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## Q&A

CORPORATE COACH ACADEMY

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# COACHING ON FEEDBACK GIVING

### PUTTING MORE 'BITE' INTO FEEDBACK GETTING

**Q** I am at a loss when it comes to my improvement as I do not know where to zero in on the feedback given to me as it is pretty general in nature. One person who confuses me a lot is my boss. He keeps saying that my presentation skills need to be polished; saying that dealers (and him included) whom I often have to present, complain that my products and sales presentation to them are pretty dry, monotonous and uninteresting, and that they require major overhaul. So now I am turning to you as to whether you can read his mind to advise me where I should focus for my improvement. Can you help me? - *Toothless*

**A** I have to give my views on three people here; you, your boss and I. As for you who are the eventual winner or loser, the ball is really in your court for you to take control of what you really want to know from your boss or any other person. As for him, he may be a poor feedback giver who rather talks in general terms rather than delving into the specifics of what he exactly means. As for me, it will be most unfair (and perhaps dangerous) to read his mind to tell you what he means. Always remember, meanings are in people. His understanding and my understanding of what is 'dry', 'monotonous' and 'uninteresting' may be poles apart.



### THE BOTTOM LINE

Of all the three persons mentioned, it is you who needs to do more than any of the two. "Assertiveness" is what you need in all situations. Rather than sulk over it, complain over it, or get someone to do the work for you, you need to be strong to express your frank views to him with confidence and not fear that he will be offended. So face up to him and ask what he means, specify the areas and give examples of it, and even asking him to suggest how this can be improved. On another score, you can also get your capable and reliable friends or colleagues to do the same for you. Specify what you want them to watch out for. These could be: your friendliness, sense of humour, message clarity and organisation of

thoughts, etc. Once you get the specific areas of feedback, act on them straightaway when the 'heat' is still on. I am sure when you can manage feedback in this manner, you will know where you are heading, and the way forward for you is surely towards becoming a successful and dynamic speaker!

### POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What part does being a good public presenter play in your career success?
- What does this require you to do?
- What are you doing about it to move forward towards this goal?
- Who can you count on to support you in getting this goal, and what do you want them to do?

### MAKING PARADIGM SHIFT WORKS BETTER

**Q** We have run out of ideas to be more effective in the organisation. Our R&D, who is responsible for new ways of doing business is not helping much too. Instead of cost-saving and staying lean in our structure, we always end up spending more trying to get more people to support and perfect a work system. To quote a recent case, we now have an automated call system for customers to call us on their problems with our software. But this is costing us lots of money and manpower compared to the manual system. - *Frustrated*

**A** The trouble is many people bulldoze their brains to find new ways even though they are at

the dead end of their imagination. Yes, we all need to be determined to break out of the old ways to get something new and refreshing. Technically, this is an adorable life principle. However, we need to be more practical and less stubborn to accept that when old ways do not work anymore, a totally new thinking has to be generated.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

Break out from the normal cultural way of thinking for other exciting possibilities to take shape. Take your case for example; instead of trying to perfect your call centre model, you could explore a totally new world altogether. Like for instance, introducing training programmes to 'teach your customers how to fish, instead of giving them the fish'. Perhaps through this way, they may not bother your staff anymore because they are now more self-sufficient rather than having the old system that continues to make them helpless and dependable forever!

### POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- How happy are you with the current ideas?
- What is it that you are looking for that is still missing?
- How can you totally change the fundamentals to get something that bears little resemblance to the existing way?
- What new possibilities do you get when you do this?

Corporate Coach Academy is conducting a 2-Day Coaching Power Tools workshop on Oct 13 to 14. Call **03-62054488** or log in **www.corporate-coachacademy.com**. Read the '*Stories That Coach*' @ **www.mikeheah.com**.

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