

## Newsletter: Bringing the Inside Out

July 2006

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### Coaching: Change your Life

Everything in this world once started with a single thought. What does that mean? Look at your environment right now. Every thing in this room was once an idea in someone's mind. How many times have you looked at something and wondered "why didn't I think of that?" (or "I thought of that, too bad I didn't do anything about it!")

Any time we don't like something that is going on in our lives, we can acknowledge that we have control over the thoughts that occur around past and present experiences. We can also accept that the way we view our past experiences or thoughts may direct the way we perceive the present and the future. Once we understand that we have created how we look at everything in our life (both positive and negative) we have the power to design our destiny by directing our thoughts the way wish them to go.

It is critical to remember that thought is energy. One theory is that when we think a thought, it is projected into the universe at certain rate of vibration. Because "like attracts like", energy of the same vibration is attracted to the energy that you put out there according to a universal "Law of Attraction". That is why if you are depressed or viewing the world through negativity, you will discover the worst in everything. Conversely, optimists find the best in all their experiences.

It is also important to remember that a thought, powerful as it is, is just a thought. They are flexible and we may ponder them for a while, mulling them over and then decide what to do with them. The power is ours to do whatever we want with our thoughts. We can discard them, change them, act upon them or create with them. The choice is ours to make whatever out of our thoughts that we desire. Dream big.

Napoleon Hill, in his famous book "Think and Grow Rich" states that "thoughts are things" and that "whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, he will achieve". You can be an achiever. Think well and you will grow rich.

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## Employee Appraisal and Feedback Models:

This article is about appraisal and feedback models using an employer-employee relationship example. However, giving feedback is one of the tools of an effective leader. If you are leading in a situation that is not an employer-employee relationship, understanding of these systems and tools can still be useful and adapted to other situations as well.

Many employers never give formal feedback to their employees. In small companies with just a few employees, it seems bulky and inefficient when all you are trying to do is get the work done. However, to get the best out of your employees and to encourage them to develop their skills and grow, feedback can be a powerful motivator. There are several models of feedback out there, some can be implemented with just a few staff and if done correctly, can really improve morale and identify problems in a systematic way solving them before they escalate out of control.

Feedback can be given with gentle skill in a one on one setting by a supervisor or manager to an employee in periodic formal or informal meetings. One of the best skills to use in constructive criticism is to ensure that you outline a positive feature, then a negative, then a positive again. Try to outweigh the negative to positive feedback by at least two to one. If you can't think of more positives than negatives, prioritize your negative feedback, if you give too much, the respondent may shut down and the process may backfire, making a less motivated individual who feels that he or she can do nothing right. Another skill is request the employee to also give you some feedback on how you can assist them to complete their tasks.

The way that formal feedback is commonly given is through a graphic rating scale. In the graphic rating scale method of appraisal, there is a list of criteria and a scale of performance. People are rated as per the criteria. Frequently, the appraisal form is divided into behaviors and skills. Behaviors may include taking responsibility, learning new skills, handling stress and pressure, contributions to the team and so on. Skills rated could include report writing, bookkeeping, customer service etc. based on whatever type of business it is. This type of assessment rates the employee from good to poor and a numerical value is usually assigned. There are examples of these types of assessments found on the internet or you could hire a consultant to develop an assessment for your business.

Another popular model of feedback is the 360 degree feedback process. This is usually used to help someone with supervisory or managerial responsibilities compare how they see their leadership capabilities with how others see them. The term 360 degree reflects the fact that the feedback is gathered from all around the individual – for example, from their own evaluations and reports, their

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peers, the customers and their own manager or department head. By considering how others perceive their strengths and challenges and comparing these perceptions with their own, the recipient is able to identify areas where they can improve their performance and set new developmental goals.

The process begins with the nomination of other people who would give feedback, including the person's supervisor, peers, perhaps customers and other people directly worked with. Each of the respondents then completes a questionnaire, which typically takes less than fifteen minutes. The replies go directly to an external organization, who compiles a feedback report which should then go to a facilitator. The facilitator then has a face to face meeting with the individual, helping them to understand their feedback and coaching them to set new development goals and plans as a result.

When appraisal or feedback systems are undertaken, all participants must understand why the process is happening. Is it to assess whether or not a pay increase or promotion is in order? Is it to clear up problems periodically before they become major issues? Or is it just to keep the employees motivated and planning? It is critical that all participants understand what the process is for before the process is undertaken.

There are other types of employee appraisal and feedback systems. If you feel unsure about how to implement a more formal system, there are consultants and experts to help you plan your systems, including some that will conduct the interviews and give the feedback as well and there are training courses in how to conduct appraisals and feedback.

## **11 Commandments for an Enthusiastic Team**

1. Help each other to be right – not wrong
2. Look for ways to make new ideas work – not for reasons they won't
3. If in doubt – check it out! Don't make negative assumptions about each other.
4. Help each other win and take pride in each other's victories.
5. Speak positively about each other and about your organization at every opportunity.
6. Maintain a positive mental attitude no matter what the circumstances.
7. Act with initiative and courage as if it all depends on you.

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8. Do everything with enthusiasm – it's contagious!
9. Whatever you want – give it away.
10. Don't lose faith – never give up.
11. Have fun

**Quotes to Live By:**

***“The first step toward success is taken when you refuse to be a captive of the environment in which you first find yourself.”***

**Mark Caine**

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