
LEARNING WORKS FOR ALL OF US

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"How Emotional Competence Can Make a Difference" Comments on an article by Maureen Fitzgerald in PeopleTalk, Summer 2002

Maureen Fitzgerald starts off her article on emotional competence with this quote:

"Anyone can become angry – that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way – this is not easy."

Aristotle

For those of us working in mediation, conflict resolution, communication skills training and/or coaching, dealing with people who are angry or frustrated or stuck in inappropriate patterns of behaviour can be a daily activity. We may often shake our heads and wonder why colleagues, supervisors, employers and clients don't value each other more. In her article Maureen Fitzgerald asks this question:

"We all know the value of those employees who give with their hearts. We also know what happens to employees who have been heartbroken on the job. So why are some companies slow to recognize the significance of emotions at work – both positive and negative?"

She goes on to answer this question by quoting research to show that strong emotional competency is the foundation for leadership skills. She also concludes that training in emotional intelligence will develop interpersonal skills that impact on work relations both with clients and colleagues.

"If you are a manager you have probably struggled with emotions in the workplace. If you are a trainer you probably see a thread of emotional intelligence in all of the training that you do and probably know that emotional intelligence is a qualification of any good facilitator."

This is not a new trend or fashion but finally the skills developed through emotional competence training are being recognized as integral to the success of companies and community projects. Companies as diverse as American Express or the Boston-based Hay group are discussing the success of emotional competency training in their organizations. As with most training programs, they recommend a program planning approach of determining the needs, defining outcomes, selecting intervention strategies, designing a program and implementing and evaluating the results.

Maureen quotes the Hay group from one of their 1999 articles:

"Tactically focussed programs – the typically short seminars and workshops that have become the standard fare of most training efforts – do little to advance an individual's emotional intelligence beyond increasing awareness and understanding. Instead, a much more purposeful developmental program is

needed – one that can effectively transform the ingrained patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviour that constitute emotional intelligence.”

The first step advocated in Maureen’s own words:

“...People must understand themselves, their abilities, their needs and interests. The absolute first step is to...develop the competencies of self awareness and self management...identifying what is unique about you, recognizing your own emotions as well as your particular strengths and weaknesses...the best way to do this is by reflecting, speaking to others who will challenge you, such as coaches, mentors, or counselors. Simply begin the process of asking questions.”

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Comments on our Breakfast Meeting

Meeting the LearningWorks’ Team
October 31, 2002

I had the pleasure of meeting Betty, Jane, Louise, Carole, Ana and Maggie of LearningWorks along with Rheona Severson, a Lifestyle Coach, and Mike, a lawyer with Alexander Holburn, on October 31, 2002 at the LearningWorks’ offices. We began our meeting by introducing ourselves.

The conversation quickly turned to the demands of the marketplace and current economic conditions. The discussion was lively, thought provoking and informative. Upon reflection, it was particularly helpful to me for the following reasons:

1. All were in agreement that economic resources, particularly for external training and development were scarce. It normalized my experience – we are all experiencing similar challenges.
2. Thanks to Rheona I now understand the distinction between coaching and counselling and how my skills fit into the picture.
3. I further clarified my strengths and defined the services I have to offer in the marketplace.
4. I generated new ideas for business development and am currently testing them. I’ll let you know how it’s working at the next meeting.

I thoroughly enjoyed meeting the group and am excited about developing a network of related collegial support and association.

Have a Great Month,
See you December 12, 2002
Joanne Macpherson
MJM People-Solutions

Next Breakfast Meeting

For those of you in the Vancouver area, our next breakfast meeting is on December 12, 2002. This is a time for us to meet and share ideas. Please join us at 8:00 a.m. at:

LearningWorks
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1110 Hamilton Street
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Inspirational Quote from the Dali Lama Response to 9/11

That is the challenge that is placed before every thinking person today. Today the human soul asks the question: What can I do to preserve the beauty and the wonder of our world and to eliminate the anger and hatred – and the disparity that inevitably causes it – in that part of the world which I can touch? Please seek to answer that question today, with all the magnificence that is You. What can you do TODAY... this very moment? Central teaching in most spiritual traditions is: What you wish to experience, provide for another. Look to see, now, what it is you wish to experience – in your own life, and in the world. Then see if there is another for whom you may be the source of that. If you wish to experience peace, provide peace for another. If you wish to know that you are safe, cause another to know that they are safe. If you wish to better understand seemingly incomprehensible things, help another to better understand. If you wish to heal your own sadness or anger, seek to heal the sadness or anger of another. Those others are waiting for you now. They are looking to you for guidance, for help, for courage, for strength, for understanding, and for assurance at this hour. Most of all, they are looking to you for love. My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness.

Dali Lama



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