



Welcome, Bienvenue and Herzlich Willkommen to

VocalPoint

FocalVocal's Free Monthly Newsletter

VocalPoint: Issue 7: March 2007

Welcome to the seventh issue of VocalPoint!

The FocalVocal team and I are delighted that you are interested in receiving up to date news about FocalVocal and reading articles written by us about current issues within training today. If there are specific questions you have regarding your training needs or areas that you think are worthy of investigation, we would be happy to hear from you and see if we can help out by doing some research and writing an article.

In this month's issue of VocalPoint, apart from giving you details regarding what's on, what's new and what's coming up, Kirk Halinson one of FocalVocal's business coaches will be giving some helpful hints on team coaching.

However, in the meantime:

What's on?

Monica will be competing for Harrow in Business (part of Business Link for London) and in partnership with Women's Connection

International Women's Day

The Entrepreneurs Experience celebrating and supporting female entrepreneurship.

Monica will be interviewing and doing a Dimpleby with a panel of experts and business entrepreneurs in the Harrow Civic Centre's conference chamber from 1.00-1.30pm and 3.00-3.30pm.

If you would like to meet Monica and some other FocalVocallers, come and say hello to us on our stall in the main area of the event.

Date: Saturday 31st March 2007

Time: 12.00-4.00pm

Venue:
Committee Rooms 1 & 2

Harrow Civic Centre
Station Road
Harrow HA1 2UH

Transport: Nearest BR station and Bakerloo line: Harrow & Wealdstone

Parking: available in the Civic centre's car park

Pre-payment: can be made direct on www.eggmeg.co.uk

In-house taster sessions

FocalVocal is currently offering free of charge in-house taster sessions, a perfect opportunity for you to test drive FocalVocal's method of training and our skills. If interested please e-mail monica@focalvocal.co.uk

A recent two-hour taster session conducted at PKF (UK) LLP proved hugely successful and thought provoking dialogues regarding combating nerves by 'thinking in pictures' when presenting ensued.

'PKF invited FocalVocal to deliver a taster session on Beginners Public Speaking. The attendees found it to be informative, developmental and fun. The presenter and actors struck the right tone from the very start and allowed the participants to contribute which helped maintain their focus. It was a thoroughly worthwhile session.'

John Watkins Director of Training and Development PKF (UK) LLP
Accountants & business advisers

FocalVocal Taster Sessions 2007

1. Beginners Public Speaking with Monica Lowenberg
2. Assertiveness with Helen McNeill
3. Managing Change with Chris Robinson
4. Giving and Receiving Feedback with Chris Robinson
5. Work/Life Balance Helen McNeill
6. Media Training with Gareth Rubin and Monica Lowenberg as from April 2007

FocalVocal taster sessions are two hours and fifteen minutes in length, conducted at your premises by one trainer and two actors, one session can train up to 18 persons.

What's New?

Corporate Entertainment

'Raise the Spirit' a light-hearted look at the world of wine, led by wine expert (or so he thinks) Angus Tarte. The inflated and flawed ego of Mr Tarte visits wine growers, sommeliers and marketers from the new and old world regions.

If you would like an opportunity to see FocalVocal's Karen Bartholomew in this production, DVDs of the show are now available.

If interested please e-mail monica@focalvocal.co.uk

What's coming up?

- **Personal effectiveness training with Monika Key**
- **Business coaching with Kirk Halinson**
- **Forum theatre**
- **Role-Players for assessment days and pilot days**
- **New brochure that can be soon downloaded from publications www.focalvocal.co.uk**
- **April VocalPoint with Helen McNeill on how to keep a healthy work/life balance**

Helen McNeill is a member of the General Social Care Council, a seasoned trainer for local government and FocalVocal's trainer in work/life balance, communication and assertiveness skills.

In the meantime here is Kirk with some advice regarding

Team Coaching – What constitutes a winning team?

In recent years much has been written about Life/Personal Coaching and Business/Executive Coaching and generally the coaching intervention is on a one to one basis i.e. the coach and client working on individual issues and creating individual action plans for the attainment of goals/objectives and performance improvement.

However, coaching can also be used when working with teams. According to Smith and Katenback, *The Wisdom of Teams* (1993) a TEAM can be defined as, 'a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals and approach for which they are mutually accountable.'

So what does it mean to be a member of a team? Again, much has been written in answer to this question, but much can be gained from the Goose Story

When you see geese heading south for the winter flying along in a 'V' formation, you might be interested to know what science has discovered about why they fly that way.

It has been learned that as each bird flaps its wings, it creates uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in a 'V' formation the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are travelling on the thrust of one another.

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way as we are going.

When the lead goose gets tired, he rotates back in the wing and another goose flies point. *It pays to take turns doing hard jobs.*

The geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. *An encouraging word goes a long way.*

Finally, when a goose gets sick, or is wounded by a gunshot and falls out, two geese fall out of formation and follow him down to help and protect him.

They stay with him until he is either able to fly or until he is dead, and they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with the group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that.

The Goose Story highlights the importance of **Direction, Formation, Encouragement** and **Support**. A team where all members are heading in the same direction, in a formation which brings out the best in each member and which offers a network of encouragement and support is a winning team.

