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Is it Management or Organizational Development - Part 3

By Melanie Parish, CPCC, PCC

Managing Teams Versus Developing Teams

A well-managed team can function adequately in an organization but a well-developed team can become a powerful asset. A developed team has the support and vision of organizational leadership partnered with highly skilled contributors who are effectively utilized in a creative and collaborative environment.

Developing a team takes care, patience and a willingness to allow lively discussion and occasional differences of opinion among team members. Most often, the team that allows full participation of all team members will come up with the strongest and best solutions. A decision is inherently stronger when team members bring a variety of perspectives to the team and share those perspectives freely and safely. Although it takes time to develop a synergistic and powerful team there is a great payoff.

Here are some tips for developing a great team:

- Make sure every team member is important. If you don't want a team member's voice heard take him or her off the team.
- Follow good protocols on your team. For example, have an agenda and take minutes. This keeps everything professional and orderly so that it is easier for team members to accommodate some chaos due to occasional differences of opinion.
- Develop a clearly defined method of making decisions as a team.
- Invest in creating good facilitation skills in some of your team members. A great facilitator can help to create an amazing team!
- Make sure there is a systemized way to hear the voice of everyone in the room. Leave enough time to create a team plan--this may feel slow in the beginning if your organization is used to "managing" a team instead of developing a team. Initially, developing a team takes time up front but a well-developed team can save time



during the implementation phase. Make sure team members have time to talk through their thoughts as the team makes decisions.

- Take time to assess the strengths and weaknesses of all the team members. Take time to figure out how you can use this information to your advantage. Share with team members.
- Find out what areas of the project each team member is or is not passionate about. Try to use their passions and strengths as much as possible to have them create the most effective solutions possible. The more you are able to tap into these two areas the more powerful your team will be.

Taking the time to develop a team will help you create a treasure. This investment is worthwhile because high functioning team members give their best and use their skills to make incredible contributions to the organization. Take some time to look around at how you can develop your team.

This article series on management versus organizational development also appears in choice Magazine's 'Expert Series'. Parts one and two appeared in the January and February 2007 Leading Edge newsletters respectively, and can be viewed at www.sageportfoliogroup.com/archives.html

Go Team! A look at the philosophy behind team coaching

By Jennifer Dawson

Pep rallies, team songs and cheerleaders seem to work in the world of sport. But in the world of business the need to analyse risk, recognize opportunity and anticipate change has sharpened our critical thinking and problem solving skills to a fine point. That leaves little room for team spirit and lots of opportunities for accidental jabs and pokes. What suffers, in the end, is the morale and productivity of the team. Team members can feel hurt, criticized, and vulnerable. As an entity of its own, the team itself will lack a confident, respectful, harmonious voice.

Team coaching, a relatively new addition to the suite of services offered by professional coaches, examines the team as a system rather than as a group of individuals. The coach facilitates group interactions and provides a safe, inspiring space for the team to articulate its needs and values. "The team is the system," says Sage Portfolio Group CEO Melanie Parish, "and all the wisdom is in the team already. The coach's role is to bring out that team voice and to teach teams to relate positively with and about each other."

It is this emphasis on positivity that defines team coaching. "In order to have a productive relationship with anyone, you need to offer five positives for every negative. If we're nothing but problem solvers that just doesn't happen," admits Parish. "Sure, we can share the odd compliment or two. But our social norms dictate that we can't speak for very long about the positive aspects of a work or team environment, or the pleasure we feel working with particular individuals."

Team coaching can focus on a particular objective but Parish is quick to point out that this cannot be assigned from the outside. "It will be determined by the team itself," she says. "Certain themes or common elements will emerge, and the coach will listen for these cues and articulate them for the group." Parish has coached teams that were hungry for more time together. That wanted desperately to develop their leadership skills. That were interested in bringing forward new leaders so that the organization could grow. Once articulated, these "system needs" can be acted on and the coach can assist the team to identify ideas and strategies to move forward.

Team coaches use the Organizational and Relationship Systems Coaching (ORSC) model developed by Marita Fridjhon and Faith Fuller. They can administer a team assessment, which measures seven productivity and seven positivity factors and presents the results in an easy-to-read profile. The assessment is unique in that it measures the team as a whole. The coaching component often involves a day-long session, broken into 90 minute segments, that includes team building and examining real-life business problems that the team is working through. Follow up to the in-person session occurs in a conference call setting for a pre-determined length of time.



Some clients choose to have ongoing team coaching. The involvement of the coach is in the ongoing development of the team, not in providing facilitation for the team.

