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About FYA

FYA - *For Your Advantage*, is a free twice - monthly newsletter published by TrendLeader Connections.

With every issue, FYA provides insights into the topics that concern healthcare leaders today and the challenges that will be faced in the near future.

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The Foreign Language Challenge in U.S. Hospitals

Two problems are emerging as major issues for U. S. hospitals. The first problem is the growing number of healthcare professionals that speak English as a second language (ESL); and the second problem is the growing number of patients that don't speak English at all.

We have a shortage of doctors in primary care and in all disciplines in rural communities. We are experiencing a shortage of nurses throughout the country. Our Nation has seen a rise in the number of foreign physicians and nurses immigrating to fill these vacancies. As the numbers rise, the issue of miscommunications rises.

Misunderstanding of orders or lack of clear instructions to a patient is causing an increase in errors at a time when the focus is on reducing and eliminating medical errors.

Addressing this challenge is Carnegie Mellon University. It has a software program called NativeAccent™ and is being sold under the name Carnegie Speech*. At a lower cost and more available than a human tutor, this software lets individuals with ESL to train in the privacy of their office. It shows them what sounds and rhythm to work on and points out what they can do to improve. Professionals can use it over and over until they are confident with their speech. The basic system provides over 50 hours of training material for all of the sounds of English and its rhythm. Lessons are adapted to problems linked to the user's native language and the computerized tutor adapts each individual lesson according to the user's personal progress.

Learning a foreign language is not only a question of getting the words and syntax right. You can't be understood until you can pronounce it well. NativeAccent is designed to let users speak, then give them feedback as to how they did – what to correct and how to correct it. The Carnegie Speech product uses state-of-the-art speech recognition technology from Carnegie Mellon University. The product is being used throughout the world in call-in centers

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The Foreign Language Challenge in U.S. Hospitals (Continued...)

associated with U. S. companies. It is now available and very affordable to hospitals and health systems.

The second major issue facing U. S. hospitals is understanding and communicating with patients that don't speak English. Patients can't understand doctors and nurses and vice versa when they speak different languages. A Tucson-based company, CyraCom, has the solution. CyraCom provides and supports ClearLink™, a patented dual handset phone specifically designed for medical interpretation. Accessing services using ClearLink is like having trained on-site medical interpreters at your disposal 24 hours a day, every day, in more than 150 languages.

With the touch of a few buttons, a health care provider can have an interpreter on the line almost instantly. The ClearLink allows two people to communicate continuously without having to pass a single handset back and forth. The sharing of a single handset is not transparent because it can lead to longer interpretation sessions and critical information can be lost in

communication. The ClearLink™ allows patients and caregivers to remain on the line throughout the conversation, and facilitates a more natural flow of communication.

It takes the push of two buttons and less than 30 seconds to select one of the 150 languages needed to get a trained medical interpreter on the line. More than 900 hospitals and healthcare facilities are using the product in the U. S. One medical center in Virginia reports that its monthly bill for the service (146 phones throughout its campus) is \$26,000. Spanish is the most common language that needs interpreting, but as many as 60 languages have needed interpreting at the Virginia hospital including the most frequent: Russian, Vietnamese, Arabic and Farsi.

Thanks to new technology, the challenge of dealing with the growing foreign population is getting resolved.

*FULL DISCLOSURE: The publishers of this electronic newsletter have a subsidiary that is the sole distributor of the Carnegie Speech training program in the U. S. healthcare industry. For information about this training product call: (406) 586-5929.

About



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Using Imagination for Motivation

By Fred Lee

I went through the Disney training program earlier in my career. During my first day in the program, our instructor used imagination to motivate us. "Imagine some good friends whom you have not seen for a long time but would love to see," he said. "You just found out that they will be here on Friday to spend the weekend with you. What will you do to get ready for their visit?"

We made a list. Clean the bathrooms and hang up clean towels. Change the sheets on the bed. Vacuum the carpets. Stock up on special food and drinks we think they will like. Mow the lawn. Wash the cars. The list went on.

Then he asked us to make another list. "What are some things you would do or refrain from doing while they are here if you want them to have a good time and come back again?"

At each table we made a second list. Cater to them. Ask them what they wanted to do and do it with them. Let them use the bathroom first. Serve them good food and be eager to refill their glasses. Be polite and friendly. Respect their privacy. Be up before they are so we can greet them in the morning. Ask them if they're having a good time. Smile and be cheerful around them. Dress nicely. Don't pick your nose. Say please and thank-you and excuse me. Play the kind of music we know they like. Don't air the family's personal problems in front of them. Put their needs first. The lists varied, but these were the kinds of thoughts that were expressed.

Then our instructor pointed to the combined list of our answers on his flip chart. "We all know how to treat a guest in our home, don't we? It's no different at Disney. We are hosts, every one of us. Our customers are called guests. Please treat them as you would if you knew each one of them personally and liked them. Treat them as you would if they were staying in your own home. And do it every day, all the time. Help us keep our promise to them that we are here to make them happy – just as you would make your own guests happy."

