



People, Passion, Performance

March 2008

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Ride the waves of change with ease.

Spotlight on: Encounter

Encounter is the willingness to meet another, to change and to be changed by the other.

The Engineers were angry that their work was being outsourced to others. To make their point, they ignored the contractors, gave them the worst jobs and locations and basically made any communication between the two groups impossible. A no-man's land stretched between them within the department. On a two day course, nineteen engineers and one contractor, Paul, sat rigid and removed. Yet over the course of the day, they crossed into the no-go area and arrived at a completely new and unexpected point: deep, genuine positive regard.

Paul had described how tough the outsourced work was, how dispiriting it was when there was no communication and how discouraging it was when there was no cooperation. The engineers finally listened and ...

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Quiet-conflict Resolution

We are all familiar with them, those quiet conflicts that simmer below the surface in most workplaces. They dampen our enthusiasm for our work and our teams, they sap creativity and drain energy.

But conflict is an inevitable and necessary part of simply living and working together as human beings. We live with different levels and forms of conflict all the time, whether at work or at home. We are never taught the tools and techniques to use conflict positively, so many of us lack the skills to harness its innovative potential.

Conflict is necessary and it can be positive. Used creatively it increases our resources because it leads to synergy, trust, honesty, diversity, authenticity and an ability to work through difficult issues. Time and again, we have found that high-trust, high-communication businesses grow and thrive simply because time and energy is not wasted on these energy drains, but is focused on finding creative synergy. Enormous growth is possible when people begin to understand conflict and are willing to actively work with the dynamic energy within it.

We are running a one-day workshop on quiet-conflict resolution. Bring along a conflict and leave with a concrete plan of action for resolving it.

Date: June 12th 2008 - 9.00am for 9.30am start - 4.30pm

Location: Montague on the Gardens, Montague Street, London WC1B 5BJ

Cost: £247 (£197 if you book before May 23rd)

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Book Review

Spotlight on: Encounter

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... began to glimpse the human suffering and the cost to the business of working against each other. They encountered Paul, the human being, instead of pigeon-holing him as an outsource worker.

Our conversations can be our pathway to encounter. And what is important is what happens to our humanity in those conversations.

We meet and interact with countless people each day. In rare moments, we become conscious of how our lives are shaped and our characters sculpted by these encounters. But mostly we pass through those moments in an unthinking blur.

The moments that stand out do so because, in those moments, we have had a deep, genuine meeting, where we truly 'see' and 'are seen'. Encounters are moments of deeper human connection we can recreate once we understand the steps involved. So how can we make this happen every day? It is built on all the tools we have been following up to this point.

1. **Stillness:** An encounter is marked by our complete presence in the moment. We are not planning a sales pitch, balancing the budget or worrying about the children. Inside, we are quiet, we are still; the 'monkey mind' is not racing ahead but is quietly present.
2. **World-class listening:** In that moment, we are open, honest, willing to hear meaning not just the words of the other person. The phenomenal transformative power of being completely listened to and the respect this conveys is deeply undervalued in most offices.
3. **Story:** we tell our story, relay our experience and in doing so we give the other person a sense of what it is like to walk in our shoes on this issue.
4. **Honesty:** to speak and to listen with honesty demand courage and care-fullness for each other. This honesty can make us feel vulnerable because we are seeing the situation from another perspective, away from the stories, excuses we may have entertained. That understanding may require us to change how we act, how we respond which can lead to...
5. **Transformation:** it is a paradox that in becoming more vulnerable, by coming out from behind our armour, we can become stronger through the insight that we gain from speaking honestly and listening openly.

Our website is being revamped

Putting the spark back into our website

We are delighted to tell you that our website is going through a two-phase re-vamp. Phase one is an intermediate stage, to bring it more up to date with new content, quotes, stories, a search facility and details of our three up coming programmes and workshops.

Phase two is a redesign of the site - including a blog - which we are working on right now. Our vision for the new site is to create a dynamic, interactive community forum for learning and sharing. It is there to support you and your work, so we would really appreciate all your suggestions, ideas and feedback. Just email Jennifer: jennifer.hurley@lamontassociates.com

"If we don't do the impossible, we shall be faced with the unthinkable."

Petra Kelly



The Hot Seat

*Morag Simmons,
Broadway Tyres*

Broadway Tyres is a tyre company that has chosen to do things differently; it recruits truly remarkable people and values them bringing the whole of themselves to work. Their genuine passion and commitment inspires exceptional customer loyalty.

