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## Cost Justification of Engagement Skills Training

### Introduction

Most contemporary managers understand that developing engagement skills for service provision staff, is a good, if not essential investment. Articulating that case to the holders of the corporate purse strings, is not always easy. The Finance people are usually wanting quantifiable evidence of an improvement to the bottom-line. This paper aims to help General Managers present their business case in a practical and compelling way.

### Return on Investment

The Return on Investment (ROI) for training must be measured by outcomes. The outcomes from engagement skills training are only realised if behavioural change occurs. If employees learn a lot of new techniques but fail to put them into practice, then from an ROI perspective, the training has been sub-optimal!

We often learn new and interesting things, but if they have no impact on the way in which we conduct our roles, there is no ROI. It is not enough for a training event to merely educate the participants. Providing additional knowledge alone does not add value. The organisation needs to adopt and utilise the information actively. The justification of engagement skills training will rest with the likelihood of positive outcomes, through behavioural change.

JHW workshops are designed around a model to promote behavioural change (See appendix 1). Selecting a training offering that has been designed in such a way will maximise the uptake, outcomes and ROI, and reduce the risk failure.

### Return

The areas of significant return from better engagement skills are; improved productivity, reduced time cycles, greater client satisfaction and improved morale

**Improved Productivity** - Better engagement with our stakeholders will lead to greater co-operation and less conflict. Business will transact more smoothly and effectively. By getting closer to our stakeholders we will obtain a better understanding of their needs. This will enable us to apply our capabilities in more effective ways, to meet their needs. As engagement grows, we are rewarded with greater levels of forgiveness when things don't go according to plan. As our communication improves through better engagement, we will experience less mistakes and misunderstandings. Better preparation will result in more focused and productive outcomes from shorter meetings. Focussing on outcomes will result in less wasted effort and lost opportunities. This should also create better plans of action ensuring tasks are completed in a timely fashion.

**Reduced Time Cycles** - For all the reasons discussed above, we will also experience quicker turn around with more on-time and on budget, results. Quite apart from the productivity benefits of this, are the rewards of getting to market sooner. We can achieve faster turnaround time for our stakeholders, greater credibility for on-time delivery, and avoid down stream costs, caused by late delivery.

**Greater Stakeholder Satisfaction** - If we build more productive relationships with our stakeholders (both internal and external), and improve our expectation management, client satisfaction will improve. This will lead to greater and more profitable utilisation of our services, increasing our edge over the competition. Where our stakeholders are external, the revenue impacts are obvious. Where the external stakeholder is further down the supply chain (our direct stakeholder is internal), the benefits are no less real. Unless our back office infrastructure supports the front office appropriately, it cannot service our clients effectively. When the back office supports its internal stakeholders as if they were external stakeholders, then the organisation develops a culture of quality service for everyone.

**Improved Morale** - Improving the engagement skills of the organisation will contribute to morale and co-operation levels. This will not only impact the three areas already covered, but it will also lead to lower staff turnover costs, and easier recruitment. Companies like Apple, Virgin, Amazon and Google do not become employers of choice by accident!

For further details, see appendix 4 - Translating Behavioural Change in to Value

### **Measuring Costs**

The true cost of training and development is greater than the course fee. Other cost elements include lost productivity (while attending training) and the lost opportunity of doing something productive. If training is offsite (which often produces better results), then you may need to also include participant travel, venue costs, refreshment etc.

### **Measuring Returns**

This is not as easy as measuring costs, but is at least as important. Training and Development will impact differently on participants depending on their experience and willingness to learn. Many of the outcomes are not immediately obvious, although they may have a significant downstream impact on the bottom line. For instance, raising our customer satisfaction rating from 7 to 8 has no immediate bearing on the Profit & Loss. An experienced Sales Manager however, might well forecast a corresponding increase in Sales of say 8 or 12 percent. Knowing the current level of repeat sales and their margins, means that it should not be difficult accurately predict the bottom line impact of increased customer satisfaction. To attempt an "Activity Based Costing (ABC)" analysis, post Workshop, for each participant based on their every task, is clearly impractical. The cost and time involved in doing so would potentially negate any potential benefit achieved. To discount the return to zero because it is not empirically measured would be equally foolish. Experienced practitioners can and do make worthwhile estimates based on reasonable assumptions about their business. These tend to be based on groups rather than individuals. These estimates are appropriate for a Return on Investment analysis.

