

BMTFedNewsletter



The BMT Federation would like to wish you and yours a joyous holiday season and a safe and happy New Year!

****US Conference News****

The BMT Federation is hosting a Behavioral Safety and a Behavioral Leadership Conference in the US on May 24th and 26th, 2011

For more information on these events, please [click here](#)

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

The Time of Year...

by John Austin, PhD

In one of his workshops at Google, Marshall Goldsmith asked audience members to “close your eyes and imagine you are on your deathbed.” He continued, “now imagine looking around you while on your deathbed – how many of your current day coworkers are there?” People laugh at the insinuation.

When I first heard it, this story really resonated with me. What I took away was that we really should appreciate what we have. Others call this living in the moment.

I learned about this concept when I was in graduate school. Not through a meditation retreat, but by having the experience around every major deadline that, “after the deadline, things will be better.” The problem with this view is that it’s an illusion. How you behave during deadlines and crises is symptomatic of how you deal with things on an everyday basis (the same is true for people in organizations). The point of living in the moment is that you can’t put it on hold.

Two of my best friends right now have terrible cancers. Spending only 30% of your time feeling good has got to be a tough way to live. A good friend passed away on a moment’s notice this time last year. There are lots more stories like this, I’m sure we all have them. These sorts of things give one pause, and make you wonder if you’re using your time to the fullest.

In thinking about this topic, I jotted down some things you might consider:

- Are you where you want to be, right now?
- Are you on the right sigmoid curve, and at the right spot on the curve?
- How much of what you are doing now is important to you? To your family and loved ones? To the company?
- What do you have to be thankful for?
- Does what you’re doing make you feel good?

This is the time of year for reflection.

You are in control of your life.

If you’re not happy, do something about it.



Behavioural Coaching by Howard Lees: A Review

By Nicole Gravina, PhD

The booklet, *Behavioural Coaching* (2nd ed.), written by Howard Lees is an insightful, clearly written primer to effective coaching. Howard covers every stage of coaching including when it will be useful, the initial meeting, moving through the process, and when to call it quits. The figures provide demonstrable steps for building a coaching relationship and the sample excerpts of coaching letters offer insight into the content of coaching.

This book removes the illusiveness from coaching by providing clear guidance for practicing your skills and improving your effectiveness. Howard translates behavioural science into practical techniques that you can try immediately as well as expected results that can help you determine if you are doing it well. Anyone will find this information useful and you can use the strategies outlined with your coworker, boss, spouse, or even your mom.

The writing is engaging and easy to follow and I truly appreciated the concise explanations and focus on actionable behaviors. The book is not long, but offers substantially more valuable information than the average 200-page business book. In fact, it almost seems like Howard is giving away the farm in this book because he details the coaching process he uses from start to finish. However, these techniques must be deliberately practiced over time in order to maximize effectiveness (or become half as good at coaching as Howard). Overall, this book is a must read for anyone who wants to create better relationships and more influence.



Bosses and fear responses toward their own people – it's more common than you would think

By Howard Lees

As you will have read in a previous newsletter fear responses are 'fight', 'flight' and 'freeze'. The boss in question turned up to module 1 of the course, he announced that he was sceptical about BMT but he still turned up. There were one or two occasions when he was whispering to the person sat next to him, the other person looked a bit embarrassed and didn't look as if they wanted to join in with the dissent. Module 1 finished and the course attendees were encouraged to complete their online coursework.

Two weeks passed to module 2, everyone had completed the homework, the boss had not scored well, he had clearly not spent much time on the reading and case studies. The module began and he was distracted by his blackberry. The first break occurred and he walked off on the phone to someone. The first exercise started and he did not join in, back on the blackberry. In the open discussion, one or two of his people opened up and he quashed the line of debate. I later reported to the course organiser that the boss had clearly not enjoyed the course and the boss confirmed this to the course organiser himself, "it's a shit course" he said.

He was clearly intimidated by the fact that he had scored in the bottom 20% of the class and I suppose his fear responses consisted of him cycling between flight (Blackberry) and fight (stifling open conversations.) As I left the last module he said to me, "I am not happy," I said, "which dwarf are you, grumpy perhaps?"

For balance, I would like to mention another course this year where the boss stood up for five minutes at the beginning of each module and spoke very positively about the course, the people, the progress achieved and its potential for the project. During the module he stayed silent and displayed positive body language, at break times he worked the room. This leader is presiding over a group of motivated people on a very successful project, it's an efficient, safe, profitable project, the kind of project and boss you want to be associated with. That's what I call good leadership, no sign of fear responses anywhere.

A safety incident story, in a town near you

By John Bennett

I was standing outside our local Co-op which was being renovated and I noticed a man struggling to fix a fascia plate on the side of the roof of the building. He was standing on a filled up wheeled cardboard container and it was wobbling a bit. He got off the container and asked his supervisor if they could get a platform for him to complete the work safely as it was indeed a bit precarious. The supervisor said, "oh yeah, I'm going to order you a platform and delay this job by one day just so you can have an easier time, get up there and get it done now." Of course, the guy climbed back onto his wheeled cardboard bin and finished the job. There it was before my very eyes, the classic helpless and distressed guy working for a tyrannical boss. I looked at the worker, he looked sheepish. I looked at the supervisor, he looked sheepish as well.