



Wedgworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture & Natural Resources

Let's Reflect

Seminar VII
Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida

Monkeys to Messages

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When we arrived in the beautiful resort setting of the Mission Inn it was clear why this peaceful

location was selected and was perfect for this less hurried seminar.

We started our weekend get away with a luncheon in the main dining area in La Hacienda. Everyone had an opportunity to get reacquainted with spouses and family members that came along for this seminar.

We then began our first session with our main speaker for the seminar, Mrs. Marion Kay. Marion is a management consultant from Charlotte, North Carolina and has consulted with several companies.

After a quick icebreaker “Getting to Know You” questionnaire that we filled out with everyone that was in attendance, she spoke to us about “Managing in the Real World.” She talked with us about stress in our lives. Stress is anything that places a demand on us. “If you didn’t have some stress in your lives you wouldn’t get out of bed”, she said. Marion had us fill out a couple of questionnaires to help us rate the good and bad stressors we have in our lives.

Marion gave us some tools for managing stress and remaining healthy. They include

Being Ready Physically (this includes avoiding the “CATS in San Francisco” – caffeine, alcohol, sugar, salt and fat.

(Later that evening, we took this advice straight



Class VII members and their spouses and significant others play a quick game to reacquaint everyone

to the barbeque where we had soda, alcohol, ribs and dessert!),

and Being Ready Mentally (this included the idea of keeping a journal of the “idea of the Week” – things that make you laugh and lessons learned.

It also included accepting personal limitations and hiring or bartering

those tasks in your life.) We talked about “Flight”, or walking away being acceptable, Communicating Assertively (“Thank you for your confidence in me. I won’t be able to do that at this time.”), Delegation, and Monkeys! Monkeys are the tasks that we accept or give away. We can feed or shoot Monkeys. We need to decide which is appropriate! We also covered time management and the fact that our work will expand to fill the time we set aside for it.

“The danger in communication is the illusion that it has been accomplished.”

~George Bernard Shaw

communicate in conflict situations. She used the example of a daisy. The content of your message is the center of the flower. The things

that can distract from the message are the petals. The petals can be the following things: tone of voice, face change, profanity, name calling, sarcasm, physically acting out anger, voice change (higher/faster), or manipulative questions. As listeners we are hooked on the petals. We get derailed in resolving our initial conflict and the content of the message because of the

petals.

Marion wrapped up the morning session by sharing the concept of 100% Responsibility in Communication. That is, if we are 100% responsible for communication and the other person is 0% responsible then we not only can’t blame the other person or justify our behavior, but we are much more likely to really take a long hard look at what we could do to improve the relationship.



Difficult Conversation & Difficult Dances

Richard May

After spending the afternoon with Marion we boarded a bus for a dinner sponsored by Florida Citrus Mutual which was hosted by Mr. Rusty Wiygul, Director of Grower Affairs. The dinner was lakeside and we were able to enjoy the sunset before dinner. Rusty was a gracious host and fed us well with a dinner of barbecued ribs and chicken!

On Friday morning we had a relaxed (thank you Hannah!) start time. Marion spoke to us about “Getting the Mess Out of the Message.” She talked about how non-verbal queues mean more to us than what is being said and that listening is so important because it is how we learn and build relationships.

Marion continued by explaining how to better



After a great lunch under the pine trees, we resumed class with Marion Kay. Even though we had the same speaker, she brought an enthusiasm and freshness that made every seminar seem very interesting!

In the afternoon session, we discussed handling difficult conversations. In difficult conversations, anger is often an emotion experienced. We learned we need to recognize that anger as a secondary emotion. The primary emotion is usually fear

or disappointment, which needs to be dealt with in order to have a successful conversation.

It is very important not to push the hot buttons, which can be very tempting to do! We also discussed the necessity of staying in the present. Bringing up past wrongs only proves to stir the pot and get you totally off subject. Unfortunately, difficult conversations are going to be a part of business life, and I feel that Marion really gave us a sense of how to deal with those in the most productive way possible. One way that she helped us do that was by helping us identify the different types of difficult people, and how we can adapt our conversations accordingly. There are always going to be know-it-alls, constant



complainers, etc, but we need to adapt our conversations accordingly in order to

move on with our day. I felt it was very productive to learn to recognize conflict and deal with it appropriately.

Now comes the fun part!!! David and Nancy McDonald hosted us at the Tangerine Improvement Society for a night of barbeque and square dancing and line dancing. We were all a little tired, but the night proved to be very memorable, and I'm sure left many people with stomach cramps from laughing so hard!! For the most part, everyone danced and had a great time laughing at each other and ourselves. The dinner was delicious and our hosts were very gracious.

They shared the importance of the Wedgeworth Alumni Association, and I hope that all of our class will continue to be active in the Alumni Association to keep the old friends and make new friends.

The caller for the Square Dance was quite the comedian! He along with his partner taught us the moves, and we put on quite the

show. The atmosphere was lively, as we all tried to learn the moves, and keep up with the couples in our square! Usually, if you looked around at different squares, we were rarely doing the same thing, but everyone was smiling and truly enjoying themselves.

It was great to all get to on our jeans and boots and do something mindless... well... mindless for some people! Others were still trying to figure their do-si-dos from their promenades! We learned some other line dances, which were a lot of fun and kept us moving! It was fantastic, and we even got to each take home a plant from Nancy's nursery as well as a bag of goodies.



Elizabeth Pines trying to help other class members learn to square dance.

We also talked about the importance of building a team and the characteristics that make a good team such as a casual environment, a clear objective, the ability to openly discuss without criticism, and

understanding. This session

really made clear the importance of building up the people around you in order to get the best!

Overall, this seminar was very refreshing. It was great to have our spouses be able to have a peek at what goes on at our seminars. Marion Kay proved to be a very informative and understanding speaker who was very willing to adapt her program to our needs. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in February!



Class VII members learning to do the Electric Slide

The next morning our session was on motivating yourself and others. We had the opportunity to set a list of goals with our spouses for where would like to be in 5 years, 10 years

and what we would do if we only had 6 months to live. It was a great exercise, which allowed us the time to really reflect on where we want to be in life, and then be able to share that with our spouses.

Next Seminar:
February 23-26, 2009
Media and Communications Training
Haines City, FL