

ITP



LINK

The Newsletter for Members of the Institute of Training Professionals

Professional Targets – the Experience of Kelvin Sze

By Ms Angie Yu, FITP

Kelvin Sze, one of the Vice-Chairmen of ITP, is a practitioner in Operations Training with solid experience. He started his career in the T&D field as an Operations Training Officer in the MTRC, and now is the Head of Operations Department in Tate's Cairn Tunnel Co. Ltd, overseeing the Operations and Training of the Company.

With more than 15 years' experience in the field, he quoted that the most challenging experience was when he conducted, for the first time an external training course in HKU SPACE for a group of participants, most of which were senior management staff in the Security and Property Management field. They were all experts. However, he did enjoy it. "I enjoy communicating with people of different companies, ages and academic background ... I get a lot of satisfaction as I could convince all these experts (the in-house trainers) to apply the training concepts and learning theories on their job." He said. One of the main differences of

operations training and management training is the nature of the knowledge and skills to be transferred. "Trainers of the operations training must have hands-on experience for the skills to be transferred, for example, rescuing a breakdown vehicle. Trainees can be easily assessed whether they are competent or not," he added. "However, while the trainer for management training could

pass the management skills, for example, leadership and teambuilding concepts to staff of various backgrounds, the training effectiveness may not be easily and readily measured," he further elaborated.



With the increasingly competitive business environment, Kelvin finds that training is becoming even more important than ever – as it is important to let individuals to equip themselves with new knowledge and techniques to meet the new challenges. This is evidenced that "You can see more post secondary courses offered and more new campuses built by local universities in Hong Kong in the last few years..... Other than the

usual remuneration packages, staff development is a very important measure to retain talents. Therefore, training field should have a bright future. Even in during the period of economic downturn, cutting training budget would be a short-sighted corporate strategy,” he said. Of course, strong support and understanding from top management are key factors to drive staff training successfully. Kelvin is glad that he is working for a company with a culture that encourages and supports continuous learning.

To start a career in the T&D field, “The first step is to set for yourselves a target to be a GOOD

TRAINER” He said. “Then, you will naturally progress continuously. You will be successful in passing on the knowledge / skill in a way that your participants require. You should also have an attitude of treating your participants heartedly, and making them understand your messages. In this way, they can apply it on their job, rather than just for passing the course.”

It is important to start with a target in your profession, and your passion will naturally follows. Kelvin is a good example for us. In the beginning of 2010, what is your target in your profession?

ITP Supporting Hong Kong Institute of Education’s MEd Program

By Prof. Alfred Ho, FITP

Many of Hong Kong’s veteran trainers will recall the legendary Diploma in Training Management program that was formerly offered at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Till today many of our ‘first generation’ professional training managers still cherish the valuable learning experiences that this program provided them back in the “good old days”. For various reasons this Diploma program was dropped in the nineties of the last century.

The backbone founders of ITP, many of which have been graduates of this Diploma program, however remain convinced of the need for such comprehensive and structured learning opportunities for those who intend to build one’s career in people development. For those who have been transferred from line operation to take on staff training and development roles, such a program would help them systematically fill the

competency ‘gaps’.

As Hong Kong evolves into a ‘knowledge economy’, our government has been active in encouraging and offering keen support to continuing/lifelong education. Funding schemes such as the SME Training Fund (now already exhausted) and the much larger CEF (Continuing Education Fund) are good examples.

Back in 2005 when the Institute of Vocational Education (IVE-Morrison Hill) initiated its two higher diploma programs in Training & Development (a 1-year full-time program for Business Diploma graduates and a 2-year full-time program for F.7 graduates), ITP rendered support through serving on its program advisory board, offering free student membership to its participants, donating scholarship, and ITP executive committee members have given career

talks/delivered sharing sessions with the students.

As Hong Kong people continue their pursuit of higher formal qualifications local recognized degree offerings in the Training & Development field however remain non-existing. So when the Hong Kong Institute of Education raised the idea of planning to offer a master's degree (MEd) program with specialization in Human Resource Training and Development two years ago, ITP readily availed its support.

This initiative was well timed as ITP has lately been devoting efforts in developing a trainers' competency set that is tailored for the Hong Kong situation. The competencies serve as highly relevant reference and even standards for curriculum development, pedagogical design, and learning assessment. At the Institute of Education's end the program-in-charge was Dr. Thomas Man, with Eric Law and Christina Yu serving as development team members. Executive committee members who have been involved since the early days of planning and development of the Institute's degree program were Chairman Fred Kwan, Sam Ying, Denny Chow and Alfred Ho.

After almost a year of hard work, the degree program proposal has at the time of writing gone through the planning approval stage within the Institute. Team members are now busy developing the module contents. If everything proceeds as planned the MEd program will commence in September. For a 1-year post-graduate program (extendable to two years for those busy part-timers) this market offering

would provide an attractive further study option for those existing HRM and training practitioners as well as those who plan to strive for their future career in this profession. The program is targeted at candidates residing in Hong Kong as well as those in Guangdong Province and Southern China.

Tentatively the MEd program consists of two core compulsory modules covering the contemporary topics relating to HR development and adult learning, as well as research methodology for enabling candidates to carry out their subsequent thesis work. Then students need to choose four specialist modules from a range that covers specific training and development areas, from Organization Development to consulting for example. On top of that, students need four more elective modules to complete their degree pursuit.