JHW corporate clients seem to indicate a productivity improvement in the range of 5 - 10% with a 2 - 4 year life depending upon skill reinforcement (See sustaining the Savings below).

## **Cost Benefit**

By feeding the numbers into a spreadsheet the ROI is calculated. For details see appendix 2.

By way of example, we have made the following assumptions:

Workshop Fee = \$22,500 including materials, handouts etc.  
15 Participants each on an annual salary of \$100,000  
3 Day workshop  
Venue fee of \$12,000 including refreshments etc. Travel to venue \$40 per person  
Estimated improvement in productivity of 7%, sustained for 3 years

The total once off cost of the workshop is \$55,555. The Annual returns (based on 7% of salary) is \$105,000. In year 1 the net return is \$49,445. In year 3 the ROI is \$259,445, which is almost 500%. Varying the assumptions will change the outcome, but even so the results look quite compelling.

## **Sustaining the Savings**

Once the investment is made, you can expect to see behavioural change and better outcomes. If nothing else occurs, this will gradually tail off over time. Without refreshing the skills, complacency will set in and over a period of around 3 - 5 years and the impact will be gradually lost.

Alternatively, if the service provider and the organisation invest a little in staff management and development over time, a greater level of benefit will be derived, and the impact will be sustained. See appendix 3 for JHW's recommended approach to sustaining the skills.

## **Risks**

A major risk is that you do not attain the behavioural change you are seeking.

No behavioural Change = No Return on Investment

Be sure to select a provider that has a clear strategy for achieving and sustaining behavioural change.

Saving money on the fees by selecting a lower cost provider is often appealing when faced with budget constraints. If the chosen provider falls short on behavioural change, then the returns to the business may be severely compromised. Remember that the fee is only around half of the total cost of the training, so a 20% reduction in fee only represents a 10% cost saving. If you do not achieve sustainable change, you are putting the potential returns at risk.

Reworking the example above based on a 20% fee reduction, but only a 3% productivity gain for 2 years, we see an initial saving of \$4500 (from \$55,555 to \$51,055). However the results are a dismal \$6000 loss in year 1 and only a \$39,000 return for the 2 year life of the event.

The reality, could be far worse. Often the catalyst for training of this nature is to respond to changing market conditions, or to perform better on a particularly challenging project. If the training event under achieves, the entire initiative may be at risk. Recovery from such a situation is problematic. You cannot say, "We selected the wrong course, sorry, but now I would like you all do give up another 3 days to see if we can get it right". We have lost credibility and goodwill, as well as momentum on the initiative.

A second potential risk, particularly in large corporations, relates to business buy-in. A centralised Learning & Development (L&D) facility can have an critical role in achieving consistency, and evaluating the appropriateness of offerings. There is a danger that focussing on consistency and cost reduction may come at the expense of the Business Drivers. A well intended initiative that is not specifically targeted to the particular business need will be counter-productive. It doesn't take too many of these before we lose the buy-in of the business sponsors, which we know is critical to the end result.

The third major risk is that the business unit are insufficiently committed to the behavioural change. This cannot be a "one off" intervention where we tick the box, congratulate ourselves and start looking for the next challenge. Staff development sometimes appears to be the forgotten role of management. Increasingly, Managers appear to be encouraged and rewarded for "task management".

It is not enough! The greatest benefit that most managers can bring to their organisation, is the development and nurturing of their staff's capabilities. Succession planning in a healthy organisation requires people to be ready for the next step. Our employees are too well educated and capable, to be content following orders.

