

May, 2008

'To love and be loved, for all the right reasons.'



That's our Story and We're Stickin' to It!

There is a saying, you've likely heard, that goes like this...

"If you continually do the same things, the same way, you can expect the same results".

While in some cases, lack of change may be good, it is clearly not good in all circumstances, something you all know well from working in the technology environment. From a leadership perspective, stagnation is never good, as leadership requires continual growth and evolution.

Responding to the risk that exist in always doing the same things, the same way, the direction of our QBR, moved us out of the proverbial "comfort zone" and pushed us to be radical thinkers, and required us to tap into our emotive side, in order to

recognize the power of intimacy.

That being said, imagine with me, if you will...

A narrow conference room crowded with a very large table, some oversized, wobbly chairs, sunlight beaming through a rear window and lots of papers and portfolios scattered across the table. Present are one radically thinking facilitator, an excited troop leader and eight curious participants. The smell of coffee fills the air, while clanking spoons and air conditioning generate a low hum of morning noise. The facilitator, *Helanie Scott*, anxious and optimistic about moving the team to a greater level of unity, shuffles papers and prepares the presentation and flip charts.

Meanwhile, the

participants mentally exercise their defenses. They lean on their education, their work experiences, their relationships and their historic meeting databases to build the necessary walls they feel they will need to protect themselves from the unknown.

All secure and braced for the start, there was no warning of what was about to happen. Confident that the most harmful of blows to their perfectly constructed walls would come from the outsider, [Read more...](#)



The Radically Thinking Bunch

How Well Do You Know Your Senior Leader Team? Play to Win!

When the QBR was over, each of the SLT members was tasked with a homework assignment of the team. Looking for to write an elevator speech. An everyone in the elevator speech excitement, that would occurred to us that it capture the might be fun for you to essence of the three match the speeches up days, such that they could with your respective SLT share it with others in 60 members through a seconds or less. contest.

As the speeches came rolling in, they were reflective of the

importance of, the impact of & the result of the relationships and growth of the team. Looking for to write an elevator speech. An everyone in the elevator speech excitement, that would occurred to us that it capture the might be fun for you to essence of the three match the speeches up days, such that they could with your respective SLT share it with others in 60 members through a seconds or less. contest.

So, enter contest, "How Well Do You Know Your Senior Leader Team". We

are offering a \$100 gas card prize to a selected winner. All you have to do is read through the speeches, assign each an SLT member name & submit them to the email listed below. If you get all of them correct, your name will be put into a drawing for the gas card prize. The official drawing will be on July 24th at the next ITS All-hand Quarterly meeting.

Good Luck!



It's Really About Getting the Bananas...

While making cultural change is a difficult task, sometimes putting things into perspective is as easy as hearing a little story. For the QBR, it was the

story of acquiring bananas...

Once upon a time there were some monkeys that lived together in a cage. One day the ladder

hanging invitingly by a thread was a banana.

It wasn't very long before one monkey began to climb

[Read more...](#)

Welcome to the ITS Quarterly Business Review Meeting

Thinking Outside the Box

That's our story...(continued)

the facilitator, they were blind-sided when their troop-leader stood up and delivered a wall-destroying grenade when he used the word "love"! "My wish for our team is, 'to love and be loved for the right reasons'", he said. What kind of work meeting was this going to be?

With the protective walls clearly at risk, they chose not to stay in danger long, making a timid move to the trust and protection of their troop-leader, though weary of the stability...love? Then, another *hit*, this time by the facilitator ...intimacy!

"Intimacy"! Love and intimacy? You have got to be kidding!

The team scattered with a quick reconstruction of the walls!

The troop leader could not have been more pleased, as this became his opportunity to address what the team said was their biggest challenge – conflict!

Extending a safety net, by recognizing the need for familiar ground, the troop leader and the facilitator engaged the team in a session of word-brainstorming. They asked the team for words that they felt described themselves, a simple-enough task.



They began spouting off words such as respected, trusted, driven, focused, collaborative and decisive. The facilitator quickly pointed out that their choice in words were very "corporate", so she challenged the team to be radical thinkers—were there other words that said the same thing? So, the team responded with word revisions, such as supportive, comfortable, happy, etc., and agreed to land on *happy, classy, winners* and, with much discussion, *intimate!*

Now that the team was absorbing their new "radical definition" they engaged in an exercise of sharing and discussing the feedback they had received from one another from a pre-work assignment, both positive and negative. This was certainly going to be a mine-field of conflict. Throwing caution to the wind, they bolted through the mine-field, with nary a scratch. Their open discussions resulted in individual and team

commitments that would move everyone in a forward direction—a "winning" direction.

Beyond these hurdles, the meeting was injected with laughter, hugs, cheerleading, sharing of personal stories, strategy discussions, future growth opportunities, a victory lap, cultural discussions and overall how to become a stronger leadership team and ITS organization...all without conflict!

This battle was won.

Addressing the issue of conflict can be difficult in any situation, but if the parties at conflict have a foundation of love and care for one another and agree that the mission they share is the same, the conflict can be healthy and beneficial. Choosing to view their team as a group of *Intimate, Classy, Happy Winners*, was yet another step in establishing a solid foundation on which our Senior Leadership Team can team together for the good of the organization, comfortably disagree on issues, yet still come to constructive and positive decisions. They are paving the way for our up-and-coming leaders.

Bananas...

the ladder. But as soon as he did so, icy cold water sprayed down on all the monkeys. This happened each and every time one monkey set paw upon the ladder. Very soon, each and every monkey was on the look out, lest one of its companions would try to climb the ladder. How the monkeys hated that water. They hated it so much they quickly learned to attack any would-be banana questor. In time the monkeys simply learned to ignore the banana, as if it were not there at all.

And then one day a new monkey arrived in the cage. It wasn't very long before the new monkey saw the banana and began to climb the ladder. Immediately the other monkeys attacked the new monkey and

thrashed him severely. The new monkey quickly discovered that the banana was taboo.

As days went by more monkeys from elsewhere found themselves in the cage. Each in turn learned the lesson. Typically it was the recent victims that punished the new transgressor the most. In fact the monkeys were so busy punishing each other that they failed to notice that their numbers were remaining mysteriously the same.

For every new monkey that appeared in the cage one of the original monkeys was removed. It wasn't too long before every original

"That's not how things are done around here"

monkey had gone. There wasn't a single monkey in the cage that had experienced the icy deluge. In fact it wasn't long before no monkey had any memory of why it was wrong to reach for

the banana. It simply became part of their culture.

If it was possible to ask the monkeys why they would beat up all those that had attempted to go up the ladder, might the answer be..."*I don't know...that's how things are done around here*".

Don't miss the opportunity to do things differently, for the sake of getting a different result.