

SPARKING IDEAS AND ACTION IN YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS
HARMONY COACHING & CONSULTING

The Three C's Of Collaboration

This is part three of a three part series on effective collaboration. If you missed any of the previous articles please contact us today.

Collaboration will be most effective when there is communication, coordination, and cooperation. Thinking about how they interact and what distinguishes one from the other helps us understand collaboration better.

Communication is the cornerstone of collaboration. It can be established through written words, sound, signal, or body language. How well the communication is received – seeing it visually, hearing it audibly, or feeling it kinesthetically – is the ultimate measure of the transaction.

Communication is understanding. Feedback is the only way we know what the receiver heard, or what they think we have communicated. It is important to note and evaluate verbal and nonverbal communications.

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How to Maintain a Positive Attitude

Many sales professionals know that a positive attitude is a key element, perhaps the most important element, to success in sales. Even though they know this, most sales professionals find it extraordinarily difficult to maintain a positive attitude all day, every day. The reason? Most likely because they

believe that their attitude is the result of external circumstances rather than something that is within their control.

Here are some tips to help you stay positive:

1. Create a new definition for yourself of "external circumstances." You might think that hitting a few red lights on the way to an important meeting with a prospect could be seen as "bad luck" and put you in a bad mood. Definitely not a mood you want to convey to your next potential client! However, if you view those red lights as an indication to yourself of how wise it was of you to leave early, they take on a whole new meaning. If you are late because of those lights, take it as an opportunity to collect yourself and brainstorm a damage-control strategy.

2. Begin every day with 15 minutes of positive input. If you fill your mind with positive thoughts, you'll have a larger library of positivity to pull from when your day might not quite go as planned. Read an inspirational book or listen to motivational CD's in the morning. We happen to know where you can get a few of those! Might we suggest popping in your Sales Development CD's on your way to prospecting meetings? (If you need one contact us today)

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Verbal and nonverbal should always be sending the same message. When verbal and nonverbal conflict, whatever is being communicated nonverbally will be what is “heard” and remembered. Make sure you pay attention to both your verbal and nonverbal messages. Written communications are excellent for reference or clarification and should be concise, clear, and easily understood. Verbal communications should also be clear, concise, and easy to understand. When communication does not exist, or there are mixed messages or unclear understanding, there will be poor coordination and operation for the task at hand.



Coordination starts with practice for mastery of individual skills – running, throwing, catching, blocking...or selling, managing, resolving conflicts, computing, or analyzing. These skills are studied and mastered individually before interacting with others in a coordinated activity. Then the individual skills are practiced with others. Some activities take a great deal of interactive practice to find coordination. Fortunately for us, coordination itself is a skill that may be transported to new disciplines and can be developed with practice.



Cooperation is a less explicit contributor to collaboration, it results from conscious intention, just like communication and coordination, but cooperation is the ingredient that gives meaning to collaboration. The outcome is determined by the complementary use of talents

and skills by two or more collaborators. Collaborators may work together at the same time, or they may work separately at different times. Either way, in a smooth collaboration all efforts are coordinated through cooperation to achieve tangible output.

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3. Choose your news. You get bombarded everyday with a news media that believes in the mantra, "If it bleeds, it leads!" followed by commercials designed to make you feel better. Our media strives to ramp up your feelings of anxiety by highlighting horrific stories and follows them with advertising that helps you to buy comfort food or medications to relieve the pressures of everyday life. Unplug yourself from this negative imagery. Find alternative sources to keep yourself up to date with the day's events, such as public radio or print news. It's easy to choose what to read and listen to.



4. Surround yourself with positive people. Business associates, friends, and relatives who have a negative view about life can make it hard for you to maintain your positive attitude. These people can drain you mentally and physically. Wherever possible, avoid them or at least limit your contact with them. If you cannot avoid them, don't get drawn into lengthy gripe sessions. Listen empathetically and turn the conversation to a more positive topic as soon as you can. On the other hand, positive people can enhance your life and help to keep you upbeat and with a good outlook on your world.

What We're Reading...



Pump up Your Professional Development!

Are you looking for great books and other resources to jump start your professional development in 2006? If so, look no further than the Links & Resources page on the Harmony website at www.harmonycc.net/links.htm

One of the best books I've read this year is *Primal Leadership* by Daniel Goleman. This book discusses the theory of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and different leadership styles and how they incorporate Goleman's model of EI.

