict would be positive – i.e. looking at what actions would most help them achieve their vision. There would not be the pettiness that would be more apt to happen with the top arrow. The middle arrow represents a team that would be better than the scattered arrow but not as empowered as the bottom one.

Go over the pages of Sample Vision Statements from a variety of companies and ask for your client/s input. Which ones did they relate to the most? The least? Why?

Encourage your client/s to answer Some Visioning Questions to Ask. This is excellent both for individuals as well as for teams to complete for reflection and can be helpful as a preparation for writing their own vision statements for their team/organization. - and for their own Personal Vision.

If your client/s are managers or other leaders, suggest that they write their own first, then take it to their team and ask for feedback. Suggest that everyone do the exercise first alone and then together, they can create a shared team vision.

Ask them to then write their own Personal Vision. Is it in alignment with their Team Vision? Stress the importance of this alignment.

Share with each other – can do pairs first, giving each other feedback and/or as a group. Finish with sharing as a group.

And if you are doing this with an individual client, you can process their discoveries with them as well.

Mission

“Your vision, any vision, is best supported by a mission, often expressed as a statement. A mission statement is a general description of why an organization, team or individual exists. Like the vision, it is based on passion, forward thinking and service. The difference is that the mission statement serves as an expression of a vision. A mission statement usually involves making an impact in some way. The mission statement expresses your vision in terms that others can easily understand and follow. It can be composed of high-minded language or simple terminology.”

– Author unknown

Next discuss Mission. Explain that the Vision is the big picture; the Mission takes the vision and makes an action statement from it that defines how you operate. You can lead them through the process of making a Mission Statement. The four questions to review with them are:
1. Who are you?
2. What do you do?
3. Who do you serve?
4. Why are you here?

Having this structure helps them to put together a good statement.

Debrief as above.

Go over page that has Vision (what you wrap your heart around), Mission (what you wrap your mind around), Goals (what you wrap your hands around).

Discuss what that means to them.

Values

Values are defined by Webster’s Dictionary as “a principal, standard or quality considered inherently worthwhile or desirable.” The root for value is valor, which means strength. Values are sources of strengths, because they give people the power to take action. Values are deep and emotional and often difficult to change.

The Vision and Mission would not be complete without Values. Values are where we live. If we go outside our values, it will cause incongruence and if not immediately, it will cause us stress and discomfort over time.

It is important in this section to have your client/s not only come up with their values but equally important that there is a behavior to go with each value.

Values and Behaviors should be congruent.

Example: Value – team spirit. Behavior – employees support each other with words and actions.

This can be done individually, in pairs or as a group.

Ask:

How would you know that your team/organization has a particular value? Make the point: if you really want to know what someone values, look at their behavior.

As with all modules, have client/s complete this module with their Action Plan.
Vision to Reality

In this section the client/s states what concrete steps they need to take to have their vision become their reality.

Begin by having them fill out the “Where’s the Gap Between Vision and Reality?” Ask them to do it both for their personal life and their work life – work goes home with us and home goes to work with us so seeing the similarities and differences can be quite enlightening.

This is a very insightful exercise because as you walk them through it, they see their obstacles in achieving their vision – and they recognize that they have the power to overcome them.

Example:
In my workshops, I often find that people are stunned to see that they have far more power over their life than they had realized – most of the obstacles can be overcome. This is a time when the Serenity Prayer is appropriate – to change what we can, to accept what we can’t and the wisdom to know the difference. Recognizing the power in being able to close the gap between our vision and our reality is just that – empowering.

The questions following this exercise are excellent for debriefing whether with an individual client or in small groups.

Debrief.

Ask:
What did you learn? Any surprises? What are your obstacles? How can you deal with those obstacles? What skills will you use to deal with each step in the process?

The next pages are done individually.

Start with having them:

1. Write down ten things they want to achieve to reach their vision. That’s step one. The next step is very unique – ask:
   a. What knowledge/skills and relationships do you need to achieve them?
   b. What would your life look like if you could have it?
   c. If you could have it, would you take it with all the consequences that may occur? Often it is easy to write down what you want; however, asking the question – if you could have it with all the consequences it might bring – puts the reality to it. For example: someone may think they want to make more money but if that would mean a second job with less family time, they might change their mind.
2. Your client will have the opportunity to put a time line to these ten steps with their action plan if they choose to do so.

