

## BRIEF BIO



**Coach / Organizational Consultant / Group Facilitator** Assists leaders in advancing their ability to co-create their future from a place of presence, deep listening, and integrity-based communication. Since 1999, through education and facilitation, has helped private individuals and non-profit leaders resolve personal and relational challenges, improve their awareness and communication skills, and strengthen their leadership and organizational skills. Prior to private practice, was responsible for end-to-end operations of multiple sportswear divisions, most recently as Div. Vice President with responsibility for a professional buying staff merchandising 43 stores in New England and an operating budget of \$120 million.

**Areas of Expertise:** Leadership and personal development; training program development and delivery including organizational development, emotional intelligence, psychology, communications, energy, coaching, group facilitation. Retail management, strategic planning, financial forecasting, inventory management, negotiating, succession planning.

## TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

### OVERVIEW

Success in any organization or personal endeavor requires that we act with both well-honed, evolving professional skills and emotional maturity. Today's leaders need the willingness and ability to respond (not react) to any environment or situation, regardless of what it is.

### CORE PHILOSOPHY

Throughout my retail career, and in my experience as a coach, consultant, and group facilitator, I've reflected on what contributes to growth and sustainable success: why did my retail divisions consistently perform in the top quartile of the industry; how did my work with psychologists, doctors and coaches expand their ability to help people live fuller lives; what helps people learn, and what doesn't; what facilitates lasting transformation; what helps people not only succeed, but also thrive? I arrived at the following:

- Human relation skills and technical business and organizational skills are of equal importance. The boundaries of what we can achieve are defined by our emotional maturity, what we know how to do, our willingness to contribute, and our ability to interact collaboratively with and for something more than ourselves.
- Everyone and everything can contribute positively to growth. Growth is a personal choice.
- Experience is the best teacher, and is most relevant and enjoyable when it assists the individual in achieving their personal goals in the context of their next larger set of goals – personal, professional, and/or organizational / community, environment.
- Leaders / Creators must know several basic things:
  - o Who are we serving? What do the stakeholders indicate they need/ desire?
  - o What is emerging from the future; what 'wants to be born'?
  - o What resources do we have collectively?
  - o What processes and products would be most satisfying and sustainable?
  - o How shall we use what we have and work together to create what we collectively intend?

Whether in the boardroom, classroom, or countryside, great leaders are teachers and coaches, and we grow right along with our teams. Whether teaching a yearlong program for therapeutic professionals, facilitating non-profit board retreats, or guiding a retail buying team over multiple years, it's clearly the combination of everyone that helps each person deepen their understanding and skills. As teacher / facilitator I make certain participants learn or create what they intend, but as or more importantly I'm making a place for all of us to learn from each other's experience, ideas, insights. I'm helping people appreciate and utilize their diverse natural talents, release resistances, discover more than they once knew, and work together to accomplish what they came here to do.

My teaching style is experiential. Upfront in any training I clarify my goals for our experience together (both technical skill and leadership development targets) and outline our initial methods, timeline and resources to accomplish these. I typically follow this with:

- A brief check-in with each participant to discover what they would like personally and professionally from our experience together.
- A dovetailing of our goals to assure my plan and that of the students are joined.
- A *brief* talk that 1) sets our work together into its next larger context, and 2) overviews the separate topics and related skills we will be learning.
- An overview of each topic followed by demonstration, practice and/ or exercises that engage the students in learning by experience, and from each other.
- Assignments to reinforce what they have just learned.

I consistently break the whole into sequential parts, repeating a similar rhythm that includes instruction, demonstration, reflection, practice, reflection, assignments, reflection.

Ultimately people deepen their understanding and learn a 'whole skill' and all the parts embedded in it. Where applicable, they do so in the context of working on a self-selected project, something interesting and meaningful to them. Upfront, participants receive written notes on everything we cover in class. I want people to have the space to listen, to be curious, and to expand their critical and creative thinking.

I believe in class participation, and demonstration of understanding and skill. Reading and exercises are assigned to deepen and expand knowledge. On the rare occasion that tests are given, they are merely to assure participants understand the material, and to give them the opportunity to have their questions answered and to receive individual instruction as needed.

In the process of learning, participants are challenged to exercise linear and intuitive thinking, and to look at personal, local and global contexts. We consider the impact of demographics and geography, always inviting people to draw upon their own collective diversity, experience, and inherent wisdom.

While working together as a group, I pay close attention to where each person is in their learning and development. I look for their strengths and challenges and do my best to assist them in addressing each of these in a way that makes sense to them.

What excites me about teaching/learning is the union of skill and discovery. In everything we do, I notice we learn skills, accomplish goals, and achieve outcomes while *through* these things something else emerges – wisdom beyond knowledge, human understanding, awareness of individual and collective patterns and their impact on one another, new ways and technologies to collaborate, and ultimately new ways to help each other grow.