



Serve Up a Sandwich

By Kristin Arnold

When you bring a topic to the table to discuss among your team mates, I suggest you “serve up a sandwich.” Whether it is a problem to solve, an idea to flesh out, or an opportunity to recognize, serve up a sandwich with two pieces of bread (the rational parts) squeezed between the gooey and messy creative part!

The first slice of bread: Take a moment to clarify the process you are going to use (creative *then* evaluation) and **define** the key terms being used.

A few years ago, I was facilitating a team that was talking past each other – simply because they hadn’t bothered to clarify the words they were using: strategic planning, operational planning and



business planning. Once they defined these key terms, they were off to the races!

The gooey middle: This is where creativity comes into play. Brainstorming has gotten a lot of bad press lately because people combine creative brainstorming AND the evaluation process at the same time. It’s like Whack a Mole. Someone brings up an idea and a team mate smacks it down saying, “We tried that three years ago.”

Another idea surfaces and it gets evaluated on the spot. Creativity gets smacked before it even has a chance to see the light of day!

So let the ideas flow. Some are going to be horrible.... (cont’d on p. 2)

Rewards in Rituals

By Joseph Sherren

Have you ever faced a challenge by insisting on wearing a specific article of clothing, or following a consistent routine prior to the event? It is commonly regarded as a “superstition” and there may now be scientific evidence that following regular routines improves outcomes.

Rituals, the performance of symbolic actions connected to an important event, date back thousands of years, cross cultural lines and come in many shapes and forms. Bible stories are rife with traditions. Ceremonies, such as weddings, are common in virtually all cultures while other traditional rituals are particular to specific religious denominations.

Studies show even simple rituals can be extremely effective. Rituals performed after experiencing losses alleviate grief, and those performed before high-pressure tasks – like speaking in public – do, in fact, reduce anxiety and increase confidence.

1

(cont’d on p. 2)

In this issue....

Practical Team Activities:
Whine No More!

From the Bookshelf:
The Happiness Advantage

The Spotlight Effect

What’s New at QPC Inc.

Quote of the Quarter

August 8 Webinar

How to Intervene Gracefully & Get Your Team Back on Track

Ever have someone dominate the conversation during your team meeting? Two people discussing (who knows what) on the side? Beat the proverbial dead horse and be unwilling to let it go?

Despite your best intentions, all teams inevitably get off track. The key is to get the conversation *back* on track in a manner that encourages collaboration and doesn’t shut down the offender.

Come join master facilitator Kristin Arnold as she shares her escalating intervention model so you can intervene gracefully and keep the conversation going!

Register on our website for this *free* 45-minute webinar being held on Thursday, August 8, 2013 at 12 noon Eastern or register at <http://bit.ly/zeQbIY>



Serve Up a Sandwich

(continued from page 1)

but that's part of the process. No need to comment on it right now because we'll evaluate it later. We're looking for creativity, synergy and possibilities around the topic. All ideas are valid – and sometimes the best ideas are in the “third third” – the brainstorming that is beyond the first third (the easy ideas that are top of mind), the second third (where you have to dig a bit) and the third third is where inspiration happens.

After all the ideas are out on the table, THEN you can finish off your sandwich with another rational piece of bread. This is where the evaluation of all the ideas begins: Some teams will prioritize the ideas, group like ideas together, sequence them in a timeline or a combination! Oftentimes, it is the synergy of the discussion that creates something beyond what just one person could envision.

Your team is thinking it through, making better decisions and achieving greater results. And isn't that what teamwork is all about?

Rewards in Rituals

(continued from page 1)

Many successful people I have interviewed engage in rituals, even though they tell me they do not believe in them.

Perhaps they should. A series of investigations by psychologists revealed surprising results demonstrating that rituals can have a causal impact on people's thoughts, feelings and behaviors.

In one experiment people received either a “lucky golf ball” or an ordinary golf ball, and then performed a golf task; they found the “lucky ball” enhanced people's confidence in their abilities, motivated greater effort and improved subsequent performance. These findings are consistent with research in sport psychology, which demonstrates the performance benefits of pre-game routines.