Story:
Many years ago, I received a letter from a woman who had been in one of my classes. She lived in New Hampshire and wrote her letter while visiting San Francisco. The reason? She wanted me to know that she had gone through the vision process in the class the year before and had achieved all ten of her visions. They were not easy visions to achieve but she said using the above process had helped her become clear on what she wanted – and to be focused on making sure her choices and actions supported her vision. I saw her recently and she said that ten years later, all of her long-term visions continued to manifest – and what she has added since has become reality as well.

It shows what’s possible! And probable if we believe. As Henry James said: “Whatever we believe, we can achieve.”

Ask:
if they have an example to share.

The next pages are excellent for retrospection. They can be done at any time during the coaching process and are meant for you to work individually with each client to help them be clear about their vision and their current reality – and, importantly, do they want /are they willing to change their current reality and do whatever it takes to close the gap? It’s often human nature for people to want to stay with their familiar and not to risk anything new that would mean they have to go out of their comfort zone.

This gives your client/s the opportunity to look at the knowledge they need to have, the skills they need to acquire and the relationships they need to acquire for their vision to become their reality. They then take their Vision Statements and write them as an affirmation.

This leads them to Specific Goals to Create the Vision and an Action Plan that supports their goals and vision. And finally to Accountability: Milestones, Resources and People, a crucial final step to put all the pieces together.

This is one of the most powerful modules in the Essentials of Coaching Guide, in my experience, because it gives people the opportunity to look at their priorities at a very deep level – and if they are being congruent with what they say and what they do. As their coach, you have the opportunity to lead them through this powerful process.

And I really had the opportunity to see where my priorities are when recently I had to make a choice between quite a lot of income and attending my granddaughter Brit’s high school graduation. It didn’t take many moments to decide – yes, Brit’s graduation.

As I mention in the Values section of Vision – Mission – Values: if you want to know what someone values, look at their behavior.
Story:
Several years ago I went to a workshop where this subject was being discussed. The leader drew a right angle with a thin line going up the middle. The thin line represented our comfort zone, where we felt familiar, safe. Everything outside of the thin line was the unknown and by virtue of being unknown, the chances are that it was scary.

The leader then went on to say that if we would just take baby steps out of our comfort zone, then little by little, that thin line would get thicker and thicker – he demonstrated this by putting little arrows from our comfort line into the unknown so that pretty soon, it was no longer a thin line but a very thick one. And what had felt risky now felt safe.

Why did that mean so much to me? Because of a traumatic experience I had in high school that rendered me totally unable to speak in public – and now I make my living speaking.

To read the whole story, go to my website www.adifference.com and read About Susan Hastings.

Your opportunity is to help them feel safe as they take some risks – as the saying goes “Nothing ventured, nothing gained”.

Review the knowledge/skills and relationships they need to achieve their vision; this will help prepare them to write their goals.

Encourage them to do their Action Plan, and again, go over it with them.
Goal Setting

Now it’s time to put it all together.

1. Have your client/s read the **Principles of Manifestation: Creative Thought and Mental Clearing**

2. Ask them what they think and believe about this process. Skeptics? Believers?

3. Have your client/s read the **Principle of Vision, Visualizations and Affirmations**. For those who believe that we create our own reality (or have a large impact in doing so), who believe in the power of Visualizations and Affirmations, these pages will speak to them. And if they don’t, again encourage them to be open and see what results they get.

4. Ask if anyone can give an example of manifestation using the power of thought/ visualization/affirmation success – and share one of your own if you do. Or you can refer to my own example of ideal weight in the 7 C’s or Jeff’s and another of mine (below).

**Story:**

At the Olympics in 1984 in Sarajevo, my 25-year-old son, Jeff, was competing in ski jumping. There had been tremendous media hype about him preceding this event and he was feeling enormous pressure. Calls from top magazines were becoming routine for interviews. He was captain of the ski jumping team; he was the top US ski jumper. The stakes were high; would he win the gold!