Does all the positive talk and relationship building pay off in the end? "Absolutely," says Parish. "Positivity provides a strong foundation for problem solving, because team members trust each other. Team coaching also allows those who have found what I like to call their 'sweet spot' - the place where their skills and passion meet - to share that positive energy and pass it to others. When teams find their voice, they can accomplish great things. Most effective organizations want to hear the team voice and respond to it."

Frog Pond: Reflections from a values-based organization

Greening Your Meetings

By *Jennifer Dawson*

It was a trade show exhibitor's dream. When it's all over, we were told, just leave your cardboard boxes, extra flyers, skids and other construction waste, plastic wrappers and bags behind. No pangs of "green guilt" were necessary; we were assured that the cleaning department would collect and properly recycle everything.

Sage Portfolio Group recently attended *Here 07*, the annual conference and trade show of the HRPAA held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (MTCC). A quick glance through the exhibitor manual showed the thought the MTCC had given to greening their approach to hosting meetings and other events. The manual referred to an "aggressive waste reduction program" - including recycling, donation of leftover food, composting of food waste, and use of light sensors in meeting rooms to reduce electricity use - and included an invitation to the exhibitors to join with them as "recycling partners", agreeing to participate and promote the program to our clients and visitors during the show. It's not surprising that the MTCC was recently recognized as a national leader in environmental stewardship with the "Go Green" award from the Building Owners and Managers Association of Canada, and the Gold Award for waste minimization by the Recycling Council of Ontario. They appeared to take the issue of waste very seriously.

It's clear that green meetings have moved well beyond the realm of simply distributing double-sided copies of minutes. We're talking organic fair trade coffee, served in reusable mugs and lightened with cream or milk from bulk cartons. Serving water from pitchers instead of plastic bottles. Arranging with food banks and shelters to take left-over food, which is often vegetarian and sourced from local farmers. Sharing information electronically. Printing hard copies on tree-free or high percentage post-consumer recycled content paper. Choosing venues for their proximity to transit; the rigour of their environmental management system; the availability of shops, accommodation and eateries within walking distance. Arranging with non-profit organizations to take what might otherwise be considered "garbage" (but can really be made into new, saleable products) following a large conference or show. And perhaps the greenest option of all: choosing to utilize technology--webinars, web conferencing services etc--to connect attendees so you don't have to meet in person in the first place.

The green meeting movement is growing. MCI, the Pittsburgh Convention and Visitor Bureau, Portland Oregon Visitors Association, Stetson Convention Services, and Tourism Vancouver are all supporters of the Green Meeting Industry Council. Hilton, Marriott and Radisson Hotels in Minneapolis donate unserved food to Minneapolis food banks. The Metro Toronto Convention Centre hosted Canada's first Zero Waste Event in 2005. Fairmont Hotels and Resorts offers its "Eco-Meet" package at six locations. Green meetings are also about money - making it and saving it. Between May 2003 & December 2004, 14 environmental or sustainable conferences met in Portland Oregon, representing an estimated income of \$10.5 million USD. A non-profit organization based in San Francisco raises more than \$125,000 USD annually from goods recovered from exhibitions at the Moscone Convention Center; this, combined with other waste reduction initiatives, has cut the convention centre's hauling costs by \$500,000 USD.

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Organizers of green events agree that, contrary to popular belief, hosting a green meeting does not have to increase workload. The same types of decisions are made in the planning process: where will the meeting be held, what food will be served, what will be done with waste, how will information be communicated etc. For green meetings, there are simply different or additional issues to consider or criteria to apply during the decision-making process. If the executive team of a company has established sustainability as a corporate goal, then there are likely already policies and operating procedures in place to guide the meeting planner, making this an easy and rewarding task. And speaking of rewarding, perhaps your company's next conference, show or meeting will be nominated for the prestigious IMEX Green Meeting Award, announced annually by IMEX and the Green Meetings Industry Council.

For more information on establishing green meetings, start with these helpful web sites:

www.bluegreenmeetings.org
www.greenmeetings.info
www.meetingstrategiesworldwide.com
www.imex-frankfurt.com/envaward.html
www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green_meetings_report.pdf
www.ns.ec.gc.ca/greenman/help.html
www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings
www.mpiweb.org/cms/mpiweb/MPIcontent.aspx?id=3782

Frog Pond: Reflections from a values-based organization is a monthly column that explores the connection between business and social responsibility. The title for the column comes from the last, but perhaps most profound, of the five values upon which Sage Portfolio Group has been built. We call it "frog pond". Sitting beside the frog pond at Sage Portfolio Group's head office in Dundas, Ontario on a warm summer evening with a glass of wine and meal made from locally grown organic produce has taught us to value local roots and global consciousness, quiet contemplation and sharing with others, dreaming big and common sense. Articles written for this column take the abstract principles of Sage Portfolio Group's "frog pond" value and make them both real and useful. Dip your toe to test the water ... or dive right in!