## **Conclusion**

Sensible investment strategies demand scrutiny and a justification for expenditure. Staff development should not be exempt from this. On the contrary, well executed and supported learning and development initiatives can show excellent returns on investment if correctly presented.

At the same time, some interpretation may be required to understand the true worth of interventions. Not all of the benefits have obvious direct dollar values. We may need to make some informed assumptions to highlight their true value.

We need to ensure we maximise the returns on our investment. It shouldn't be a case of just sending them on training course. It is not a de-facto "day off". We should ensure that the training provider has a clear plan to achieve buy-in and behavioural change. Ensure that our staff receive the appropriate coaching and mentoring post-workshop, to maximise the uptake of skills, and reduce the level of skills evaporation (see appendix 4).

## **Appendix 1 - JHW model for Behavioural Change**

Each workshop conducted by JHW is designed around a model that encourages behavioural change:

### **Step 1 - Shift the Mindset**

To provide the participant with an incentive to actively participate in the workshop, to take on the messages, and to translate them into a better operating model, we first of all need to shift the mindset. The shift in mindset at the outset of JHW workshops is usually:

From task to outcome,

From technical towards people,

From pure “efficiency” towards “efficiency and effectiveness”.

Through facilitated discussions, participants will discover for themselves that they can become more stake-holder centric, and that it will be of direct benefit to them to do so. This makes them eager to absorb and refresh the relevant skills.

JHW goes to great lengths to prepare participants to commence the workshop in the right frame of mind to participate in the process of mindset shift. This includes pre-workshop briefing and rapport building, original approaches to opening the workshop, pleasant surprises (e.g. small welcome gifts) and enthusiastic and entertaining delivery.

### **Step 2 - Refresh the Skills**

We need to refresh our skills or we will gradually lose them. Complacency is an unfortunate reality for most of us over time. The journey from “Conscious Competence”, where the important things are “front of mind”, to “Unconscious Incompetence” where we are unaware of what we no longer do, is often inevitable. If participants have not experienced the Shift in Mindset (step 1), there is a real likelihood that the refreshing of skills will be sub-optimal. Reactions can vary from “I already know this stuff” (but don’t necessarily do it), to “I don’t think this is relevant to my role” (because they see their role as a technical specialist not a service provider). This step is not just about learning and then refreshing. It is about learning and refreshing **with an intent to use**.

### **Step 3 - Put it into Practice**

Having topped up the skills, it is important to put them into practice as soon as possible. Typically 50 percent of a JHW workshop will take the form of participants putting the skills into practice, in experiential and realistic role play situations. This represents the first step in executing the changed behaviour.

### **Step 4 - Review & Feedback**

A vital part of the behavioural change process, is to understand how well we have executed. This is particularly important in the first attempts. Review from workshop peers and facilitators provides essential feedback to participants on how they might continue to use these skills more effectively. Most participants exit the workshop with greater confidence in their abilities, whilst understanding that there is more for them to master.

### **Step 5 - Sustaining the Skills (See appendix 3)**

## Appendix 2 - Cost benefit Spreadsheet

<b>Inputs</b>				
<b>Workshop fee</b>	22,500			
<b>Number of Participants</b>	15	15	15	
<b>Average Salary</b>	100,000	100,000	100,000	
<b>Duration of Workshop</b>	3			
<b>Travel Per Person</b>	40			
<b>Venue Cost</b>	12,000			
<b>Other Costs</b>	0			
<b>Assumed Productivity Improvement %</b>	7.00%	7.00%	7.00%	
<b>Sustained for (Years)</b>	3			
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
<b>Costs</b>				
<b>Workshop fee</b>	22,500	0	0	
<b>Lost Productivity while attending Workshop</b>	20,455			
<b>Travel</b>	600			
<b>Venue Cost</b>	12,000			
<b>Other Costs</b>	0			
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>55,555</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Returns</b>				
<b>Improved Productivity</b>	105,000	105,000	105,000	
<b>Net Return (by year)</b>	<b>49,445</b>	<b>105,000</b>	<b>105,000</b>	
<b>Net Return (Cumulative)</b>	<b>49,445</b>	<b>154,445</b>	<b>259,445</b>	