You can purchase this book at Amazon.com by clicking on the link below –

amazon.com

Not Another Resolutions Article!?!

No, this really isn't another article about New Year's resolutions, although it is related. We'll call it a second cousin, once removed!



Resolutions too often put the cart before the horse. Let's give the outgoing year its due! My guess is that you worked hard. Maybe even harder than the previous year. So what do you have to show for it? What professional growth can you celebrate from 2005? What were your significant accomplishments? How are you different now than you were in January 2005? What were your key learning's last year? Any disappointments? Are you as far along on your career and professional development path as you planned? Do you even have a path or are you in the weeds???

These are questions I ask myself and my clients around this time each year, and not just because of the season. I firmly believe that a periodic review process is critical for those who want to excel in their careers. Reality is that responsibility for our professional growth and development has landed smack dab in our own laps! With the philosophy of 'do more with less' bosses have less time to spend on the development of their staff. Balancing the demands of staff development with the production needs of the company strains even the most compassionate of leaders who all too often tip in the favor of meeting deadlines and marketing benchmarks to satisfy their stake holders. Because of this individuals must take more responsibility and accountability for their own growth and development.

One of the key elements to this is looking back so that you can get a clearer picture of where you're going. Stephen Covey's advice is, "Begin with the end in mind." Along with that, you must also identify benchmarks along the way. Constantly looking forward without acknowledging where we are and where we've come from in our professional development can lead to discontent, feeling a lack of progress and reduced motivation. Celebrate the progress you've made this past year as well as the missteps that you've learned from! Celebrate how you've changed as a person and a professional!

Now (and this is where the distant cousin comes in) what do you want to be celebrating at the end of 2006? What are the key accomplishments you want to achieve? How are you going to take responsibility for your own professional development? Don't look to your boss or your company to do it for you! Even if they want to, they may not be able to so get off your duff and make a plan! A journey begins with one step so identify the destination and what steps you're going to take, this year, to get there!

If you'd like a partner to assist you in celebrating where you are in your professional development and creating and executing a plan to reach your career objectives, Harmony Coaching & Consulting can help. Give us a call at 901-272-7390 and check out what some of our clients have said about working with us at www.harmonycc.net/testimonials.htm.

Bill Burtch, SPHR, ACC – President, Harmony Coaching & Consulting



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Digital Impressions

A recent study reported that 40% of Internet users in the US changed their opinions of brands due to information they gathered online. This data is reinforcement that it's more important than ever to make sure that the image you are portraying online, and especially in your e-mail marketing, is an accurate reflection of your brand.

Design, content, format, information, and consistency are vital to creating the image and brand of your company.



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The Customer Is King



“The service we render others is the rent we pay for our room on earth.”— Wilfred Grenfell

Last evening I saw a stand up comic go through his customer service routine. He was very funny and had the audience of about 200 people roaring with laughter. But I found myself thinking of his basic premise as being very different from my research and experience.

He said that, by definition, a customer needs something (I would add, or wants something). And that anyone who needs something is vulnerable. Therefore customers are vulnerable and you (the business or organization) need to treat them with care because of this vulnerability.

Yes, customers may need or want something; but in this day and age, that makes them anything but vulnerable. (Unless you are the only one selling water in the desert.) Customers are actually empowered: they have the power to give or take business from you; to give you a piece of their mind; to go somewhere else for what they want; to bargain for prices; to cost you business with a careless comment; and other forms of customer power.

So, as I see it, the element of customer service is more about surviving in business than it is about acting out of the goodness of your heart for the “vulnerable” customer. Although the paradox is that sincerity and genuine care are critical for the best customer service.

This boils down to identifying customer needs; providing solutions; keeping the focus on the customer; dealing with complaints and bad moods without taking things personally, and most of all – not taking yourself so seriously.

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Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are offered by Harmony Coaching & Consulting in a public forum. Follow the links to register or find out more information.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time
Essentials of Human Resource Management www.protraining.memphis.edu	February 23, 24, 2006	9:00am - 5:00pm
Coaching & Counseling Skills www.protraining.memphis.edu	February 17, 2006	9:00am - 5:00pm

Harmony Coaching & Consulting is in the business of maximizing human talent for individuals and organizations in various industries. We accomplish this through the analysis, design and implementation of [Human Resource Programs](#), [Professional Development Training](#), [Personal Executive Coaching](#) and [Assessments](#).



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