



Eksento Inc.

knowing • doing • being

Team Building From A Place of Strength

When members of your team get together for a meeting, what do they generally talk about? Gaps, barriers, problems, solutions, obstacles to implementing solutions? If a team only or mostly talks about problems, it is a problem-based team. If a team works from a place of abundance, appreciation and learning, it creates synergy and fosters expansion of its great qualities. What focus would best describe your team?

A fair amount of the ongoing energy of teams is spent trying to deal with difficulties, dilemmas, conflicts, etc. Loretta Laroche, motivational speaker and internationally known stress expert, cleverly observes that organizations send hundreds of their employees to workshops on conflict resolution when in fact, they really should be sending the person(s) that are creating the actual conflict! It makes sense, doesn't it? But, more often than not, it's not the way it works. At least, not yet.

There is no doubt that teams need to solve problems in order to improve, yet they also need to study what already works. This crucial step is all too often omitted from the agenda. A work philosophy based on team successes and anchored in open appreciation of each other can generate enthusiasm that motivates a team towards its "new" best. Taking pride in collective achievements on a regular basis drives teams to become even more productive, effective and cohesive over time. Here are some tips to inspire team appreciation (adapted from Jay K. Cherney):

- ❑ **Plan a meeting to discuss only what works.**
- ❑ **Discover, understand and talk about the multiple sources of your team's success.**

HIGHER AWARENESS

If you look from a wider perspective, there are reasons for optimism.

-- Dalai Lama, 2004

In April 2004, I attended a talk given by the Dalai Lama in Ottawa. Soft-spoken, yet forceful in his message, he shared insightful words of wisdom, peace and tolerance with an attentive audience of more than 9,000 people.

He spoke of dialogue as *the* tool of choice to help "the world" resolve conflict by insisting on the fact that as a result of globalization, "we and them" no longer exist. Indeed, *we* are now part of each other in multiple ways and more than any other century before, human beings today must rely on true dialogue as a means to co-create peace in the world, and in their own heart.

During a brief question period, an audience member asked the Dalai Lama how he could remain so happy and spiritual in light of all the suffering and destruction, not only of the Tibetan people, but all over the world. He paused briefly and offered two simple words: **Wider Perspective.**

He went on to explain that if we see only the negative in any given situation (narrow perspective), we don't have a full picture of life at that moment, and may consequently feel overwhelmed and unable to take action or move forward as we become paralyzed by fear and pessimism. We must train ourselves to perceive and appreciate every *other* aspect of life above and beyond what we may have in our immediate frame of reference. When we adopt a Wider Perspective as one of our life principles, we don't neglect to see the "problems", but, more importantly, we don't forget to appreciate the abundance.

- ❑ **Plan your teams' future by expanding and sustaining its unique positive qualities.**
- ❑ **Dare to aim for unprecedented and unforeseen breakthroughs.**
- ❑ **List your own personal contributions that are making your team a success story.**
- ❑ **Discuss a time when your team was its most successful. What was it about that situation that made it so successful?**

We need to create safe spaces where all team members feel absolutely free to jump in, share their insights, and *envision what might be*. Such an environment depends on the quality of the human exchange taking place within the team. A dialogue-based team adopts and uses the following principles as their starting point for team appreciation and spirit:

1. **Listening:** without resistance, listening in and out, standing still
2. **Respecting:** honouring boundaries, ours and theirs
3. **Suspending judgment:** being aware of how our thoughts are generated, relaxing our grip on certainty
4. **Sharing:** courageously speaking our voice, overcoming self-censorship

William Isaacs, 1999
Dialogue and the Art of Thinking Together

Visit our website to learn more about Eksento services including **training, content development, strategic planning, and facilitation.**
www.eksento.com

This newsletter has been prepared by Jeannine Ouellette, Director of Content Development and Workshop Design.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In what situations is your perspective too narrow? What outdated beliefs can you update in order to focus more on the power of personal choice?

BEING@WORK Workshop Series
Teams@Work
1.5 Days Workshop

Three themes (half-day each):

- A. The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace
- B. The Dialogue-Based Organization
- C. The FISH! Philosophy At Work

BEING@WORK Workshop Series
Creative Team Potential
Half-Day Workshop

Learning Objectives:

- To increase awareness about mental blocks to the creative process
- To undertake a self/team diagnosis and assessment of the group creativity quotient
- To become familiar with creativity tools and their application
- To sharpen creative team thinking skills
- To apply techniques to the problem resolution process in the workplace



A Safe and Happy Summer To All!!