When the MEd program in Human Resource Training and Development is in full implementation after this summer, ITP's role will shift from developmental support to program maintenance and quality assurance. It is contemplated that ITP, or more accurately, its active and experienced members, will serve as module lecturers, and sit on the program's advisory committee and examination board.

ITP will keep members updated on the development of this timely and meaningful continuing education offering and strongly encourages members to seize this opportunity themselves and/or nominate their colleagues to get duly educated and qualified in the T&D profession through this program.

A Visit to the Training Facilities of the Noah's Ark Park

By Mr. Sam Ying, FITP

Organized and led by Miss Angie Yu, Vice-chairman of the ITP Executive Committee, a delegation of ITP members had an opportunity to visit the training facilities of the newly built Noah's Ark Park in Ma Wan on the morning of November 21, 2009. The delegation was privileged to have Mr Kevin Sin, the Project Manager of the Hong Kong Boys' Brigade, and Mr Timothy Kwong of the Noah's Ark Resort, personally giving us a face-to-face on-site conducted tour, plus their detailed and informative inputs and sharing with us.

The Noah's Ark Park is operated and managed by five separate and independent non-government organizations. As part of the Ma Wan development, this Noah's Ark is built as the world's first full-sized replica. This architectural masterpiece is erected within a beautifully landscaped garden that is surrounded by a parade of life-sized sculptured animals. The indoor components include the "Treasure House" that aims to develop creativity skills through arts and crafts, the "Life Education House" that aims at exploring the real meaning of life. The "Noah's Resort" and the "Harvest Restaurant" provide accommodation and food services to the visitors.

Surrounding and within the Noah's Ark Park, there are a number of facilities that are suitable for conducting in-company training programmes and company events. During the visit, the delegation

learned about the regular training programmes that are conducted for the general public at the Park. The delegation was guided to visit its 4-star resort hotel, function rooms, theatre and restaurants. There is also a first-class outdoor rope game set-up suitable for organizing experiential learning programs. On that day, groups of company executives were taking out-door training programs there.



During the visit, the delegation had in-depth discussions with Kevin and Timothy about the use of the Park for running corporate training programmes, and their experience

so far. They added that with the Ma Wan Park just adjacent to the Noah's Ark Park, the combined facilities provide an excellent venue for out-door experiential type of training programmes.

With this 3-hour visit ended fruitfully, Mr Fred Kwan, our Chairman, presented ITP souvenirs to the representatives of the host organization in appreciation of their kind hospitality, and more importantly, their time and effort in scheduling and providing us this meaningful visit. Some members of the delegation continued to explore other parts of Ma Wan after lunch.

(Some photos taken during the visit are available at the Photo Gallery of ITP Website.)

Roadmap for Becoming an Internal Consultant

By Ms Angela Lee, MITP

On 25 August 2009, a joint function among Hong Yip People Development Academy, HKPMA and ITP was held. Prof. Alfred Ho, the Vice-Chairman of ITP as well as a veteran management consultant, was invited to share his experience and views on how to be an effective Internal Consultant.



An Internal Consultant is one who works in one part of an organization to help another part (Meislin 1997). In other words, the clients are colleagues within the same organization. He/she has no freedom in choosing the client to serve.

Regardless of the limited targets to serve, becoming an Internal Consultant is a value-added business which needs to effectively connect skills, expertise and experience to business performance goals.

While looking at the “Consulting Process Cycle”, Alfred mentioned one important word. It is ‘COMMITMENT’. Not only the Internal Consultant should possess commitment, he/she has to be able to win commitment from the clients so that they can work together as partners.

Comparing to an External Consultant who is regarded as a ‘specialist’, an Internal Consultant is a ‘generalist’ who knows more about the corporate culture. An Internal Consultant, being a part of the organization,

his/her influence depends very much on leadership’s support, past experience and its interpersonal skills. Not unlike the External Consultant who can opt out or be replaced, an Internal Consultant, no matter how tough the situation is, has to stay on and bear with it, support its implementation and follow up.

Consulting is a relationship business. To add value and to succeed, an Internal Consultant should emphasize on anticipation, improvement and innovation. Moreover, gaining credibility is a must.

How can an Internal Consultant gain trust, credibility and peer relationship with his/her clients? Alfred shared with us that one should aim to establish collaboration with the client instead of just viewing it simply as another assignment. Sometimes, it is necessary to be prepared to play devil’s advocacy, challenge intelligently faulty assumptions and questionable logic. When there is blame, accept it. On the contrary, when there is merit/credit, share it!

Strictly speaking, an Internal Consultant plays the



role of a ‘change agent’. He/she should be conversant in the organization’s content matters, or business, but not necessarily

an expert in it. Additionally, he/she should be prepared to face objections and to tackle them

promptly, forcefully and tactfully.

Last but not least, Alfred gave the following recommendations when conducting internal consulting:

Be proactive

Be assertive

Be prepared to disagree

Persevere

Have high self-esteem of oneself

Have passion in helping others

Develop a good sense of humour

Be willing to take risks

Be creative and innovative

Continuously develop competencies

To conclude from the writer's perspective, to become an Internal Consultant is not difficult. It all depends on our attitude, ability and availability to add value to our career development.

(Some photos taken during the seminar are available at the Photo Gallery of ITP Website.)

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身體健康! 事事順利!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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