

The brain is always open and never full

Ashley Latter, 'The Selling Coach', explains why successful people believe this mantra



I HEARD the above quote while listening to a personal development CD recently. The presenter talked about the fact that successful people are always looking for new ideas, tips and techniques to help improve their business and personal lives and that their brain is never closed to a new idea; it is always open.

Today, I have worked with 10 people who participated on a one-day Advanced Sales & Presentation/Communication Skills Training Programme in London. This is their second programme with me. From the first programme they have all achieved excellent results and were all hungry for new ideas.

All the participants seemed to be running either successful businesses or departments. They were from a variety of businesses, but all had one thing in common: they all wanted to improve, expand their comfort zone and develop new skills to give them the edge. They even pushed me to stretch them.

They all delivered a series of presentations and all were reviewed in a private room by a second coach and each person wanted to do better next time. They continued to push their boundaries and mine and the development made by some of the participants was truly outstanding.

Some of the participants had travelled long distances, stayed overnight in hotels and were away from their home and family. At lunchtime and coffee breaks, they were all networking, swapping ideas and telephone numbers to develop new contacts and relationships. They took notes all day and questions were being asked non-stop throughout the day. Some even stayed behind for further coaching and advice and the others went on to the pub to continue their conversations and to further their friendships.

I am writing this article on the way home on the train. I am so tired. I look a wreck, feel dirty and all I can think about is my own bed, after spending the week in a hotel. I am honoured to have worked with some outstanding people and to have one of the best jobs in the world.

There is no doubt that these people have a strong desire to be the best and to succeed, but they all have a brain that is open to a new idea. Look at the best people in your profession and I bet they are always looking for a new idea, a new technique that will give them the edge. They have an appetite for new ideas and their brain is never closed. Successful people I find always have a brain that is always open to new ideas. Is your brain open or closed?

Why not make this the year you commit to your own personal development? Read a business book a month and adopt two new ideas a month into your practice. Listen to some personal development CDs in the car. If you listened to 30 minutes a day of personal development, that is the equivalent to over 125 hours per year.

Lastly, in addition to going on clinical courses, go and listen to at least four speakers a year who can help you on your business. If you apply all these ideas in your practice, just think what difference it would make to your goals and business. Is your brain open or closed?

- Over the last 10 years, Ashley Latter has coached over 3,400 dentists and their teams on his Two Day Ethical Sales & Communication Programme. To learn more about his courses and to receive his free e-mail newsletter, visit www.thesellingcoach.co.uk.

Trust and Society join forces

Professor John Langdon, Professor Brian Conroy, George Sweeney and Professor Peter Brennan give an update on the NRET

IN July 2007, the Norman Rowe Educational Trust became a sub-committee of the British Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and henceforth is known as the Norman Rowe International Educational Foundation (NRIEF).

The operational brief of the NRIEF will be to promote an international educational and humanitarian mandate aimed at the needs of developing and post-conflict countries. In the main, this will be a continuation of the Trust's previous activities.

It is appropriate that as a founder member, the first secretary and a past president of the BAOMS, Norman Rowe is linked to the furtherance of the Foundation's international educational and humanitarian activities. These delineate and circumscribe his professional life's work and service to others.

He was responsible for guiding the training of almost 100 senior surgical trainees at six major hospitals in the UK over a 35-year period. It is interesting to note that from that cohort came the first three presidents of the NRET, namely Professor Sir Paul Bramley, Ian Heslop and

Professor John Sowray. Many hundreds of overseas observers from numerous countries underpinned their training by attendance at his teaching rounds, clinics, operating sessions and lectures.

Origins and objectives

The Trust was established in 1993 by a small group of maxillofacial surgeons, technologists and scientists, who held Norman Lester Rowe CBE in very high esteem. He was not a political or power-seeking person, but a powerful influence for the pursuit of high standards in clinical practice, patient care, education and training within the specialty.

The founder members of the NRET thought it appropriate and fitting to remind others, especially those who had not known Mr Rowe, of his high ideals and special character traits. These special qualities are reflected by the importance he placed on scholarship, the need for well-structured training and educational pathways (appropriate to the responsibilities of their professional activities), respect for one's fellow man, duty, kindness and compassion for those in need, plus his propensity to elevate and promote others rather than himself.

It was felt that a Trust bearing his name that promoted these special qualities, and moreover his example of how to perform one's professional duties in a totally unselfish way, would serve a worthwhile and meaningful purpose.

It was also hoped that his generous spirit in helping compromised individuals and countries when passing through difficult times could be perpetuated in some way.

The working brief

The Trust was made up of trustees and managed by senior trustees, all of whom were committed to giving their expertise and time to Trust activities on a totally pro bono basis. This allowed the NRET Council to deploy its limited funds to humanitarian aid programmes and educational activities and not on administrative and trustee expenses.

The NRET has over the last decade and a half established a reputation for being a small group of enthusiasts committed to providing support to those in need and identifying clinical and educational services within head and neck surgery that would appear to have run into difficulties.

The Trust's objectives were and

continue as the Foundation:

1. The propagation of clinical and scientific information to developing and post-conflict countries.
2. Provision of humanitarian aid in the presence of adversity to developing and post-conflict countries.
3. Address problematical issues with a view to finding equitable solutions.
4. Recognise and reward outstanding signal service and achievement.

Missions accomplished since 1993

1. Organisation and the promotion of 358 separate lectures.
2. Financial sponsorship of 51 UK speakers to participate in NRET programmes held in other countries.
3. Organisation of five fact-finding meetings involving Trust officers and members of other bodies.
4. Organisation of three discussion meetings involving Trust members and clinical and scientific colleagues.
5. Organisation of 15 teaching workshops.
6. Organisation of four conferences.
7. Organisation of two symposia.
8. Organisation of six seminars.
9. Organisation of two international congresses in Jordan and Pakistan.