

BMTFedNewsletter



Welcome to the first edition of the BMT Federation newsletter.

We hope you find it interesting and informative. We have designed it so will take you less than 10 minutes to read.

Behavioural Management Techniques (BMT) is a science-based approach focused on using behaviour analysis for the improvement of business and safety performance.

Ideas for Wimps

This year's BMT conference featured a speech by Howard Lees entitled 'Ideas for wimps', it contained material from his new book of the same name. Here is the introduction to give you a flavour.

My wife took this photograph when we were on holiday in Switzerland; it was funny when the pigs started chasing me, not so funny for me when they sped up and made the kind of noises I imagined pigs make when about to feast.

This book is predicated on the fact that all of us are wimps at some time, even the hardest people I know have had their wimp moments. I have attempted to put together a set of chapters here which I hope will resonate with you. I have encountered many examples of how fear stops people doing what they feel are the right things and have developed a number of tools for individuals to help them overcome this fear. Fear is not a bad thing, our bodies are designed to detect fear and respond in ways which help us deal with the threat. Fight, flight and freeze are the physiological responses to a threat; if the threat is a grizzly bear then you can run, fight the bear or stay very still and hope he doesn't notice you.



In the workplace it is sometimes easy to see who decided to run, who fought and who stood still hoping not to be noticed. Some workplace environments are a joy to be part of and leaving them can be a struggle. Sadly there are also some work places containing people who are in a permanent state of boss induced paralysis. In the workplace we have choices which will determine whether we will place ourselves in danger. Our perception of what is danger in the workplace is developed over time, our past experiences guide us. The fight, flight or freeze responses still apply but you are hardly going to physically fight, run or stand very still in the middle of an office hoping no-one will see you.

Leaders who recognise that there will be fear in the workplace, recognising how and where it will manifest itself and dealing with these stress points would be seen as good leaders. Most leaders I have encountered are on a journey of enlightenment, some have travelled far; some are still in the garage.

Removing fear and the causes of fear in the workplace would be a good objective for leaders. However if the leaders are poor there are many techniques where everyone else can create their own positive bubble. This book will discuss various workplace situations I have witnessed, been told about and read about, I will offer commentary and some ideas of things you could do to reduce your chances of just being a wimp!

Coach's Corner – Staying calm in a crisis

As the effects of the credit crunch spread there are a number of managers who appear to be having trouble keeping a cool head in a crisis. I have had it reported to me that some previously calm managers are emitting destructive comments like a fighter jet discharges flares as it goes in to attack.

The real test of a good leader is how they behave in a crisis, of course it can be difficult to stay calm, but it's not impossible. People can do it if they arrange their environment so that its filled with reminders to take a breath before responding, this kind of 'pairing' is a great way to ensure you are surrounded with reminders of the importance of staying calm.

I often write in big letters on my wipe-board, things like 'YOU ARE TIRED' or 'IT'S A CLIENT, STUPID, STAY CALM', or recently 'YOU ARE OLD, WRITE STUFF DOWN'. I change them every time I say something stupid, I change them regularly!



"If A equals success, then the formula is: A = X + Y + Z, where X is work, Y is play and Z is keep your mouth shut." - Albert Einstein

Introducing the next OBMN President: BMTFed Member, Nicole Gravina, Ph.D.



We are pleased to announce that a member of the BMT Federation, Nicole Gravina, has been elected to the position of President of the

Organizational Behavior Management Network (OBMN)

Nicole will serve two years as President-Elect, two years as President, and two years as Past President.

The goals Nicole hopes to work toward on behalf of the network are as follows:

1. Help facilitate further dissemination of OBM outside of the ABA community.
2. Foster collaboration and networking between academics, professionals, and students.
3. Help OBM "walk the talk" by encouraging more measurement, feedback, and recognition as we work toward achieving goals of dissemination, innovation, and advancement within the network.
4. Promote greater innovation in OBM research and practice to continue to move the field forward.

How Powerful a Motivator is Avoidance?

By Rachel Edwards

Losing something makes us twice as miserable as gaining the same thing makes us happy – in other words we avoid loss twice as much as we want to incur a gain.

In a test run with over 1000 students, mugs were given out (which were meaningful to the students). The students were put into pairs and one of the pair was told they would be selling the mug, and the other buying. The seller was asked how much they'd be prepared to part with the mug for, and the buyer asked how much they'd spend. On average, the seller wanted twice as much for the mug as the buyer was prepared to pay.

This experiment describes loss aversion. Loss aversion can produce inertia, or a strong desire to stick with what we have. For any of us still paying fees to a gym we never attend, or a magazine we don't read, or higher fees to a credit card company than available elsewhere, we're probably experiencing some inertia in order to avoid loss.

So, can we frame information in a certain way to make it more effective and influence people's choices?

It seems so: a group of homeowners were 300% more likely to carry out energy efficiency improvements in their home when they learnt they were losing 50 cents a day versus homeowners who were told they could save 50 cents a day by doing the same thing.

Most of us are aware of how our mood can affect our decisions, whether we're extravagant when we're happy or grumpy when we're tired. Have you ever wondered if your mood affects your pocket? An experiment was run to assess the impact of mood on how much we spend.

A group of people was split into two; half of the people watched a sad film clip and were asked to write about it, the other half were asked to watch something neutral (a short film showing calming fish swimming around). The people were then instructed that they were moving on to a separate activity (unrelated to the film clips) asked to identify how much they'd pay for certain items. The people who had watched the sad film clip were prepared to pay 30% more than the neutral group, and willing to sell items for 33% less than the neutral group.

Applications for these ideas in our day to day lives are plentiful; whether we're pitching a new idea to the team ("we'll lose £100k if we don't implement this" versus, "we could save £100k by doing this right") or just organising our diaries so that we make sure our moods don't adversely affect our decisions.

This article was inspired by ideas discussed in 'Nudge' and 'Yes'.

BMT Federation Conference Photos



Photography by Andy Stairmand

BMT Federation Conference 2010

By Howard Lees

This year's conference theme was leadership styles and featured several excellent speakers. This keynote was delivered by Bill Redmon who is coach to one of the world's most successful businessmen, Riley Bechtel.

Andrea McHugh and Steven Fraser are both young leaders in large organisations and talked about how their style developed, and the ups and downs of their highly successful careers.

Over the two days there were contributions from Dr John Austin, Dr Denis O'Hora, Bruce Faulkner, Howard Lees, Allison Reynolds and Rachel Edwards. Dr John Austin contributed for the fourth year to the conference; he is arguably the world's leading producer of behavioural graduates into the consulting markets. Dr Denis O'Hora is an expert in behavioural techniques from Galway University.

Audios are available from the conference speeches on request. E-mail us at info@bmtfed.com