

BMTFedNewsletter



Layout - Liz Faulkner & Photography - David Lees



Our March newsletter showed a picture of Shag Rock in Sumner, New Zealand. This is what it looks like following the latest earthquake.

If We Knew What We Were Doing, It Wouldn't Be Called Research

by Rachel Edwards

The title above is a quote from Albert Einstein; he understood that achieving change over time is an iterative process. Perhaps it was being schooled as a scientist that helped him be patient about the rate of progress, or just that he'd had a lot of experience of getting things wrong before he got them right.

I recently read some wise words: "creating permanent change takes a long time, the current situation exists for a reason and you need to figure out what that is before you can do anything about it."

The 'know-do' gap describes when we understand what we need to do to get change, but we haven't worked out how to create the conditions to get the change to occur permanently. Common variations on the know-do gap are:

1. Understanding my calorie limit for the day, and regularly exceeding it
2. Knowing that next glass of wine will give me a hangover but drinking it anyway
3. Repeatedly hitting 'snooze' on my alarm, knowing that arriving at work on time is out of the question
4. Shouting at the cat for jumping on the table, knowing it is completely ineffective

Behavioural science tells me that there is a solution; I just haven't found it yet. Experimenting to find the right formula takes patience, and maybe even a bit of virtue. Both are definitely under rated!

Howard Lees has just published a new book titled **'Ideas for Wimps.'** This book is predicated on the fact that from time to time we are all wimps. We will all have experience of walking away from a situation and regretting that we said nothing. We all have a desire to do the right thing every time but sometimes, something gets in the way. Business improvement can only happen if the day-to-day behaviours of the people in the business change for the better and in turn this can only happen if the workplace environment changes for the better. This book describes how to recognise there are problems and provides insight into how you can embark on a journey of improvement.



The 7th Annual BMT Leadership Conference

12th May 2011 – Park Royal Hotel
Stretton, Warrington, WA4 4NS

This year's keynote speaker is:-

Alasdair Cathcart –
President of Bechtel Power Corporation

Also speaking will be Dr Nicole Gravina, Dr Denis O'Hora, Bruce Faulkner, Bob Cummins, Rachel Edwards, Allison Reynolds, & Howard Lees.

Topics covered

Advanced behavioural science subjects
Feedback. Dealing with difficult people. Fear responses. Coaching techniques.
For more details please [click here](#)



US BMT Conferences

May 24th -
Behavioural Safety Conference
in Kalamazoo, Michigan

May 26th -
Behavioural Leadership Conference
in Chicago, Illinois
For more details 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.

Have You Cleaned Your Teeth?

by Howard Lees



You cannot achieve any change without first setting the conditions so that change could occur. All current behaviours are happening for a reason, well a mishmash of many reasons, current and historical. I have to admit it, there are people out there of whom I am envious, it's healthy people. I have a full understanding of my own problem, I eat too much, I know what the answer is – eat less.

I recently had an experience at the dentist, I have been attending dentists for, well about as long as I have had teeth. The hygienist told me to hold the electric toothbrush on each tooth for a few seconds, i.e. don't brush. I already knew I had to do this, and until now I have always brushed! The hygienist has changed my behaviour, I now always hold the brush on each tooth for a few seconds. My teeth now appear more healthy. How on earth did she create the conditions for the correct thing to occur?

I have spent my life being an iconoclast, I derive reinforcement by tilting at windmills, unfortunately my quirky personality has now created the self destructive prospect of emerging ill health. Perhaps I should ask the dental hygienist what I should do?

Are You Reinforcing a Bully?

by Nicole Gravina, PhD

Recently I attended a conference and was in the audience while a friend of mine was giving a talk. A few minutes in, she was interrupted by her former advisor who said, "I am only going to give you another five minutes to explain where you are going with this." She advanced to her next slide and he must have liked it because he then declared to all 100 people in the room that he would instead give her ten minutes, but his interruptions didn't stop.

I kept thinking, someone should say something, trying to convince myself that someone was me. It *was* me, and it was every single person in that room. But instead, we all just sat there quietly and let him continue to hijack her talk.

I described this situation to a colleague and excused my lack of intervention by saying I don't enjoy putting people in their place. He responded with an email I want to post on my bulletin board or maybe even glue to my forehead. He said, "It's not a question of enjoying confrontation, I don't enjoy it, I do enjoy doing the right thing and I don't enjoy sitting there and saying nothing – I really don't enjoy that and for ages of regret after, especially if by saying nothing it reinforced a bully."

When we let bullies be bullies, we become responsible for them being that way, we are part of the problem. Now I am experiencing the regret my colleague mentioned and don't want to again. Confronting a bully might be scary, but the alternative is worse.

It's Not the Fish!

by Mary Gordon, PhD

I recently gave a workshop, the first day with upper management and the second day with front line management. On the first day I was trying to illustrate that we spend our time and money on activities that are immediately reinforcing and asked what activities the attendees enjoyed. Most answered "golf" and said that golfing reinforcers included spending time with friends, being outside, and trying to improve your score.

When I enquired whether the front line guys golfed they said, "*no way, we go huntin' and fishin'.*" So, I asked if they would still go fishing if they never caught anything. They responded by saying that they would as long as they could still drink beer. I then asked if they would still fish if they never caught anything, couldn't drink beer, couldn't talk to friends, and couldn't enjoy any scenery. One guy quipped, "*I'd sit in a pile of dirt if it meant I could spend a half of a day away from my wife!*" I responded, "*Well, that's an uncomfortable segway into the next consequence we will be talking about, negative reinforcement.*"

A Poem

Thinking about the balance between having/needing rules and just doing 'the right thing'
 High integrity and high trust = do the right thing = fun and profits
 Low integrity and low trust = lots of rules = bureaucracy
 These two extremes of environment are worlds apart
 Which one would you like?