

Andrew's Ax

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The Cutting Edge for Global Thinkers

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Competent?

The June Ax focused on non-cash ways to “Incent!”-ivize your people. You may recall examples of non-cash motivators under the headings **Leadership, Competencies and Rewards**. Since we only devoted a line or so to the Competencies, let’s take a deeper look at the four **crucial competencies** for higher motivation: Time Management, Listening, Solution Selling and Self-Awareness.

Your staff like doing things they do well, so you can raise overall motivation by improving your people’s skills.

Time Management

What is the single biggest cause of stress at work? Surveys shows it is *lack of control*. Firemen and secretaries “enjoy” two of the most stressful professional profiles. Why? Because critical events just “come up,” and they often find themselves in reactive mode.

When you give people more control over their job you will give them higher motivation—that’s part of the reason AMT Group’s IMA! (Immediate Materials Action) program is so popular with participants. And their leaders love it

because using the program reduces so much wasted time and resources.

You might think that Time Management is simply an important issue but not a skill that can be learned and accounted for. It’s actually both. Better time management produces positive—sometimes even life-changing— results.

Listening

Speaking of life-changing differences, get this: A participant from our listening mini-workshop claimed it “saved his marriage.” I love endorsements like his, and not just for the feel-good element in them. Companies benefit even more because when your staff is happier, they tend to perform better.

Most people agree that the single most valuable communication skill for sales people and leaders is **listening**, yet how many people actively work on improving this crucial skill?

Reading and doing exercises in books like *Listening: the Forgotten Skill* and many others can help. Even better, participate in an interactive workshop, where you can see and hear yourself listening (or not!), and you’ll add one more “enjoyable” skill to your toolbox.

Solution Selling for Everyone

Whatever your job title or position, everyone, in every organization, needs sales skills. And everyone benefits from good sales training, especially the “soft

skills” required to build trust and find out exactly what your counterpart needs.

Even your staff furthest back in the back office still need to persuade managers to go along with a proposal, or to try a different software program, or face some other issue where “selling” will help them in their job.

When sales skills improve, everything improves!

Self Awareness

Here's a little nugget for the Self Developer in you, a quote from journalist Sydney J. Harris: “Ninety percent of the world's woe comes from people not knowing themselves, their abilities, their frailties, and even their real virtues. Most of us go almost all the way through life as complete strangers to ourselves.”

Over the past 15 years we and our clients have gleaned a lot from M.B.T.I., the Keirsey Temperament Sorter, FIRO-B, DiSC, TAIS, Garuda, Social Styles and the Enneagram, and now the EQS (the Japan Psychological Association's approved assessment of Emotional Intelligence). All have strengths, and all will return more than their cost in value to any organization that uses them right.

The tools described above help sort people into “tendencies,” “preferences,” “styles,” and occasionally “personality types.” People learn that there are many approaches to a given problem, and that

once an *interpersonal* conflict is given a logical explanation, the negative effects are dramatically reduced.

The Right Approach to Training

As a training company, AMT Group is going to be biased toward continuous learning—so let me quote the president of Fusion Systems Japan, Mike Alfant, whose only bias is for creating successful, profitable companies. Mike was explaining to his managers why he was sending them on a professional development course. Here's part of what he said: “We take the commitment of corporate resources very seriously at Fusion. You might ask why we don't just divide up the money we're spending here and pay ourselves more or take a trip or something. The reason is simple. I believe there is no better investment than this investment in you—for your job here at Fusion and for your future.”

Remember too that “Education is what you learn after you think you know it all.” What have you learned lately?

Andrew Silberman is President and Chief Enthusiast for AMT Group, founded in 1992 with the on-going mission of “Developing Global Thinkers!”

Your thoughts are welcome. Send your questions or comments for Andrew's Ax to: ax@amt-group.com



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