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“There is no such thing as a worthless conversation, provided you know what to listen for. And questions are the breath of life for a conversation.”
~ James Nathan Miller

Keys to Effective Conversations

Have you ever left a conversation or business meeting wondering ‘*what just happened there?*’

Perhaps you had clear intentions going into the discussion but allowed yourself to be derailed from your original goals. Or, perhaps you thought you had covered all the important points only to realize afterward that no one had actually committed to taking action on the great ideas discussed.

To avoid this circumstance in the future, you may want to make use of the following model for effective conversations. While the model is based on what occurs in a coaching conversation, it is just as effective in meetings with business colleagues and even important discussions with friends and family.

Step One: Focus the Conversation

Make sure everyone is clear about exactly what the goals are for the conversation/meeting. What specifically do you want to accomplish by

the end of your time together? How much time do you have for this conversation/meeting?

Step Two: Examine Your Options

Get clear on what all of your options are. Brainstorm and look at the issue from many different perspectives. What outcome do you really want? Why is that important? What is the best thing that could happen? What else is possible? What would the outcome of that approach be?

Step Three: Develop a Plan

Based on the outcome of your discussion at Step 2, now choose a plan of action. Develop the plan, set goals and determine the priorities. Look at the scope of the project and work backwards: what needs to happen and when? Keep breaking down the action items until it is clear what each person must do and by when.

Step Four: Commit to Excellence

Excellence in achieving your goals is a choice you make every day. To which actions are you willing to commit to

make this happen? What are the strengths and talents you will need to rely on to ensure this plan is carried out effectively?

Examine the actions of others who are successful in this area, what are they doing that you could try? What roadblocks might arise that you will need to work around? Who else do you need to discuss this plan with in the organization?

Step Five: Clarify Next Steps and Accountability

Before the end of the conversation or meeting, clarify what will happen next. What insights have been gained in this discussion? When will you meet again? What needs to be accomplished before you meet next? And if appropriate you may ask, ‘What resources/support would you like from me to make this happen?’

Commit to having more effective conversations in 2007 and you may just have your most successful year yet!



Focus --- Options --- Planning --- Commitment --- Next Steps

Beyond the Labyrinth: Life Strategies Series

Powerful Steps to Move you Forward to your Success

April 14 and April 21, 2007

Take part in an exclusive event as 3 top coaches will help you to:

- Identify your ultimate vision for success
- Pinpoint obstacles that keep you stuck
- Apply the law of attraction to your life
- Create a personalized *Strategic Life Plan*
- Tap into the power of the group as you put your plan into action

This unique program will consist of 2 full-day sessions, followed by 3 months of telecoaching to provide support as you put your new plan into action.

Special Early Bird Discount:

Register by February 7 for only \$1,795!

Denise Cornfield-Furlong

www.insearchofexcellence.ca

Featuring:

Renate Weiler

www.renateweiler.com

Debi MacDonald

www.whitedogz.com

Contact Denise for more information or to register: denise@insearchofexcellence.ca

Regular price: \$1,995 (early bird price applies only if booked by February 7, 2007) payment by cheque or credit card through PayPal accepted. Space is limited—register early!

Weekend to End Breast Cancer Update: Half Way There!

***“A single conversation
across the table with a
wise person is worth a
month's study of books”
~ Chinese Proverb***

Thanks to an outpouring of generosity from people like you, I have already raised over \$1000 in donations for the September 2007 Weekend to End Breast Cancer!

This **2-day, 60-kilometre walk** will benefit Princess Margaret Hospital, funding important breast cancer research, education, services and care.

Did you know that one in nine Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime? Participants in The Weekend to End Breast Cancer have the opportunity to personally make a difference in the fight against breast cancer and make

an enormous impact on breast cancer research funding in Ontario.

I still must raise at least another \$1000 to participate in the Walk. But I know with the fantastic supporters I have behind me, the goal is in reach!

If you would like to support this important cause, just click on the following link to reach my personal donations page:
<http://www.endcancer.ca/>

I thank you in advance for whatever support you can give.

Denise

Do you have suggestions for upcoming newsletters or success stories you want to share?

Contact Denise denise@insearchofexcellence.ca