

February, 2010
Volume 3, Issue 2

COLLABORATION HEALTH CARE

ALIGNING COMPASSIONATE HEALTH CARE WITH AN INFORMED MARKET TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE TODAY



Collaboration Health Care, Inc., 601 Carlson Parkway, Suite 1050; Minnetonka, Minnesota 55305
www.collaborationhealthcare.com; info@collaborationhealthcare.com 952-475-6322

We Can Change the Way We Think

By almost any measure, we are just not a happy people right now. Our approval of our government leadership remains at low levels, our satisfaction with our work has plummeted, and the job opportunities aren't growing nearly as fast as we were told they would. Businesses are struggling to survive and are already re-evaluating the strategies they may have only put in place just months before. Our economy may have stabilized, but we aren't out of the woods yet.

The health care reform debacle has seemed to paralyze many of the various stakeholders throughout the system as they wait and watch to see what happens. Meanwhile, the costs continue to rise and state governments struggle with balancing their budgets and go after health care finances as a strategy to meet their fiscal goals.

It just doesn't seem to be a fun time right now.

It's very easy to get caught-up in all of the negativity. You hear a lot of it every day. Even though we may be surrounded by it, it depends on how you react to the negativity that makes a difference. This includes whether you are running a business or running your own personal life.

It's how you look at the world that makes the difference. And, yes, attitudes can change; and transformation is possible. We've seen it happen.

Perspective Makes The Difference

As a group of Marines were preparing for battle in Afghanistan they were more than a little anxious about what they would be walking into. They realized they were about to confront challenges and obstacles few of us would ever care to experience. They understood that the enemy had one goal- and they were it.

These Marines understood their mission and were committed to achieving the goals laid-out for them. The extensive training they had received prepared them well. They knew their roles and responsibilities and maintained a high level of trust between each other. They knew the Marine next to him would always, "have his back."

Despite their preparedness, the Marines were still anxious. They decided they needed to change their thinking. They used just three letters to change their perspective and change their outlook; "PMA" (positive mental attitude). Whenever, one of them would become anxious or discouraged all they would have to say is "PMA" to get them back on track.

(Continued on Next Page)

THIS NEWSLETTER

We Can Change the Way We Think	1
Perspective Makes the Difference	1-2
Five Myths of a Positive Mental Attitude	1
Something To Think About	2

Five Myths of a Positive Mental Attitude

It's easy to get caught-up with the flow of negativity that seems to surround us more today than it may have a few years ago. Maintaining a positive mental attitude with everything going on around is isn't easy. But, the effort is worth it and we need it more than ever today.

As we all know, not everyone is a believer. The web site Thinksimple.com developed The 5 Myths Of A Positive Mental Attitude that others use to justify "the other way" of thinking. We've listed them below along with our side-comments:

Myth 1: Negative thinking is more realistic. We would argue that negative thinking is more the norm, but not necessarily more realistic.

Myth 2: People with a PMA expect moneybags to fall out of the sky if they wish for them. No we don't. Most people with a PMA maintain a sense of balance but are able to find the silver linings by looking for the opportunities where others see obstacles.

Myth 3: Positive thinking doesn't change reality. Yes it does, because it changes your perspective of reality.

Myth 4: Positive thinkers have no clue of the real world. Yes we do. We may have a different view of the real world, but positive thinking also needs to be based on reality.

Myth 5: People with a positive attitude are annoying and cheesy. OK, we probably are. While it's very easy to be surrounded by negativity, having someone around who seems optimistic and positive can be annoying. Maybe it's a message.

We'd love to hear from you. Let us know your thoughts, your feedback, and other ideas.

E-mail us at: info@collaborationhealthcare.com

Follow Our Blog at: www.collaborationhealthcare.blogspot.com

Perspective Makes the Difference (con't)

While the study of a positive mental attitude has acquired a substantial research base, PMA to these Marines was very personal. PMA meant looking at the challenges as opportunities. PMA meant finding the good things instead of focusing on the bad. PMA meant having faith in your team. PMA meant having faith in yourself.

