

Summer News

Welcome

It is always refreshing to work in new areas. Paradoxically it is also refreshing to work in areas that we are experienced in, just with a little more skill! This is precisely what happened when we turned our design talents to a Customer Service Skills programme that is to be rolled out nationally to over 600 delegates. Drawing on our specialist knowledge in the Retail sector we created the following programme...

The customer experience

Our training needs analysis led us to believe that our experienced delegates would need more than just customer services skills, indeed we should avoid this term throughout. However, after our first pilot delivery we quickly returned to the grass roots of leading great service. Instead we focussed on delivering the session that tapped into the experiences of the groups and tested these out.

SERVE model of customer service - as with many of our retail clients we decided to develop a model of customer service. This is designed to map out our short customer

conversations and also be applied in situations where there is a number of days contact (during the events that the delegates would typically run). **Smile** - the initial contact relies heavily on body language, not just a smile, but attention to our posture and perceived space. The smile phase is also stretched to include the words and voice that we choose.



Engage - our aim here is to greet the customer effectively based on the situation and begin to share information to stimulate their needs. Developing rapport with existing customers and creating it with new contacts is of particular significance to the organisation. **Response** - given flexibility to our conversations this aspect revolved around two areas. **Responding** - the more typical aspect focuses on how we

respond well to customer questions. Asking for a response - typically this area was neglected and requires delegates to form bold questions to gather feedback.

Value - this aspect really demonstrates our commitment to world class service. Challenging the delegates with the question - what more can I do? **End** - this represents a real challenge and blind spot for our delegates. We focus on a professional ending to conversations and events whilst recognising the assumptions made (about the endings) from both parties.

Emerging tools - lessons from film

Using films can have a powerful impact on your learning environment. We term it purposeful viewing and recognise that the messages from films can be easily translated. Whether the films are talked about, viewed by relevant excerpt or watched in full they represent a resource that is waiting to be snapped up. Popcorn is optional...



Well known films and characters offer the most accessible learning. Most of us are familiar with *Star Wars* and Luke Skywalker's learning journey. In *The Empire Strikes Back* his meeting with Yoda (in a swamp!) offer great lessons on coaching and mentoring.

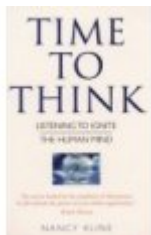


Authentic leadership is beautifully portrayed by Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society*. Stemming from individuals being attuned to their core values the film captures the enormous commitment that can be gained when one brings their true authentic self to work.



Some films naturally provide short lessons; however, *12 Angry Men* can be watched in its entirety for wonderful lessons on leadership and coaching. In particular the main character played by Henry Fonda influences with ease and shifts the perception of others in a second.

Resources - Time to think. Nancy Klein



This text ably touches upon two of our basic needs; that of the team and that of the individual. Beginning with the ten components of a thinking environment, Klein maps out successful strategies for improving the quality of thinking in our organisations. Such as team meetings. However, the application of her work applied to individuals stands out as a very powerful coaching tool. Naturally encouraging the individual to think, the 'thinking session' begins to unearth bedrock assumptions which are so often the key to real change. Coach and coachee develop the incisive question that is asked over and over again during the session and by the coachee in reflective practice. For example, 'If you knew that (*insert new, freeing assumption*)..., what ideas would you have towards your goal?'

'specialising in teams, leadership and coaching'

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