When I am expecting to address a particularly difficult or potentially hostile audience, on my way to the presentation, I sing along to country gospel music played loud. The presentation always goes better for me. Here are some examples of rituals to improve your business and life:

1. Have a morning ritual. Successful people start the day by writing in their gratitude journal, meditating or taking time to focus on the day.
2. Create a ritual to start your work day. One former colleague came in each morning with a joke of the day. It was usually corny, but people looked forward to it.
3. Meet one new person every day. Then, take the time to get to know them on a more personal level.
4. Ritualize email review to once or twice per day at the same time. Close the door to let people know you are not to be interrupted.
5. Create a home ritual to ease into your time off. For example, at the end of each work day, Kristin's mother and father would go behind closed doors to reconnect. She and her siblings knew that under no circumstances were they to be disturbed.

Success-oriented people tell me that rituals, like daily writing in their journal, are important aspects to achieving personal goals. What productive workplace rituals can you add to improve your performance or help employees feel like part of the team?

Summer 2013

Vol. 18 Nr. 3

A newsletter designed to facilitate discussion and share tips and techniques to help your teams to be extraordinary.

Kristin J. Arnold, Editor
MBA, CMC, CPF, CSP

Quality Process Consultants, Inc.

US Office Phoenix, AZ 11890 E Juan Tabo Rd. Scottsdale, AZ 85255 480.502.2100 Fax: 480.502.2102	Canada Office Charlottetown, PE 268 Campbell's Way Cape Traverse, PE C0B 1X0 416.399.9223 Fax: 902.437.6999
--	--

US & Canada: (800) 589-4733
kristin@ExtraordinaryTeam.com
<http://www.ExtraordinaryTeam.com>

Follow Kristin on:



kristinjarnold



QPCinc



kristinarnold

The Extraordinary Team newsletter is a quarterly publication distributed to clients, friends and partners of Quality Process Consultants, Inc. Ethos Enterprises, Inc. Gateway Leadership, Inc.

Articles are welcome and encouraged. We would sincerely like to know what you are doing.

The Extraordinary Team makes meetings more engaging, interactive and collaborative.

- ◆ High Stakes Meeting Facilitation
- ◆ Team Training & Consulting
- ◆ Main Stage Conversationalist
- ◆ Author & Expert on Teams
- ◆ Expert on Critical Thinking

Duplication and reprints are okay, as long as you credit the source. Thanks!

What's New at QPC, Inc. – The Extraordinary Team

We are enjoying our summer while in Prince Edward Island, Canada – escaping the heat of Scottsdale, AZ!

Kristin continues to work with her clients including Mercedes-Benz USA, Sage Group, YMCA and the Chief Executive Group. She launched the Extraordinary Team Podcast available on iTunes and continues to work on the team critical thinking skills program (see Spotlight on p. 4).

As she was facilitating the Smart Manufacturing Summit, she got the wild hair to create the Definitive Guide to Moderating an Engaging and Informative Panel Discussion. We're developing some free learning videos on www.PowerfulPanels.com (under construction) along with an ebook with bonus checklists and templates. Ultimately, the Definitive Guide will be precisely that: a more comprehensive guide to moderating any kind of panel format, complete with video examples, interviews with master moderators, PowerPoint® introduction and closing templates.

This spring, Joe was certified on another suite of professional, highly validated assessment instruments from Profiles International. ProfileXT (PXT) reveals deep, objective insight into an individual's thinking and reasoning style, relevant behavioral traits, occupational interests, and match to specific jobs in the organization. It helps managers interview and select people who have the highest probability of being successful in a role, and provides practical recommendations for coaching them to maximum performance. The unique "job matching" feature enables managers to evaluate an individual relative to the qualities required to perform successfully in a particular job.

We're really excited about this new capability and hope you have a great summer!

Kristin & Joe



Subscribe to our
**iTunes
Podcasts**

Where are We?

Kristin & Joe can be seen at the following public events:

July

Philadelphia, PA: NSA Annual Convention
Toronto, ON: York University: Successfully Managing People
Philadelphia, PA: YMCA
Washington, DC: SAGE

August

Scottsdale, AZ: Webinar: Interventions
Toronto, ON: York University: Management 2

September

Dallas, TX: Chief Executive Network
Toronto, ON: Leadership Thru Team Building

October

Stanhope, PEI: Supervising for Success
Orlando, FL: Chief Executive Network
Calgary, AB: CAPS: Advice to a Protégé
Phoenix, AZ: Chief Executive Network

November

Toronto, ON: York University: Mgmt 2
Toronto, ON: York University: Successfully Managing People



Practical Team Activities: Whine No More!

Recently, I was coaching a young manager of a highly regulated utility and he was in overwhelm. Boxed in by regulations, a boss who was passively supportive but not actively engaged, a revolving door of young workers and an email inbox that just never seemed to be empty, he was feeling helpless and hopeless about the future.