“My Hot seat is Morag Simmons. She has been with Broadway Tyres for just over a year and it has been enjoyable from the start.

The one thing I love about Morag is she doesn't judge anyone; you could say you just killed your mother and she will take it in her stride but will also provide you with an alibi! She is kind, generous and unafraid of anything. She has been known to [...] flash her tattoos!

Morag can bring a smile to any face. If you need a hug or just to blow off a bit of steam, she will be there to listen. I love having her around; she is a friend worth having.”

Our thanks to Bianca for this month's contribution. Write in and nominate your colleague for our April issue: just send us a short paragraph about why you appreciate working with them.

Book Review

The Future of Management, Gary Hamel (2007)

Hamel offers us a bold, clear picture of the future of management and invites us to envision a revolutionary and far-reaching change in the way managers manage people.

He highlights the contradiction between massive technological advances and the paucity of management innovation, asking ‘Are we changing as fast as the world about us?’

The 20th century breakthroughs in harnessing the energies of corporates are now stifling the emergence of a new approach to doing business. Our ever-changing, ever-evolving world requires constant improvement to be built into the life blood of every organisation. But we are using the old model of management to manage the new.

Hamel makes a powerful argument, demonstrating convincingly that what is required is a management style that taps into the passion, creativity and inspiration of each employee. In doing so, employees bring their full humanity to work, making their organisation fully adaptable to the fast-changing business landscape.

Iconoclastic, practical, full of real life examples and very original thinking, *The Future of Management* is highly recommended for leaders who want to discover the ultimate competitive edge. It offers no formulae but is a call to experiment, create and let go of ways of management that belong to a by-gone age.

Upcoming courses & events

Tools for Success

September 2008
Birmingham

[See website for details](#)

Advanced Practitioner

May - November 2008
High Wycombe

[See website for details](#)

Quiet-conflict Resolution

June 2008
London

[See website for details](#)

Get your copy of Georgeanne's book

We have the last few
copies left of the
first edition of
The Spirited Business.

To get your copy, email
info@lamontassociates.com

Open Forum

Leadership and gender: the debate continues

The theme of gender and leadership styles has continued to spark great interest and many responses. Thank you to everyone who shared their thoughts on this subject.

Below are excerpts from two responses we received. We thought the use of *story* in the second response was particularly fitting as it demonstrated the immediacy and effectiveness of this tool, which we 'spotlighted' last month.

- "When discussing gender and leadership there is a risk of creating a self-fulfilling prophecy that treats all men the same and all women the same. It is important to see beyond gender and recognise each other as individuals with different values and strengths.
- Corporate culture can play an overwhelming role in the values that employees are able exhibit, as an individual's core values may be ignored if they fall outside the corporate value system.
- Many men and women in leadership positions may feel uncomfortable about the roles and values they are expected to uphold within their company, and for various reasons they may be unable to change jobs so they remain stuck in unfulfilling jobs." (A.K.)
- "Women use these emotions/past trauma to make up stories to use as examples to teach younger or new managers and staff - for instance, how to treat each other and the consequences of not getting it right. They also use a story approach to explain/justify decisions in meetings to ensure everybody understands the approach - and a story approach can often give a message in such a way that makes it more acceptable overall, than to just be fed bad news or huge change via a bulleted overhead. I feel this is often seen in the workplace as 'waffling' or 'not getting to the point' - but with good balance I feel this often has the desired effect - a good 'story' at a meeting to sell a point often covers so many angles it is often difficult for anyone not to agree!" (K.S.)

We welcome your comments and opinions on this or any other topic.

Email Jennifer at: jennifer.hurley@lamontassociates.com

"Management is a calling, a life engagement that, if done properly, combines technical skills with vision, compassion, honesty and trust to create an environment in which people can grow personally, can feel fulfilled, and can contribute to a common good."

Georgeanne Lamont



Accepting our own flaws - our dandelions - and those of others can increase tolerance in the workplace.

Story

The problem with dandelions

A man who took great pride in his lawn found himself with a large crop of dandelions. He tried every method he knew to get rid of them. Still they plagued him.

Finally he wrote to the Department of Agriculture. He enumerated all the things he had tried and closed his letter with the question: "What shall I do now?"

In due course, the reply came: "We suggest you learn to love them."