

The Scoop- May 2009

II. À La Mode Teams: *Ideas to enhance creativity, effectiveness, and positivity on teams*

Positivity, a word coined by Daniel Goleman (of Emotional Intelligence fame) and used in the Team Diagnostic Assessment (which I'm loving) from Team Coaching International means constructive, respectful, trusting, optimistic, and diverse communication and camaraderie. It is not about being positive or "happy, happy" all the time. It is about being real.

One way to grow positivity on teams is to open team meetings with a five minute check-in or interactive icebreaker instead of immediately diving into your task list. Here's one idea to get you started:

Give team members a moment to reflect on how the team is working together (versus what they are working on). Simply ask, "What punctuation mark best represents our team work lately and why?" You may start with a brief overview of common punctuation marks or invite members to name a few. Have some fun with it. Then explore the meaning of the punctuation mark that is selected. Use the following inquiries as a guide or make up your own as a team.

- What is ending? What needs to be acknowledged?
- ? What questions do we have? What lessons have we learned?
- , Where do we need to pause? What might we separate?
- ! What do we feel strongly about? What is the point of our work?
- " " What comments are we holding onto? What leadership or customer statements are motivating us?
- : What's on our list? What is our ratio of productivity to positivity?
- () What qualifications do we need to consider? What can we be clearer about?

Punctuate positivity and you may find the conversation and content propels you into your agenda more quickly and enjoyably. There is a direct correlation between positivity and results delivery. Really!

For more check-in or icebreaker ideas:

- www.azukaru.com
- <http://www.businesstrainingworks.com/Train-the-Trainer/Icebreakers-Free.html>
- <http://www.nwlink.com/~Donclark/leader/icebreak.html>
- www.training-wheels.com
- <http://wilderdom.com/games/Icebreakers.html>
- *99 of the Best Experiential Corporate Games I Know* by Simon Priest, Sam Sikes, Faith Evans and *The More the Merrier* by Sam Sikes, Faith Evans, and Chris Cavert