We did this practical activity together and he felt a glimmer of hope. He felt much more in control and optimistic about the future. I suggested he repeat the same process with his team and you can, too!

First, list everything that is causing you to be upset, distressed or challenged. I call this the "Whine" List – whatever you and your team have been whining about goes on the list.

Next, separate the list into two categories: 1. Things the team has control over and 2. Things they don't. It might be that one item belongs in both categories, so tease out what you do or don't have control over. You may even need to rewrite them to be more specific. For example, "Too Much Email!" You *have no control* over the number of incoming emails each day. You *have control* over the time and method you use to check your emails.

Look at the list of things you cannot control. Take a big sigh, deep breath and let it go. You cannot change them. You may try to influence them, but your energy is best served on what you can control.

By focusing on what you CAN control, you become open to various possibilities. Don't just go for the obvious (see The Spotlight Effect on p. 4), but look around for other possibilities. For example, you can turn off the pop-up notification, check your email once or twice a day, don't expect an immediate response, filter your messages, put action in the subject line.... You get the idea.

Lastly, take action. When the team agrees on the course of action to take and holds each other accountable, then you'll feel the weight being lifted off your

From the Bookshelf

I can't remember who told me to read Shawn Anchor's *The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles that Fuel Success and Performance at Work*, but I am glad they did. (And if it was you, please let me know!)

A Harvard University professor cum consultant, Anchor provides a delightful romp through the key concepts and experiments about positive psychology.

It's easy to read – I consumed it in an afternoon on the back deck while basking in the sun on Prince Edward Island. The harder part is in the application.

Anchor outlines 7 principles to leading a happy life and then gives you great ideas on how to increase your happiness. Some I do already (yeah!) and some I think I can build into a ritual (see page 1).

- Exercise one of my signature strengths on a daily basis.
- Share three good things with my husband, Joe, at the beginning of every day.
- Lower the barriers to change by making the desired behavior more accessible and in the path of least resistance.

I was particularly struck by how important social connections are to one's happiness. In times of stress, we tend to hunker down when we should really be connecting with others!



Quote of the Quarter

"The way to get good ideas is to get lots of ideas and throw the bad ones away."

Dr. Linus Pauling
American Theoretical Chemist & Biologist

The Spotlight Effect

There is an old joke about a man searching for his keys at night underneath the street lamp in the parking lot. Another man joined in the search and innocently asked, "So where do you think you dropped your keys?" He answered, "Over there," and pointed to an area in the dark. When asked why he was looking under the street lamp, he replied, "That is where the light is!"

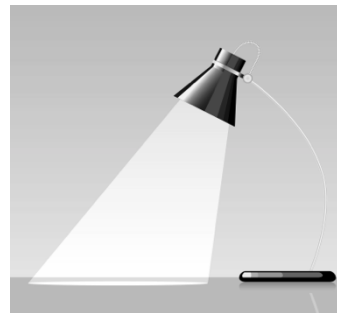
I see teams all the time looking under the street lamp. They tend to stop searching for possible answers when it seems as if the answer is immediately visible.

Yes, a solution is visible and seems right because that is what you know; it's in your field of vision. There is a "spotlight" that illuminates the most obvious path of action. It may actually be the best course of action, but what about what you don't know – or haven't thought of? Is there a better option that you haven't even considered because it isn't in your field of vision?

Think of some of the past debatable decisions you or your team have made. Did you evaluate all the possibilities thoroughly before making your decision? Knowing what you know now (hindsight is always better!),

would you have made the same decision? Would you have been more open to investigating other possibilities?

To prevent this "spotlight effect," when your team is starting to generate possibilities, really explore *all* the options. Not just the obvious ones. Or the most palatable ones. Stretch your thinking. Research what others have done in a similar situation. Ask others.



Shine the light over into dark areas you haven't explored yet. You may even find the discussion prompts some other possibilities that are a combination or synergy between options.

For example, in the mid-1990's I received a small inheritance with the express stipulation that it must be "invested in real estate."

Since I already owned a house, I bought an office building in Downtown Hampton – the world I knew. It didn't even occur to me that I had other options (roll the money into my current mortgage, invest in a REIT real estate investment trust, partner with another investor, etc.) because that was the world I didn't know or even consider.

In hindsight, I don't believe I made a bad decision, but was it the best decision? Hard to say, although I wish I had opened my field of vision rather than look only where the light was shining.