



Chart Your Change Now

Mastering the Workplace

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In This Issue

Making A Difference

Quick Links

[Newsletter Archives](#)

[Flo's Coaching Cafe -- August 25 -- Join Now](#)

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Making a Difference Quotes:

"Throughout the centuries there were men who took first steps, down new roads, armed with nothing but their own vision." *Ayn Rand*

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I... I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

Robert Frost

Dear Reader,

How Do You Define Success?

...to find the best in others, to give of one's self, to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or redeemed social condition; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exultation; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived-this is to have succeeded. -- Ralph Waldo Emerson



Time Changes Perception?

I recently attended a first meeting of a group of former board directors of a community association. I was exhilarated by the passion that still shined brightly for these volunteers after so many years away from the hot seat of community governance. It was a full circle experience for me - a completion of sorts.

If we take snapshots of what actually happened in a past event, together with your perception of the event and your memory of that event, we notice that there are different perspectives of one reality. I find that there are many filters through which we process our reality so that the truth becomes a personal experience. Even facts in a court of law are subject to human perception and memory. I see the events of 20 years ago through a vastly different lens today.

And How Does a Different Lens Relate to Success?

At my recent meeting of former board directors, there were attendees who in the past were worthy adversaries and loyal supporters. Looking back, I appreciated how much I learned from all of them. I was reminded of how at times, I was reactionary instead of tactful and how I took opposition as a personal affront. I remember the gossip and mud-slinging and thoughtless disregard for my feelings by those I counted as friends. The experience was a type of boot camp ordeal: There was a vision to guide us and a mission to pursue. We either acquired a kind of tough grace and emotional mellowness or became discouraged and disheartened.

Having made a commitment to serve on the board, I was compelled to honor my commitments. There was a vision to clarify. There was a mission to expand. There were policies and procedures to respect. There were obstacles and challenges to overcome. There was a team of directors in need of direction and empowerment. There were individuals in need of acknowledgment and clashing personalities in

need of tolerance. There were nay-sayers and supporters. In short, it was much like the mix of people you find in any organization - replete with political intrigue, an established culture, and a more or less functional approach to governance. Having a different lens or being willing to entertain an alternate mindset about your situation and the people around you is indicative of an ability to find the best in others. To do so, elevates you and others to a higher state of being and opens up possibilities for bettering our human condition.

Lessons Learned - A Model for Success

Looking back, it was the opportunity given me to make (countless) mistakes and also accomplish many goals that provided fertile ground for growth. In hindsight, how I handled certain work relationships (badly) with those who were "political enemies" was my biggest lesson learned. It is how I viewed them - political enemies vs. people with a different agenda and different perspectives, that made a difference in how I worked with them. Mindset is everything. A willingness to appreciate an "opposing" view opens the mind to possibilities. For starters, it's an opportunity to acknowledge a strong belief, a concern, a hurt that has turned to hatred. Today, I have come to appreciate how those experiences laid a foundation to relate with a deeper discernment with anyone who crosses my path.

It's nearly two decades since those times of turbulence in my community and yet, I still recall that period in my life as a pivotal moment, catapulting me into a new intensity of personal growth. Being of service, for me, is the ultimate mark of success.

I define and measure success by how much I have improved the conditions over which I have influence. For me that translates into how I make a difference in the lives of my clients. I consider myself very fortunate indeed

How do you define success and what path have you chosen to experience success in your life?

Share your thoughts about success with me, comment on my blog [Chart Your Change](#).

Join this month's *Coaching Cafe*, a virtual space of collaboration and community... get peer advice, coaching tips, take away action steps.

Have you signed up yet, for Flo's Coaching Cafe?



Every third Wednesday (except this August) Next: August 25, 2010 at 8 PM.

A FREE call-in series designed to address timely issues. What's on your mind?

Come and have a "virtual" cup of coffee with us and enjoy an open, engaging, supportive coaching experience.

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Make A Difference



Make A Difference

Once upon a time there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work. One day he was walking along the shore. As he looked down the beach, he saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself to think of someone who would dance to the day. So he began to walk faster to catch up. As he got closer, he saw that it was a young man and the young man wasn't dancing, but instead he was reaching down to the shore, picking up something and very gently throwing it into the ocean. As he got closer he called out, "Good morning! What are you doing?" The young man paused, looked up and replied, "Throwing starfish in the ocean." "I guess I should have asked, why are you throwing starfish in the ocean?" "The sun is up and the tide is going out. And if I don't throw them in they'll die." "But, young man, don't you realize that there are miles and miles of beach and starfish all along it. You can't possibly make a difference!" The young man listened politely. Then bent down, picked another starfish and threw it into the sea, past the breaking waves and said, "It made a difference for that one."

Where in your life do you make a difference?

Where else would you like to make a difference?

Making a difference is about being of service in some way; making life better somehow.

How is making a difference, leading a successful life?

What does making a difference mean to you?

Have a comment? Go to my blog, [Chart Your Change](#).

Thank you for your interest in Chart Your Change. Your feedback is always appreciated.

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Have a Joyful Month,



Flo Mauri
Thinking Well Consulting
Coach/Consultant to Emerging Leaders
Relationship Building Architect
Flo@thinkingwellconsulting.com
Flomauri01.Wordpress.com
www.linkedin.com/in/flomaurithoughtleader