

BMTFedNewsletter

Behaviour Based Safety Conference

Conference Day – 1st December
 Workshop Day – 30th November
 “10 years of BBS and how it was done”
 at
 The Park Royal Hotel,
 Stretton, Warrington WA4 4NS
[click to download flyer](#)

Behavioural Management Techniques (BMT) is a blend of applied behavioural science tools and project management skills. BMT is used to improve business and safety performance.

My Favourite Read –

Don't Shoot the Dog, Karen Pryor

by Allison Reynolds

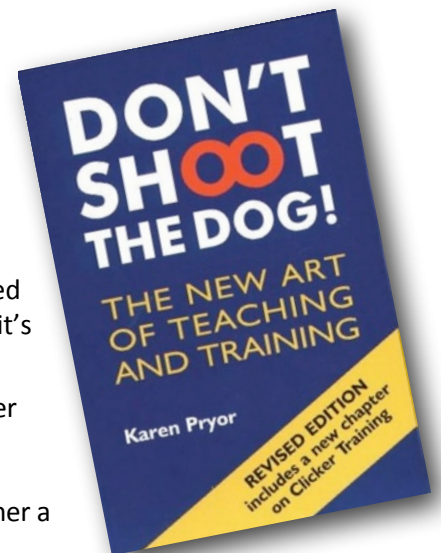
Don't shoot the Dog is my all time favourite read when it comes to behaviour change. Not only does it provide a more detailed explanation of shaping and stimulus control, but it is packed full of cool little stories about how people have used the principles to fix their dog, horse, kids and even a grumpy husband. Here are a few of my favourites:

- The author trained a crab to ring a dinner bell by pulling a string with its claw. The trick was to get the food to the crab the instant it randomly waved its claw about and connected with the string, by feeding it with forceps (if you can get a crab to do party tricks surely it's possible to get an engineer to submit his timesheet on time).
- A woman married a man who turned out to be very bossy and demanding. Worse still her father in law, who was also given to ordering her about, moved in with them. The wife formed a practice of only responding minimally to commands and harsh remarks whilst reinforcing any tendency to be pleasant or thoughtful with approval or affection. It took her a year to turn them into decent human beings (see you could have fixed your boss by now, although you might want to hold off with the affection).
- A teacher improved the general responses of his students by asking them to remove their chewing gum at the start of each class and reinforcing them as they get rid of it. Awakening the class to the possibility of earning reinforcement by responding to his request generalised to a whole heap of other responses, not just giving up their gum (yes this is why we focus on getting people to show up to your meetings on time).
- Get the family to show up for dinner promptly by serving it at a set time after calling, rather than wait for the stragglers serve their food cold. By reinforcing only within the time limit you set, once everyone shows up within that time you can reduce the window and gradually shape promptness (this is a clue as to how to fix the about issue of folk showing up late to meetings).

My all time favourite:

- Stopping a dog from jumping on the sofa by setting mousetraps. When the dog jumps up, whether owner is present or not, the traps go off, startle him and maybe a few pinch him. I'm not sure how ethical the use of the traps are, but what I really like is the story of one particular dog who figured out he just had to drag a blanket down from the back of the sofa, setting off all the traps and then he could lay safely on the blanket on the sofa. What a perfect illustration of an unintended downstream impact of punishment. The smart recipient simply figures out how to do the behaviour without getting caught.

Some might fail to see the relevance of these stories, but if you can't get the dog to sit still or the children to pick up their washing when you are at home, why would you think you'd be any good at getting people to do often much more complex behaviour when you are at work?



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Lean – an attractive buy but not the desired location we thought

by Howard Lees

Fashions come and go, it's also the case for business improvement schemes. Lean seems to be all the rage right now; people keep asking me to give a view on it. If your organisation is more than 85% efficient then it's probably going to make a difference for the good. Of course 'lean' is predicated on a flawed view that work processes can drive behaviour, it does not recognise that the folks are going to do whatever the environment dictates, blind to whatever the processes say. 'Lean' work processes have exactly the same effect as long-winded ones if people don't read them anyway.

Any circumspect observation cannot fail to observe that it's not normally the work process that's at fault anyway. If people are not behaving in the best interests of the organisation then they are behaving in that way for a reason, it certainly won't be the rules, it will most definitely be the environment created by the leaders.

There were two brothers with two houses, one house needed a new roof and the other one was in great condition – lean is the equivalent of spending available money redecorating the living room in the nice house.

No One Expects a Bit of Consequence Analysis!

by Rachel Edwards

A graduate of our behavioural course told me a heart-warming story about his experience at a recent spell of jury service duty. After several days of being called in and sent away, the judge finally sent the jurors in to decide their verdict. The jurors spent 3 hours spluttering, arguing and getting nowhere; headaches and a strong desire to get away abounded.

The course graduate then decided to introduce the other jurors to the idea of pinpointing and consequence analysis. After one more pass over the evidence they came to a verdict straight away. The verdict was 11 – 1, most of the jurors had been unsure about which way to vote; a little bit of behavioural science goes a long way.

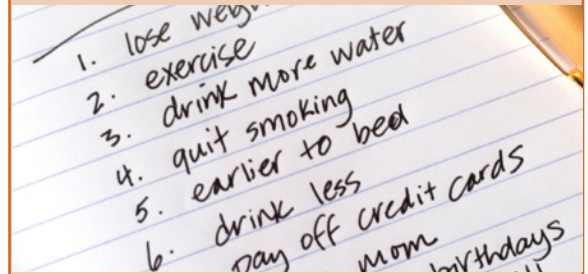


Dr. Bill Hopkins died in early September, he was one of the great pioneers of behavioural science as a professor at Auburn University. Bill was highly active in the Cambridge Centre for Behavioural Studies (CCBS) and was one of the developers of the CCBS accreditation in behavioural safety. He also consulted and trained a number of BMT Fed members.

Our sympathy goes to his family, he was one of the all time greats.

Setting Goals: Breaking Down to Break Through

by Megan Coatley



Goals, objectives, aspirations, expectations. Try as we might to hide from them, these daunting words seem to pop up everywhere we go. Between monthly performance objectives at work, fundraising quotas for the school field trip, and weekly training goals at the gym, we are constantly pushed to achieve.

Though a life full of bar-setting can stress us out, clearly defined ambitions can also help us to achieve great things. Research in behavioral science shows that, if having one big goal is great, a series of small, more manageable objectives is even better. Imagine setting out to lose 20lbs, jog 6 miles a day, AND cut out sweets, treats and alcohol all together. With this lofty idea, you're likely to lose focus or get frustrated when the going gets tough. Overreaching without a progressive plan can squash your chance for success.

A better option is to take a close look at your current behavior patterns and then set challenging, yet reasonable benchmarks to chart a path for change. Doesn't replacing your evening glass of wine with a cup of tea 3 times a week sound much more do-able than eliminating your favorite libations all together? And, if that charity 10K is a few months away, you could start out by penciling in just 3-4 short runs per week (remember to jot down your fundraising goals as well!). Setting specific goals, then breaking those into achievable objectives makes it easy to track (and reward) steady progress and this translates your health and fitness efforts into real, measurable transformation.