

THOUGHTS FOR THE

# good life

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*Is your year shaping up as you intended? A quarter of the year is now behind us; is there something you wanted to start and haven't addressed yet? Make your agenda a priority. Whether it's about taking better care of yourself or taking your business to the next level, start today!*



*Be well and enjoy,*

## A COACHING TALE

### Overcoming Overwhelm

Joe runs a professional services business. A few years ago, he successfully merged his business with a larger firm, which has helped him double his billings and reduce the administrative issues he manages. Becoming managing director of the new firm is a goal Joe is thinking about. Yet, he knows handling more responsibility will be overwhelming.

Joe's current challenge is that he feels completely consumed by the sheer volume of his workload. The feeling controls him and has become his biggest issue, hindering his overall success and fulfillment.

He's beginning to delegate many daily tasks. As a result, he can refocus on becoming more of a consultative advisor – which is where his passion lies. Joe recognizes he's resisted delegating and is now setting up structures with the staff to ensure they support his new efforts.

#### ACKNOWLEDGE ACHIEVEMENTS

During sessions, Joe revealed that he always focuses on what has to be done, taking almost no time to acknowledge personal or staff achievements. Although skeptical at first, Joe was willing to experiment with acknowledging his successes. He'd list them, tell co-workers or his wife about them, or shoot a quick message about them to his coach. The goal was for him to digest the good stuff which would increase his internal sense of satisfaction and minimize the overwhelming feelings.

Joe's now focused on delegating and acknowledging himself – particularly when most stressed.

#### CALM RENEWS ENERGY

Soon, Joe felt more energy and excitement than he had in years. The new internal structure significantly increased the number of projects he delegated. He is much calmer and excited about his business. The acknowledgement part felt awkward at first, but he started to enjoy it as his energy for the business returned.

How about you? Do you recognize your accomplishments on a daily basis before moving on to what's next? Are there tasks you continue to do out of habit or need for control? Could you be delegating these tasks to give you more energy for other parts of your business that need more focus and attention?

*Newsletter articles draw on actual client experiences. The names are changed to protect client privacy.*

### What's Next?

"What's next?" is a classic coaching question. Coaches often ask the question after a challenge has been discussed to find out what action a client will take with the insights developed from the session. The question can be used for the short-term or for a bigger context. Sometimes you might need to do some shorter-term "what's next" work to get to the bigger context answers.

#### Resolve Short-Term Issues First

A client started coaching to determine when she might retire from her senior level position and what she could do in the next chapter of her life. As we began the coaching sessions, it became clear that some short-term "what's next" questions and subsequent activities had to be handled before clarity could come for the longer-term questions. She had not yet begun a succession plan to develop and determine her future replacement(s). As we uncovered areas of satisfaction and dissatisfaction on the job, she recognized that she could do a better job delegating some of her current responsibilities and providing mentoring for her direct reports.

So the current "what's next" action steps became staff development and moving some of her responsibilities down the chain. This will give her more space and time to bring clarity to the longer term question of "what's next," as well as address senior issues that could serve the business that she has not had time to think about.

*Are you living with a "What's Next" question that you would like to address with a coach? Let's discuss it during a free 30-minute coaching session. Amazing things can happen when you put a coach on your team. Call or email Susan to schedule an appointment.*

### Whose Voice Do You Listen To?

**When starting something new – whether it's starting a new business, looking for a new job or bringing a new concept to your industry, it is essential that you make room for objectivity when getting feedback from others. It is easy and natural when we are in new territory to be more vulnerable than normal taking the negative input of others as the truth.**

A client recently pitched a new business concept to a colleague for a professional symposium. The presentation wasn't accepted and the client began wondering if his concept was viable. He was naturally discouraged and questioned his ability to articulate the concept's value and to develop it into a lucrative part of his business model. Through our sessions, he recognized that his was a good idea. He just needed to rethink and refine the concept and pursue other opportunities to present it.

**It is important to get other people's perspectives and insights when we are journeying into new areas. At the same time, we must hold some objectivity about the source of the input and not let negative feedback destroy our excitement for creating new opportunities.**

# Ask For Feedback

Winnie sells pension plans and securities for a small firm. From a Kolbe perspective, she is an Entrepreneur – she always seeks a challenge and enjoys supporting her challenge with an analytical approach. Additionally, she resists working in a structured way.

She understands her strengths and is very conscious that her lack of orderliness challenges her ability to sell and delegate.

## LESSEN FRUSTRATION

Winnie has had a long-running frustration with staff members and doesn't understand why it has been an issue for her. Winnie wanted to improve her working relationships in the office. She asked some of the support staff for feedback to understand why they found her challenging. One conversation with a staff member turned a light bulb on for her. She always hated it when people gave her instructions in a very orderly fashion because of her innate frustration with structure. In fact, she viewed structured directions as a lack of respect for one's ability to complete a task. She realized she chose not to receive such detailed instructions and, therefore, made the assumption she was honoring her co-workers by not providing it.

When, in fact, many needed specific direction and not receiving it was a source of their great frustration in working with Winnie.

Winnie's determination to improve her working relationship by asking for and receiving honest feedback gave her tremendous insight and support in advancing her sales results and becoming a better leader for her team.

“ Kolbe has helped me understand that I don't need to fit into a prescribed corporate role of being 'everything to everyone.' Kolbe is helping me to run on all cylinders. I have much more energy, enthusiasm and enjoyment when the work that I am doing is compatible with who I am. ”

a client's experience  
*Kim Wright*  
Systems Consultant

KOLBE

# Kolbe Eases A Team's Extremes

A good friend of mine, Lori, owns an HR consulting company. Lori is an Innovator in Kolbe terms – she is very quick, always seeks a challenge, is willing to work with some structure and avoids thorough, factual approaches. Her most senior employee, Sandra, manages many of Lori's key client relationships and is a Researcher in Kolbe terms. Sandra has a great need for analytical approaches and details are her comfort zone – the juice in her day.

The extreme difference between Lori's and Sandra's natural problem-solving abilities – one's extreme need for the facts and the other's avoidance of that level of detail – was causing unspoken stress in their working relationship. We did a Kolbe Team Success Seminar® for Lori's team, where we reviewed how everyone on the team naturally operates. We focused on where they may encounter conflict and created strategies to overcome their innate differences.

## APPRECIATING DIFFERENCES

The team's and, specifically, Lori's and Sandra's working relationship has improved significantly. They now recognize that their different approaches are innate and unchanging. They have a new understanding of how each other must operate and recognize that each brings a unique contribution that neither one could deliver by themselves. The level of stress between them has decreased.

Sandra recently called a meeting with Lori seeking specific support on an issue she had with a client. Sandra respectfully asked Lori to patiently listen to “her facts” and to slow down in order to help her sort through the client challenge. They both laughed at the understanding of their differences, rolled up their sleeves and dug in together!

Can having a better understanding of your employees or colleagues help you solve the challenges of the day and bring greater ease to your team? Call me and we can talk about how the Kolbe Concept® and a Kolbe Team Success Seminar can bring increased productivity and better results to your team.

*The Kolbe A™ Index is the assessment that measures an individual's innate problem solving ability. If you are interested in an individual assessment or in learning how Kolbe can support a business team striving to be more successful, call me at 847.242.0351 for more information.*

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