How can coaching help to bring about a winning team? We need to understand the dynamics of team development. Let's begin with the end in mind - the recognised characteristics of a winning team:

- Clear objectives shared by all members
- Good communication

- Supportive behaviour
- Trust, constructive criticism
- Shared workload, co-operation
- Balanced roles, consensus decisions
- Effective leadership

Assuming that these are the ideals of a winning team, we will call the ideal team state the **COOPERATION** stage. There are 2 stages through which the team has to pass before it reaches the ideal state.

Stage 1 is known as the **INCLUSION** stage, where people determine if they are or feel likely to be a team member. Anxiety and introversion are prevalent. The need for acceptance and the fear of rejection are strong. If there is a designated leader, members will look to him/her for acceptance and guidance. The tone and example that the leader sets at this stage is vital as it tends to become the accepted norm of the group. For example, a good leader may display openness and honesty, which in turn will promote an open and honest team. Once the majority of the group feels included, another dynamic emerges, **stage 2** that of individual **ASSERTION**.

Stage 2 is a time of expressing power and of extending boundaries. Roles and responsibilities of team members will begin to emerge. However, competition within the team will be fierce and sometimes cause exceptional individual performance at the expense of others – productivity outweighs cohesiveness. This is an important and valuable development phase and equally can be tough for the leader. The transition from **ASSERTION** to **COOPERATION** and the attainment of the characteristics of a winning team will owe much to encouragement and support – and of course coaching.

How can the coach facilitate/accelerate the **INCLUSION > ASSERTION > COOPERATION** process? The coaching of a team is based on the same principles as coaching individuals. Increasing both individual and collective Awareness and Responsibility is the key to improving performance/behaviours. If the goal of a team being coached is to achieve the state of COOPERATION, then coaching can bring forth a shopping list of options, for example:

- Discuss and agree the definition of a set of common goals for the team.
- Develop a set of ground rules or operating principles acceptable to all team members and to which all have contributed.
- Put support systems in place to deal, in confidence with individual troubles or concerns as they arise.
- Develop a common interest outside of the work place.

Each of these suggestions or options can be considered by the team. The decision to adopt one or more of these options must be made democratically. We now have the Way Forward towards a winning team.

Bibliography

Noyes, H.C. (1992). "Goose Story." *ARC News*, Vol. 7, No. 1.

Whitmore, J (2003). *Coaching for Performance*. London: Nicholas Brearley Publishing.

Kirk, FocalVocal's business coach is a qualified Life Coach who has gained several coaching qualifications with both the European Coaching Foundation (ECF) and Newcastle College, one of the UK's leading Life Coaching and Corporate Coaching training providers. Kirk is a fellow member of the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants and during the past 25+ years has held senior roles within Finance, Administration and most recently Human Resources.

The Goose Story

by Dr. Harry Clarke Noyes
ARCS NEWS, Vol. 7, No. 1, January 1992

*Next
fall, when
you see Geese
heading South for
the Winter, flying along
in V formation, you might
consider what science has dis-*

covered as to why they fly that way:
as each bird flaps its wings, it creates an
uplift for the bird immediately following. By
flying in V formation the whole flock adds at least
71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

**People who share a common direction and sense of community
can get where they are going more quickly and easily
because they are travelling on the thrust of one another.**

When
a goose falls
out of formation,
it suddenly feels the drag
and resistance of trying to go it alone
and quickly gets back into formation to take
advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front.

**If we have as much sense as a goose,
we will stay in formation
with those who are headed the same way we are.**

When
the Head Goose
gets tired, it rotates back
in the wing and another goose flies point.

**It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs
with people or with geese flying South.**

Geese
honk from behind to
encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

What do we say when we honk from behind?

Finally,
and this is important,
when a goose gets sick, or is
wounded by gunshots and falls out
of formation, two other geese fall out with that
goose and follow it down to lend help and protection.
They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly, or until
it dies. Only then do they launch out on their own, or with another formation
to catch up with their group.

IF WE HAVE THE SENSE OF A GOOSE, WE WILL STAND BY EACH OTHER LIKE THAT.

FocalVocal works with businesses in the private and public sector who wish to improve their communication and management skills. Businesses who

- know that a dynamic, interactive learning environment is the most successful in helping you to retain newly acquired skills and be confident to apply them
- are bored with courses where you get to sit, but don't actually get to do
- have found it to be a bonus to have trainers and actors who are native English speakers but are also bi-lingual in German and French
- like the challenge of working with professional actors to test out new skills in a fun, non-judgemental environment

If you think the same, then get in touch with FocalVocal today!

Please feel free to forward VocalPoint to anybody you feel would find it of interest.

E-mail: monica@focalvocal.co.uk

Web: www.focalvocal.co.uk

Monica Lowenberg MA, BA (hons), QTS,
Founding Director FocalVocal
Enterprise House, 297 Pinner Road
Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 4HS
Tel : 0845 055 6301
Vat registration: 882 0710 31

Copyright © March 2007 Monica Lowenberg