### Appendix 3 - Sustaining the Skills

Over the last 30 years technology has replaced many manual tasks, and has also enabled vastly different management structures. The result is that most corporations have far less people doing much more than they used to. A significant number of the employees are either partially or wholly project based. Project deadlines have become sacrosanct, even at the cost of quality, and the focus on task has led to the reality that staff development is seen as an annual task when appraisals need to be completed. The term "Management" has seemingly become "task management". Many managers I know see their role as the "Super Doer", the one who takes on the most urgent and important projects and tasks. Many spend day after day in "back to back" steering and other project meetings. The only time left to achieve the multitude of tasks that they accumulated is either before 8.00am, or after 7.00pm.

For many employees "Life Balance" has gone. The role model for employees is sadly, devote your time and yourself to work and you will succeed. With all the best intentions, we coach and mentor staff to develop valuable skills (and carry more of the load) just so they can work more, it would appear. At best, send them on a training course and hope they can work it out.

I suggest that there is a better way - the old fashioned concept that the manager has a staff responsibility. A responsibility to develop, delegate, mentor and coach subordinates. For many it is a case of understanding that Important initiatives need to be addressed **before they become urgent**.

Take the time to understand your direct report's aspirations. Provide them with feedback on observed behaviour. This needs to be both positive to reinforce good behaviour and engender confidence, and constructive to assist improvement. Delegate to them challenging initiatives in order to stretch their comfort zone. This will also free up space for you, the manager, to manage. Clearly we need to monitor their progress through these initiatives and ensure that they don't drown. Not only will the overall staff capability rise, but with it, morale and confidence.

The indirect and incremental productivity effect of this approach, far out-weighs the value of the direct task contribution that a manager might make. It is cumulative and unless the manager personally works progressively harder each year, their direct contribution will peak, and at best will then flat line. Your next career move will be more likely affected by the performance of your team, than your direct contribution. Corporations need leaders that can leverage their value across a broader population of staff. It is also much easier to promote you if you have developed a successor to your old role.

JHW strongly encourages the managers of workshop participants to use the workshop as the catalyst for a more direct involvement in staff development:

**Step 1:** Attend the workshop yourself! The least you get is a valuable refresher, and who knows you might pick up some new ideas? More importantly, you will be leading from the front and demonstrating your commitment. You will also be in a position to spot and reward improved behaviour of your employees, post workshop. You will be in a position to engage constructively with your staff on some of the key issues that might otherwise get less exposure in the day to day turmoil.

**Step 2:** Visibly use the techniques yourself, whether it be the "Learning Log" provided on the course, or perhaps your active use of the "Call Plan" for meetings. Be seen to walk the talk.

**Step 3:** Each direct report deserves 1 hour of your time each month. Not to discuss their workload or project progress, but to focus on their skills and personal development. Their Learning Log is a great starting point. Discuss with participants, several weeks after the workshop, what changes they have made since their workshop, and what other ones they have listed, but haven't got to yet. What observations can you share with them, either positive or constructive? What can you do to help them develop and practice their skills further? This is often a great opportunity to delegate some responsibility. These sessions can be one to one, or in broader groups. A casual coffee session can be more productive for some than a formal meeting room. The value of starting with their learning log, is that **they** have written the suggestions in the log in the first place so you are less likely to meet resistance.

**Step 4:** Encourage your direct report to cascade the learning log review down to their direct reports (and so on)

**Step 5:** Run regular refresher sessions, to bring skills to front of mind. You can bring in external facilitators to run some sessions (JHW is always pleased to run these), but you can also do a lot yourself. Take the lead by running one or two sessions yourself, at team meetings, then delegate the leadership of the sessions to team members.

JHW is always keen to work with client management to help establish this sort of follow up to workshops. We want to ensure that your organisation gets the full value from its investment.