The Alibi Network: A Business Where You Can Buy a Lie

Posted on Businesspundit.com

What would you pay for an alibi to let you miss work, provide cover for an affair, or pretend you are somewhere that you aren't? Most of these services can be provided starting at \$75 from a business called [the Alibi Network](http://thealibinetwork.com). From the website:

Alibi Network is a cutting edge full service agency providing alibis and excused absences as well as assistance with a variety of sensitive issues. We view ourselves as professional advisors who understand our clients' unique situations. We explore various approaches with our clients and implement the best solution based on each individual case. We understand your need for privacy and we are completely discreet and confidential.

It's a fascinating business idea that, according to the Internet archives, goes back to December of 2005. Do you consider this unethical? Even though they won't provide alibis for illegal activities, I lean towards yes. I can see a few examples that aren't so bad - like if you were traveling to a dangerous part of the world, and preferred to tell your spouse you were just in Europe, so as not to cause too much worry. But even with my utilitarian leanings that doesn't seem quite right.

It would be interesting to see a breakdown of their customer base by job title and location. In a world with plenty of Jeff Skillings and Dennis Kozlowskis, I'm sure they aren't hurting for business.

What's Out There is a monthly column highlighting the ingenious, wacky or merely weird in the business world today -- people, organizations or subjects that push boundaries, break down barriers or build bridges in novel or unexpected ways. Sage Portfolio Group does not necessarily endorse the ideas presented in *What's Out There*, but we do feel that bringing forward the innovative or unusual opens our minds to new possibilities, enhances creativity and helps identify our own values. Far out, man.



The Culinary Coach

Pumpkin & Black Bean Soup

This recipe is a family favourite in the home of our CEO, Melanie Parish, but is also popular with guests who have been known to admit admiringly (sometimes with mouth full), "I've never tasted anything like it!" Melanie recently served it to staff who had stayed late to help with new employee interviews. It was a fast, flavourful meal that saw us through to the last candidate! The recipe originally came from Melanie's daughter's Montessori teacher, who prepared the soup for a kindergarten World Food Day. It tastes fantastic with fresh multi-grain bread.

2 cups pumpkin or other winter squash (one 16 oz can)
2 tbsp olive oil
2 medium leeks (white/pale green parts) halved, well-washed, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic
1 large sweet potato, peeled and chopped
1 medium red pepper, seeded, finely chopped
5-6 cups vegetable stock or broth
15 oz can black beans rinsed, drained
1 tbsp tamari
1 tbsp grated peeled ginger
1 tsp cumin
¼ cup fresh cilantro

Quarter and seed pumpkin. Steam 10-15 minutes until tender. Allow to cool. Heat oil. Saute leeks and garlic until soft. Remove from heat. Scrape pumpkin from peel. In a large pot combine pumpkin, sweet potato, bell pepper and 5 cups of broth. Boil and simmer until sweet potato is tender. Puree soup in batches. Add leek mixture and remaining ingredients. Simmer until heated.

The Culinary Coach is Melanie Parish, founder and CEO of Sage Portfolio Group. Good food is about culture, community, family, physiology and fun. Each month we share one of Melanie's tried-and-true recipes in celebration of the power of food to strengthen, nurture and inspire. Cheers!

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The Leading Edge is published monthly by Sage Portfolio Group and written for a readership that includes coaching clients, human resource professionals, business leaders, fellow coaches and the occasional aspiring gourmand. Our goal is to offer a combination of wisdom and wit--sourced from our own in-house experts and other respected leaders in the field--in an easy-to-access e-zine format. A hard copy version is published bi-annually. We welcome editorial questions, comments and story ideas; please direct these to the editor, Jennifer Dawson, at [jen \(at\) sageportfoliogroup.com](mailto:jen@SagePortfolioGroup.com). If you find value in the articles we invite you to pass them on to a friend with the recommendation to sign up directly for *The Leading Edge* at www.sageportfoliogroup.com. Articles from *The Leading Edge* can be reproduced in an in-house publication provided that Sage Portfolio Group is credited for the article.