While the reality of the situation didn't change, the Marines looked at the challenges different and were able to change their perspectives to make the decisions they needed to make to succeed. And, just three letters did it.

From Napoleon Hill to Stephen Covey to others in between, the mental outlook you possess has proven to determine how you react when situations occur and times change. And, as the Marines proved, defining what you need to maintain a positive mental attitude can be defined on your own terms- and sometimes it doesn't take much.

Several years ago, Charles De Gaulle commented, "It so happens that the world is undergoing a transformation to which no change that has yet occurred can be compared, either in scope or rapidity." The massive transformation of the world De Gaulle referred to many years ago continues today, and at a much more rapid pace than before.

Unfortunately, the transformation we are experiencing has come at a tremendous cost at many levels. Whether we decide to accept the realities or not, many are struggling to make sense of it all. We still have many challenges ahead. It's what we do with those challenges that will make the difference in our outlook and our actions.

As we need to do in our personal lives, organizations also need to periodically assess their perspectives. Whether recognized or not, the culture (or perspective) of the organization has a tremendous influence on the outlook of those who work in them and ultimately on the productivity and contribution they will make.

The numbers don't look all that encouraging today.

The Conference Board's recent 2009 survey finds only 45% of employees are satisfied with their work compared to over 61% in 1987. As Lynn Franco, director of the Consumer Research Center of the Conference Board stated, "This downward trend in job satisfaction could spell trouble for the overall engagement of U.S. employees and ultimately employee productivity."

This raises a particularly interesting challenge for health care. If we are relying on "consumer engagement" as a key strategy for reforming our employer-based health care system, how are we going to get them engaged when only 45% are satisfied with where they are in the first place?

More than ever, organizations need to look at the world from a different perspective than they may have in the past. We moved from a period of growth and prosperity to a period of instability and uncertainty in a relatively short period of time. The strategies and approaches we may have used 3 years ago may not be working well in the world we face today. Holding-on to the old "world-view" with the hope that things will return to "normal" soon will likely have unpredictable results. Things won't be going back to normal (however you define it) for quite awhile. Our world is being transformed.

And, while it may be easy to fall into the trap of negativity, there is also the opportunity to create a PMA mindset within our organizations to address the challenges ahead. We have the opportunity to maintain a positive mental attitude to confront our challenges just like the Marines in Afghanistan:

An Organizational PMA confronts the brutal realities of the marketplace and looks for new opportunities that may not have been available before. Instead of "hunkering-down" or "riding-it-out" these organizations use

these new realities to their advantage. They know that some of our most innovative ideas were launched in challenging times.

An Organizational PMA doesn't focus on the negatives despite the challenges. It accepts the negatives for what they are and focuses on the positives. It always looks for the good in things no matter how bad others may tell you things are or how difficult things may become.

An Organizational PMA is supported by trust. This trust is created through the relationships established between all stakeholders and confirmed by actions. It is based on integrity, open communication, mutual respect, and a win/win mindset. This trust is maintained with the confidence that those you are dealing with will always "have your back" when you may need it. And an Organizational PMA knows trust is earned not given.

An Organizational PMA prepares its stakeholders with exceptional planning, transparent communication, training, and execution. The organization is aligned to its mission and purpose and all stakeholders know their roles and responsibility.

Transforming from a negative mindset to a positive mental attitude is not easy. Sometimes, the flow of negativity we live with each day comes subtly and without our notice. Many times, our perspective begins to change and we don't even know it.

Attitudes of individuals and attitudes of organizations can change but it takes work. It takes a focus and determination to maintain a positive perspective when it's easier to just "go with the flow." Maintaining a positive perspective within ourselves and within our organizations can make a difference in the way we make the daily decisions we need to make to address the challenges and recognize the opportunities in the months and years ahead.

If it works for our Marines facing the challenges they face, it will work for us at home.

Something To Think About

"There is no security in this life. There is only opportunity."

Douglas MacArthur

"Destiny is not a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved."

William Jennings Bryan

Continued Next Column