This is using imagination for motivation, not creativity. The two are different. Motivational imagination begins with questions like: What would you do in this situation? If such-and-such happened to you, how would you feel? These kinds of questions prompt us to imagine a real situation, then analyze or rehearse our response.

There are four levels of motivation.

To show how important imagination is in motivation, let's examine four types of motivation and arrange them according to their power to affect our actions. We'll go from weakest to strongest.

LEVEL 1: Compliance (doing what someone makes me do).

When my motive for doing something is to get an extrinsic reward or avoid punishment, I am doing it from the motivation of compliance. It's when my boss says, "If you want X, you will have to do Y." This could be a threat or a bribe. It's based on the assumption that I wouldn't be likely to do it unless spurred by external reinforcement. If I don't do what is required, I will get written up or fired. If I do such and such, I will get a prize or a bonus. Compliance is always in relationship to some external authority who has the power to give or withhold rewards and punishments. In management it is often called the carrot-and-stick approach. This is level-1 motivation and represents the weakest motivation because a

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About



FYA - For Your Advantage is brought to you by TrendLeader Connections. The function of TrendLeader Connections is producing educational materials and seminars that help healthcare executives differentiate between fads and trends; and making connections with "Trend Leaders" within the healthcare industry.

We are committed to delivering new perspectives and ideas, creative and innovative healthcare solutions, provocative concepts and quality educational materials to today's healthcare leaders. We want to concentrate on "what comes after what comes next."

Using Imagination for Motivation (Continued...)

person will stay in compliance only as long as the authority is present and continues to give extrinsic rewards or punishments.

A workplace focused primarily on compliance is a paternalistic (adult-child) culture because managers are like parents who lay down the laws to children who had better obey them or else. Although compliance is a common feature of most work environments, we need to note that in terms of human motivation, it is the weakest, and places the responsibility for success on the shoulders of a controlling, paternalistic authority. Since the world is full of people who don't want to grow up and take responsibility, and plenty of others with an obsessive need to be in control, it often becomes the natural managing style.

LEVEL 2: Willpower (doing what I believe I should do).

The next level of motivation, synonymous with self-discipline, is when I do something on my own because I believe I should do it, even if I don't feel like it. Nobody is making me do it. I do it because I believe I should. It takes willpower to do something I believe I should, especially when I don't feel like doing it. Another word for willpower is self-discipline. I believe I should exercise in the morning. I set the alarm. When the alarm goes off, I am sleepy and it's cold outside. What I feel like doing is skipping it and staying in bed. But, like a drill sergeant, I tell myself: Get up. Don't be a wimp. You promised yourself you would do this. You know you should. Come on, let's go! When I do the thing I believe I should, all on my own, the reward is intrinsic. No one is there to congratulate me if I do or ridicule me if I don't. I pat myself on the back for my victory over my feelings. Psychologically, a life filled with such victories, whose rewards come from inside of me, builds my self-esteem and sense of competence, something compliance does not do.

Since we know that people are better motivated by values than compliance, a great deal of effort is being spent in companies to forge and communicate statements of core values intended to awaken the desire in employees to do the right thing whether authority is watching or not. Better that someone act from a sense of ethical imperative than fear or selfishness. The difficulty with this approach, however, is that values have to be internalized before they can become the source of self-discipline. They don't work hanging on the wall, especially in a culture of compliance. And employees are

quick to become cynical if they do not see these values reflected in the behaviors of their leaders or in the actions taken by the company, especially in a crisis.

LEVEL 3: Imagination (doing what I want to because I feel like it).

This is the most interesting, at least to me, because it is through imagination that my feelings are created in the first place. It is also through imagination that my feelings can be changed. We often hear it said that you should not make certain decisions on the basis of emotions. But that is very hard to do unless you are a master of self-discipline. If I can change my feelings, however, the required action will be much easier since I don't have to use sheer willpower to overcome them. When my feelings make me want to, instead of not want to, the motivation is much more powerful. That's why it occupies level 3 in the model. The startling truth is that imagination is more powerful than willpower.

LEVEL 4: Habit (doing what comes naturally).

Habit is the most powerful motivation of all, at level 4, because it is what we do without thinking. Obviously we don't do anything without thinking, in the technical sense. But when we use the phrase "I didn't think," we are speaking of force of habit. It's our knee-jerk response to stimulus. Habit is the result of all the programming we have absorbed in life and the repetitious responses to events. My force of habit is shutting the alarm off and going back to sleep when I said I would get up and exercise. My bad habits are all the things I do that seem to get in the way of my best efforts to achieve better health, increased knowledge, greater accomplishment, and more rewarding relationships. Our lifelong pursuit of competence and character is an effort to replace bad habits with good ones.

I will continue this concept of the power of imagination to motivate in a future column.

Fred Lee is a highly popular speaker; and the author of "If Disney Ran Your Hospital." His book was named the 2005 book of the year by the ACHE.

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