



Quick E-Tips



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Thank you for subscribing to this newsletter brought to you by International Advantage™ – *Leading Across Cultures*. Every month we bring you tips to help your team and organization, especially those operating in culturally diverse environments, reach their business goals.

Topic this month: The Northwest Airlines Strike and ... the Emotional Intelligence of Your Team, Part II

Have you heard that the mechanics at Northwest Airlines are on strike? The company officials want the mechanics to take a 25% pay cut. Without looking at the details surrounding the situation or who is more justified, I think it is safe to say that these situations are stressful and emotional for everyone involved.

The news story prompts me to think about choices that organizations make, as they relate to Part II of our 3-part series of the emotional intelligence of teams.

Northwest Airlines officials chose a “big act”. “Big acts” are actions by organizations that are strong, forceful, and provocative in nature. They can include actions like layoffs, significant salary cuts, or structural reorganization.¹

Whenever possible, it is usually more emotionally intelligent to release energy building up in teams and organizations through small, frequent acts than by using “big acts.”

What does this mean for us? Using emotional intelligence in our daily work teams (either culturally diverse teams or homogeneous ones) means avoiding “big acts” and paying attention to emotional intelligence on three levels²:

1. the individual
2. the whole group
3. other cross-boundary groups

Last month we explored emotional intelligence on an *individual level* (see http://www.intladvantage.com/e_tips.htm). Now let's look at how improving the emotional intelligence of the *whole group level* can help your team work more effectively.

Tips: How to build the emotional intelligence of your team at the whole group level³:

¹ Edwin C. Nevis, Organizational Consulting, 2005

² Urch Druskat, Vanessa and Wolff, Steven; Harvard Business Review, Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups, 2001

³ Some ideas adapted from Urch Druskat, Vanessa and Wolff, Steven; Harvard Business Review, Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups, 2001

1. Check in at the beginning of a meeting – one person at a time – allowing each person to comment on what the group is needing. Example: Complete the phrase in one to three words: “We need...”

Why? Groups will heighten awareness that they have collective moods and needs, which are distinct from those of individuals’ moods and needs.

2. Acknowledge and discuss group moods by using your own sensory skills whenever appropriate. Example: “I sense that the group is feeling frustrated or confused because I see many of you looking around at each other” (then wait for feedback).

Why? Members can benefit from making sense for themselves what is going on in the group. It also encourages members to share.

3. Schedule time to examine team effectiveness.

Why? We can maximize group effectiveness just by taking the time to analyze what is working and what is not. Studies show that we do not derive knowledge through our experiences, but rather through taking the time to analyze our experiences.

4. Remind members of the group’s important and positive mission.

Why? Thinking globally about what the group is trying to accomplish helps us not to get caught up in irrelevant squabbles. Furthermore, reviewing what we all have in common helps support the sense of teamwork.

Next month we will look at emotional intelligence *on the cross-boundary level*, the third of our 3-part series.

What we have been up to:

Last month we mentioned a workshop and strategic planning retreat we provided for Molex S.A. de C.V. in Nogales, Mexico. We are happy to announce that we have been selected to help the Lead Team implement their strategic directions and improve team processes over the next 12 months! We look forward to it!

Interested in consulting and technology?

The Institute of Management Consultants – Arizona Chapter presents speaker Rod Lenniger, COO of *icrossing* at September 9th breakfast meeting in Phoenix, Arizona. He will speak about what every consultant needs to know for themselves and their clients regarding technology.

Details and registration at http://www.imcaz.org/monthly_meetings.htm.

See past issues of Quick E-tips: http://www.intladvantage.com/e_tips.htm

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To your continued success around the globe,

Lisa