## Appendix 4 - Translating Behavioural Change to Value

Quantifying the dollar value derived from an improvement in soft skills is difficult, despite the fact that most clear thinking managers intuitively know that it is a sound investment. As mentioned elsewhere, any pay-back comes through behavioural change. If, for whatever reason, there is little change in behaviour, then ROI will be compromised.

Based on anecdotal information from hundreds of post workshop discussions with JHW workshop participants, and their managers, we have compiled a sample of typical experiences. These include those that are cited as break-through in terms of Productivity, Time cycles, Stakeholder Satisfaction and Staff Morale:

### 1. Productivity:

BEHAVIOUR	BEFORE WORKSHOP	AFTER WORKSHOP
<b>Assumptions</b>	We interpret one another in communication, based on our life experiences. Since everybody has different life experiences, we have a multitude of opportunities to get things wrong. The longer a mistake goes undetected, the more expensive it becomes. Many projects have become disasters on this factor alone. We may be complacent about our communication - think we understand, assume "we have seen one like this before", but in fact get it wrong.	Many participants have highlighted the extra diligence they undertake in making sure they fully understand - the text, the sub-text and the context. More probing questions to ensure we have the detail. Paraphrasing to play back my interpretation of what was said to confirm agreement. Choosing an appropriate channel for the communication - email has been the route cause for many communication disasters - it simply doesn't work for complex discussion. Who can put a figure on preventing a communication disaster? Just one, can cost millions.
<b>More productive meetings</b>	We all do meetings - it's a standard part of the role. Been doing it for years. How hard can it be? The vast majority of participants agree that they do not have a formal meeting planning procedure. Most occasionally do some ad hoc planning when they are faced with a tricky one. For the rest they wing it and hope to survive.	Post workshop, most participants report that they have adopted the JHW call plan (or a variation thereof) for all but the most simple of meetings. Results include "shorter meetings that achieve outcomes, instead of long ones that talk about stuff", "More repeat meeting as we build greater credibility more quickly with stakeholders", Less "omigod" moments, because we have prepared for all eventualities. Instead of hoping to survive, we enter meetings knowing that we will achieve our desired outcomes.
<b>Greater co operation</b>	Many participants coming on to the workshop have strong technical skills, but have not developed the "interpersonal side of their repertoire. Indeed, some of the very best technical people are predisposed to a technical/ analytical solution to all issues, and do not naturally "get" the whole rapport thing	A specific example of a senior risk manager in a banking & finance environment: "Since the workshop I have made a specific effort to build rapport with the stakeholders. I moved desk to be in the project area rather than back at HQ. I started having coffee with the guys, and taking an interest in the person rather than just the work. In recent weeks I have been invited to several project meetings and consulted on approaches. This is unheard of! Nobody actually invites the Risk Manager into their meetings - we are usually kept at arms length. It sure helps me to do my job"