When the day of the 90-meter competition, he was 15th after the first round – he was certainly not where he wanted to be. On the second and final jump, he stood at the starting gate as they announced his name “Jeff Hastings, United States of America!” And then he disappeared. Where had he gone? He had to jump within 20 seconds, why had he left the starting gate?

And then he appeared and flew like a bird – a beautiful jump. When I asked him why he had disappeared, he said, “I knew I wasn’t ready to jump, so I withdrew for a few seconds. I visualized what it was like when I had won the World Cup last week, how I felt, and the way my body moved…. And once I could feel it, I jumped.” And jump he did, coming in fourth just 7 tenths of a point from the bronze medallist. In fact, the next day, the chief of the hill told him his distance had been miss-marked and he should have won a medal. His response was so Jeff: “That’s perfect for my personality – who will ever remember who was the 4th ski jumper in the Sarajevo Olympics?” We will.

Visualizing made him succeed. Not only in that moment but that success has led him to later being the National/Olympic Coach for the US Ski Jumping Nordic Combined Team – and he has been the ski jumper color analyst/announcer for all Olympics since he competed.

Visualizations? Affirmations? They work.

© 2007 Creative Communications Center.
Discuss:
Go over those pages with your client/s. It is rich for deep thought and discussion.

Story:
In 1984, I had the opportunity to put the power of thought together with visualization and affirmation. How? By walking on hot coals. Why in the world would I, a seemingly sane person, put myself at risk by walking on hot coals of 1300 degrees – when the temperature of the hottest iron or stove is 700-900 degrees?! Why? Because I did and do believe in the power of thought and prayer but I had never put my safety on the line. I wanted – and was ready – to do just that.

I attended Tony Robbins’ Mind Revolution in Bolton Valley, Vermont (I mention this workshop in the 7 C’s as well because of the body language skills) and there, after just a short time of getting ready – looking up and visualizing the sky; (see) affirming “Cool Grass” under my feet (hear) and energetically empowering myself (feel), off I walked. It was so easy that I thought, “Bring on the water next”…

It was the amazing depth of this experience that made me decide to become certified in NeuroLinguisticProgramming, a very powerful communication model. I went to Arizona and this time walked 40 feet on mesquite wood which, they told us, was 2600 degrees.

What’s the point you may ask? As Tony affirmed, if we can walk on hot coals, what can’t we do?! It’s our limiting beliefs that hold us back. This experience proved that point for me – the power of thought/belief combined with visualization (what we see), affirmation (what we say) and energetic breathing (what we feel) is powerful beyond our wildest dreams.


What is their Vision? Their Mission? Their Values? What actions do they need to take? What skills do they need to have/learn? All of them have been covered in other modules but this is the first opportunity to put it all together in one place – their final Goal Setting.

Note the circle in The Goal Setting Process – the 4 W’s. The Belief (Vision)/Where leads to Commitment (Mission/Values)/Why leads to Goals/What leads to Actions/What, which comes full circle again to Belief.

Debrief the above. What insights do they have? Did they learn anything new that they would be willing to try and/or look at differently?

Ask them to fill out their Goal Setting Process pages. After they have done that, review results

Ask them:
1. What are the results you want?
2. Are you willing to pay the price?
3. What are the pluses?
4. What are the negatives?
5. Do the plusses outweigh the negatives?
6. How will you measure your goals?
7. How will you know if you have been successful?
Go over the Key Elements of a Goal Statement – the SMART goal:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-specific

Exercise:
After they have gone through the process of writing their goals on the designated pages, have them get in pairs and have them coach and give feedback on each other’s goals, using the Action Plan Questions and the Questions for Coaching to bring it all together.

If you are coaching individually, you can go over those pages with them.

Debrief as a group. What did they learn? Insights? What visualizations/affirmations could they integrate into their days?

Celebrate!
Whether you are working with a group or with individuals, take time to honor their hard work, their insights and their courageous “aha”’s. What was most meaningful for them? Their proudest moment? What, if anything will they do differently? Have them stand and acknowledge any of the above. Everyone else (or just you) claps wildly in support of course!

A suggestion for celebration: have them create a collage of their vision and share with the rest of the group or just with you if individually coaching. And/or ask them what would have meaning for them to celebrate.

This can be a momentous moment. Make the most of it.