

BMTFed Newsletter

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BMT for Safety Conference
19th & 20th November
Manchester, UK

TICKETS ON SALE NOW



Shades of BMT - People Who Leave

It is extremely unusual for people to tell the whole truth regarding 'why' when they leave organisations. Let's face it, why would someone say anything that could even slightly risk burning bridges for themselves in the future? However, the leavers probably hold the massively valuable feedback the organisation really needs to know. Of course, it could be that directors don't really want the whole truth, because there is always a chance that the tough truth is the reason that the person left.

From Our Opinion Surveys...

Today's BBC news says that more than a third of employees believe they have been bullied in their workplace. Our anonymous survey data has shown for a while now that bullying seems to be making a comeback; perhaps people are speaking more openly now. For sure it's not just the words that hurt, it's the posture and tone that add fear to these scary situations for its victims. The solution must be borne in education, for victims and protagonists. Tangible improvements flow from feedback and education, they always have. Someone should do something. Hang on, I am someone!

Right Under Your Nose, Part 2

By Howard Lees

Scientific methods help us discover what's happening right now, which in turn allows us to make informed decisions. We have to collect as much objective data as we can because science also demands that we experiment with the variables at play. Of course, in Behavioural Science we rarely achieve a controlled environment; we are observing humans who are supersensitive to changes in their environment. Once we have observed a behaviour multiple times, we can then ponder the potential antecedents and consequences, and this is where the experimentation and analysis starts. If we were dealing with chemistry or metallurgy then we would be able to fix some variables and observe the effects; not so when observing humans.

In simple terms, when you are sat in meetings, you could observe what's being said, and also observe what's really being said. You could make some notes and start predicting what the people around the table are going to say in their responses. It's an activity you don't need to worry about owning up to; you can do this on your own. There are many things to learn about what's already happening in your environment, right under your nose. Have a go, make some notes, and see how good you can get at predicting what happens. Over time, recognising antecedents at play gets easier, over much more time your ability at discerning other people's consequences will improve also.

[Click this link to read Right Under Your Nose Part 1](#)

BMTFedNewsletter Behavioural Management Techniques (BMT) is a blend of applied behavioural science tools and project management skills. BMT is used to improve business and safety performance.



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Exceptionals

By Howard Lees

There are a small number of exceptional people out there who are hugely successful at what they do. In fact, anything they seem to turn their head to, they are successful. They seem to achieve this while still holding on to their integrity. Their success transcends both results and relationships. They deserve the respect they receive, for sure; we all want to work for one of these special people.

An awful lot of the people that have the potential to be exceptional don't look exceptional on most organisations' radar, and that seems to be the problem. In leadership training schemes, 'one size fits all' is easy to administer but that seems to be the very policy that ensures that the sunflowers in organisations flourish and many of the 'exceptionals' stay hidden. Perhaps organisations could amend their policy and only promote 'tall posh blokes'. Oh wait!

Behavioural Integrity or Mutual Respect?

By Kate Coyne

As a newcomer to Behavioural Science there are certain areas that I particularly like, such as the simple concept of behavioural integrity. While this is used to help managers and leaders in industry be the best they can and set a good example, it appears to me that it also applies to all other aspects of our lives, be it simply being on time when you've arranged a meeting with a friend, or responding to that call from your mother-in-law that you've been ignoring because you know she has something to pester you about.

Integrity requires commitment, honesty and consistency, but actually to show behavioural integrity all that is required is to do what you say you are going to do, all the time.

It could be argued that mutual respect will be borne out of behavioural integrity, so does that mean that my friend who is always late when we arrange to meet does not respect my time, or is she simply not capable of managing her own time? Who knows? One thing I know is that it's really annoying and ultimately puts me off making plans with her. I guess the same is true of business relationships. If I let down my customer/supplier/colleague by being late, cancelling meetings and making excuses, sooner or later they will stop contacting me and go elsewhere. It seems obvious that this is a sure fire way to lose business, so why do we continue to make the same mistakes? Is it because we don't care, or because we are unable to manage?

So the next time your inner voice tells you that you really ought to call your someone back (it's not always the mother-in-law, let's face it), or the next time you see a number flash up on your phone and deliberately let it go to voicemail, ask yourself what the consequences will be, or simply pick up the call. You'll be rewarded in the end.

Treatment Versus Prevention

By Lisa Kazbour

Everyone has heard the old adage, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", and recent medical research has shown that to be a solid piece of advice. The Trust for American Health has reported that \$1.00 spent on prevention would save \$5.60 in treatments for diseases. I'd argue that the same is true for safety – small efforts on the front end could save us a lot of trouble down the road in terms of lost time, productivity, and cost. So why is it so hard for us to engage in 'preventative' behaviors?

The answer lies in consequences. Preventative behaviors generally have what we'd consider later and unsure reinforcing consequences. Take walking for example. If one consequence is that I might lose weight, it's a reinforcer that occurs later, and is unsure. This means it's not a very strong or motivating consequence. As humans it's hard for us to focus on the long-term reinforcers, because there are hundreds of more powerful and immediate consequences controlling our behaviors.

What's the key? To be successful at preventative behaviors, you have to create some 'now' and 'sure' consequences that will support the behavior. Without them, you're leaving it up to natural law and your chances of success are minimal.

The Next Great Thing.....

By Howard Lees

At some point very soon there will be a high tech product on the market in the form of a pair of glasses that identify to the wearer all the opportunities in their immediate environment. It will be able to be tuned to 'coaching', leadership', 'sales opportunities', 'threats', 'sunflower opportunities', anything the wearer wants to have pointed out to them. I can't wait for one to be invented myself. In the meantime I suppose I will have to continue to do the best I can with my vision and my brain.