BEHAVIOUR	BEFORE WORKSHOP	AFTER WORKSHOP
<b>Locking in commitment</b>	A common foible of many participants is the reluctance to ask for commitment. No problem talking about stakeholder needs and potential solutions, but when it comes to asking for sign-off many find it difficult and stressful. If they do go for it, it comes out clumsy and ill-timed. Often it is not asked for.	During the workshop, participants get comfortable with seeking commitment, and practice ways to phrase the question such that it feels comfortable and natural. Asking for, and getting the sign-off can be the difference between success and failure, whether we are seeking a project milestone sign off, commitment to a plan of action, seeking an order, or asking for a pay-rise.
<b>Expectation Management</b>	Our credibility is at risk if we over-promise and under-deliver. Yet in the heat of the moment, 2 very powerful motivations can cause us to sign up for things we can't deliver - The desire to be liked, and the fear of intimidation. Agreeing to the demands is not a good solution in either scenario. At best a quick fix, but the problems to be faced later when we fail to deliver are far more severe. It is hugely costly at both a personal and organisational level if we fail to set reasonable expectations.	Post workshop many participants report on greater confidence and assertiveness in holding the line, and not caving in to the temptation to agree to the unreasonable. Practising on the workshop provides a number of alternative phrases to use in order to manage expectation without causing offence or conflict.  The result is less missed deadline, less chaos, greater morale, higher quality, increased credibility.....
<b>Objection Handling</b>	Its an attitude of the mind. Objections are problems, conflict, difficulties, more work. They are unwelcome and we certainly will not solicit them.	Objections are simply a request for information. Many see them as buying signals. My stakeholder is interested in what we are offering, otherwise why would they be asking about price, skills, time-lines etc. If I can handle their "objections" professionally (which I can), then I get one step closer to reaching my goal.
<b>Informal Feedback</b>	Many participants report that within their organisation there is a shortage of either positive feedback, constructive feedback or both.	Positive feedback reinforces good behaviour, and lifts morale. Constructive feedback helps to improve performance. If delivered tactfully, both forms can add tremendous value to every aspect of the organisation. Many participants report an increased focus and comfort in providing informal feedback post workshop
<b>Pro-active time management</b>	Workshop discussions reveal that the average professional in a medium to large corporation will spend between 2 - 3 hours per day on email. They will receive on average between 80 - 120 emails per day. They believe that less than 5% (some say as little as 2%) of these emails impact in any way on their KPIs, KRAs or other objectives. 30% of our staff time spent on an activity with less than 5% impact on our mission. Good investment? Probably not, but at least 60% of your staff could be caught in the same trap.	It is not that email is a bad tool (although in most organisations it is shockingly used). Many of the technology based productivity tools have a wonderful ability to make us all more reactive. Yet most of the participants on our workshops seem to need to become less reactive, and more proactive. Taking time focus on their KPIs KRAs, etc. instead of reacting to every event going on around them. There seems to be a fear of taking the risk to go and do something valuable, in case I miss an important email. The greatest risk might be not taking any risks. If you serve email as your master you will not achieve real value add for your company. By the end of the workshop, many participants take away an intent to become master of the tools not their slave, focusing on <b>Outcome not Tasks</b>

## 2. Time Cycles

BEHAVIOUR	BEFORE WORKSHOP	AFTER WORKSHOP
<b>Co operation</b>		Building engagement results in greater co operation. Clarifying assumptions leads to reduced errors. Stronger engagement is rewarded with a constructive level of forgiveness with things go wrong. All these contribute to minimising delays, and shortening elapsed time to complete
<b>Expectation Management</b>	See above. When we fail to meet expectations, we can start a cascade of dependencies that also be at risk.	Conscious expectation management; stating what will, and what will not be done, after thorough consideration of what is feasible (including contingency), and where necessary assertively pushing back on unreasonable demands will save individuals and their employers big-time in chaos, credibility and real dollars.

## 3. Stakeholder Satisfaction

BEHAVIOUR	BEFORE WORKSHOP	AFTER WORKSHOP
<b>Engagement</b>	Most participants join the workshop with sound technical skills. Many join the workshop believing that their key to success lies solely with their technical skills - isn't that what I get paid for? This approach is unlikely to develop strong engagement with stakeholders	Those that intuitively get "engagement" tend to go away with refreshed skills, greater confidence and a framework around which they can better employ their skills. For many of the others, the revelation can be life changing. The result is that stakeholders feel better engaged by their service providers, and this builds greater co operation, access and forgiveness.
<b>Recognition of different personalities</b>	When we deal with the world based only on our own personality style, we can thrive with those like us, but may struggle to get on with those different to us. Unfortunately that can be as much as 75% of the world	Participants regularly cite their new found ability to gauge the style of others and adjust to it using the simple 4 quadrant model. The result can be astonishing in terms of the success that can be attained by dealing with people in the way they like to be dealt with, rather than pleasing ourselves.
<b>Influencing</b>	People are resistant to change imposed upon them, but not change in which they have had some stake. Despite this, there is often a predominance of "tell" from service providers to stakeholders.	Most participants attain a conscious competence in influencing skills. Using this ability, they can have far greater success in winning the buy-in of stakeholders.

#### 4. Staff Morale

BEHAVIOUR	BEFORE WORKSHOP	AFTER WORKSHOP
<b>Better use of communication channels</b>	Best intent, wrong channel. That is usually the route cause of most email wars. Email is a convenient way for the sender to tick off another task on the to do list, but often does not create the desired outcome - indeed, may send us back several steps in achieving the outcome. Email, badly used, might be seen as the snake in the corporate game of snakes and ladders!	Imagine the impact on morale and productivity if we could eliminate email wars. Getting participants to engage and think constructively about the merits and failings of the various communication channels available for the work they are trying to transact, has an immediate and lasting impact on the outcomes they achieve.
<b>Feedback</b>	Feedback can be a tremendous technique to build morale, reinforce good behaviour and improve performance. Unfortunately, most organisations provide too little feedback, provide an imbalance of feedback (either too much or not enough positive), and/or deliver it badly	Many participants have related to us the positive impact on morale and performance that they have observed in their teams by using some of the feedback techniques discussed on the workshop.
<b>Expectation Management</b>	Regular emergency long hours, intrusion into life balance and general chaos, the result of inadequate expectation management is not a good recipe for good staff morale.	Participants emerging from the workshop feel more confident and assertive about setting realist expectations, and pushing back on those that use intimidation to demand unreasonable outcomes.
<b>General impact of training</b>		The recipient of well delivered professional development feels valued, and appreciates the investment in them, and the opportunities that this opens up. Participants on JHW workshops work extremely hard for 3 days, but genuinely enjoy the event and return to their workplace invigorated, enthused and more confident, whilst recognising that there is still room to improve.

#### 3 elements of behavioural change

We observe 3 levels of behavioural change among participants following an intervention such as a Consulting Skills Workshop:

**Intuitive** - Even participants that admit to making no conscious effort to adopt new behaviours from the workshop intuitively pick up hints and tips, and refresh skills that they once had (but with which they had become complacent). When, in post-workshop discussion groups, we ask participants to share their experiences of using the workshop techniques in the workplace, occasionally an honest participant will explain that due emergency situations, sudden overload, change of circumstance (dog ate my homework...), that they had not really followed through on their intentions to implement their key workshop takeaways. On listening to the experiences of others, these participants will then usually agree that they have actually been doing many of the same things unconsciously. Simply the awareness from the event will make a change, even without conscious effort. One gets the feeling that while some of these will stick, some of improvements may drop off over time without a conscious effort to bring them in to regular play

**Conscious effort** - Most participants bring their well thumbed learning log to the event, often with highlighter pen on some of their notes showing conscious priority that they have allocated. They enthusiastically tell of their experiences thus far in using the techniques they have applied, and you can see that there will be a lasting take up on many of these techniques. These participants will of course also be the unconscious beneficiaries of the intuitive benefits discussed above.

One of the key coaching questions at the learning log review is, "What else is in your learning log that you have yet to try?" The answer, is usually "Quite a lot". Participants may typically record 15 - 20 take-aways in their learning log during a 3 day workshop. They cannot easily implement all of these immediately - they have to prioritise. The danger is that unless they regularly (and consciously) refer back to their learning log, many of the phase 2, 3 and 4 interventions from their learning log will be lost over time.

**Conscious and refreshed** - One of the simplest and valuable things a manager, coach or team leader can offer is to be the catalyst to regular reviews of the learning log. It is not confronting - the points in the log were all written in there by the participant - they believe in it. Just being the conscience that takes our colleagues away from the battle front for an hour or so every now and then, to think strategically about how they go about their role and refining their skills can make a huge impact on the take-up of skills. Elite sports people - even the best in the world - do this. That's why they are the best in the world!

JHW normally runs one post workshop learning log review with participants. We encourage managers and team leaders to take on this role thereafter. We believe that the ROI of the workshop can be more than doubled by doing so. More skills will be used by looking back at the learning log more regularly. Existing skills will evaporate less quickly due to regular focus on them. It is a clear statement that the organisation strongly supports and values the skills of its people.