ACCOMPANYING HANDBOOK

for the presentation:

Water the Flowers
Not the Weeds

SOLUTION FOCUSED COMMUNICATION:

A Strategy that Revolutionizes
• Professional • Personal • Family
Communication and Relationships

BY
FLETCHER PEACOCK

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SOLUTION FOCUSED COMMUNICATION® is a registered trademark of Fletcher Peacock Enterprises Inc.
WHAT WILL YOU LEARN THAT YOU CAN PUT TO USE IMMEDIATELY?

Each one of us has a unique way of communicating. How then can we find the key that will open the door to better communication and relationships: professional, personal and family?

The method that Fletcher Peacockconcisely presents emphasizes the strengths and the resources of each individual that permit him to make his way through the normal ups and downs of life. Instead of laboriously looking for the causes of our difficulties, we are invited to discover solutions. In this way, we can concentrate on the successes and the good already accomplished for a foundation on which to build the future.

WATER THE FLOWERS, NOT THE WEEDS:

By means of simple and clear short stories, the author enters the world of our problems and in a subtle way leads us in a direction that elicits harmony, understanding, confidence and well-being. Here is a lively book that leaves us refreshed and alert, like flowers after a gentle rain. Since the original French edition, Arrosez Les Fleurs, Pas Les Mauvaises Herbes, was published in February 1999, it has become a best seller. The more recent English translation has gained a word of mouth following in English-Canada, the U.S. and around the world. The book has also been translated into Spanish and Dutch. It is currently being translated into Chinese.

FLETCHER PEACOCK, B.Sc., M.S.W.

AUTHOR, SPEAKER, HUMAN POTENTIAL TRAINER:

Fletcher Peacock holds a Bachelor of Science (Mathematics & Physics) and a Master’s Degree in Social Work. Since 1989, he has been giving seminars and trainings in SOLUTION FOCUSED COMMUNICATION® in many cities across North America. He is a consultant in the areas of business, education, health and government. A talented popularizer, he is known for his freshness, dynamism, enthusiasm and humor. His book, Arrosez Les Fleurs Pas Les Mauvaises Herbes, is a best selling title in Quebec, Canada and has been translated into English (Water The Flowers, Not The Weeds), Spanish and Dutch. It is currently being translated into Chinese. Fletcher Peacock is sometimes referred to as a “professor of happiness”.

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SECTION 1: OUR INNER GARDEN

OUR EXPERIENCE OF “REALITY”

EXPECTATIONS

BELIEFS

PRESUPPOSITIONS

THE MAJOR PRINCIPLES

1) There are no problems… **only opportunities.**

2) There are no failures, **only learnings.**

3) There is not just one solution (one truth), there are **thousands of solutions.**

4) There are no resistant, unmotivated, uncooperative people, **only people with their unique way of cooperating.**
SECTION 2:
I DO NOT HAVE THE TRUTH

I Do Not

Have

The Truth...
SECTION 3:
THE THREE STYLES OF COOPERATION
~Each client has his ‘unique way of cooperating’~

A. VISITOR (SLOW SPEED)
A person who does not have a problem. He is there only because someone (employer, parent, spouse, judge, principal) has told him to go.
- No expectation or desire for change (at this time, consciously).
- It is possible that this person does not even recognize that there is a problem.

Response of Communicator:
- Look for strengths, positive points.
- Much accompanying (pacing), build relationship.
- Give positive feedback (compliments), no tasks “Slow down to speed up”.
- Speak indirectly (to unconscious mind).
- Example: Triangulation.

B. COMPLAINANT (MEDIUM SPEED)
Someone with a problem who is not yet ready or able to take action.
- Example: “Yes, but…” (passive victim) (his current truth)
- In the past, this person was labeled “resistant”, “not motivated”, “uncooperative”.

Response of Communicator:
- Observation tasks, ask client to “think about something” (no direct tasks).
- Speak indirectly to unconscious mind.
- Exception (less bad).

What needs to happen to improve the situation?

C. CUSTOMER (HIGH SPEED)
Someone who is ready and willing to do something about the problem.

Response of Communicator:
- Can give direct task with confidence that the client will do the task and will find it useful.
- Speak directly to conscious mind.

What can you do to improve the situation?
SECTION 4:
COOPERATION
(Or No Resistance)

RESISTANCE ➔ PERSISTENCE

ACCEPTANCE ➔ DECREASE ➔ DISAPPEARANCE

THE SERENITY PRAYER

Dear Lord,

Give me the COURAGE to change the things that I can change, the SERENITY to accept the things that I cannot change (at this time), and the WISDOM to know the difference.
SECTION 5:  
THE THREE GENERATIONS OF COMMUNICATION

FIRST GENERATION: PAST

- understand, explain the problem in the past
- long-term approach
- negative labels (e.g. “resistant”, “not motivated”, “uncooperative”)
- dependent on the expert
- questions begin with “Why”

SECOND GENERATION: PRESENT

- systemic approach which involves interrupting the vicious circles in the present
- more short-term approach
- no negative labels
- less based on expert

THIRD GENERATION: FUTURE

- we send the client into the future, where there are no problems, only solutions
- even more short-term approach
- “coaching” approach (non-expert) where we learn to ask good (solution focused) questions
- questions begin with “What” and “How”
SECTION 6:
SOLUTION FOCUSED QUESTIONS

KEY PRINCIPLE #1:
In the past the Best Leader was the person with the most and/or the Best Answers. (Best Solutions)

In the future the Best Leader will be the person who knows how to ask the best questions.

KEY PRINCIPLE #2:
The QUALITY of your LIFE (personal, professional) will be PROPORTIONAL to the QUALITY of the QUESTIONS you ask yourself.

The Quality of your Organization will be proportional to the Quality of the questions that team members (managers, employees) ask themselves.

1) BELIEFS  2) DISTINCTIONS  3) QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

What am I learning?

How will I behave differently in the future to create a more satisfying result for everyone involved?

WIN-WIN = ABUNDANCE
SECTION 6: SOLUTION FOCUSED QUESTIONS (Cont’d)

A - MIRACLE QUESTIONS SEQUENCE

B - EXCEPTION QUESTIONS SEQUENCE
C - SCALING QUESTIONS SEQUENCE

If a miracle happened overnight and your problem is solved, if things went better (a little bit less worse)…

…How would you know?

…What would you notice?

… What would be different?

… WHAT else? (SILENCE)

We want as rich a description as possible of the solution state:

? What would you see? (Visual)

? What would you hear? (Auditory)

? What would you feel? (Kinesthetic)

? What would you be doing differently?

The miracle question gives us the good goal in the client’s key words.

Ex: 1) Better communication
     2) Better relationship
     3) More satisfied at work
     4) More comfortable with mathematics at school

The experience of describing in detail a future in which the problem is already resolved helps to create the expectation that the problem will be solved.

This expectation, once created, can help the client to think and act in ways which will lead to the achievement of this expectation.
SECTION 6: SOLUTION FOCUSED QUESTIONS (Cont’d)

A - MIRACLE QUESTIONS SEQUENCE

B - EXCEPTION QUESTIONS SEQUENCE

C - SCALING QUESTIONS SEQUENCE

? Are there times when this miracle (good goal in client’s key words) (or part of miracle) happens already?

“I have a good experience of what happens when there are problems. In order to get a more complete experience, I need to know about when the problem does not happen.”

? When do you not have the problem?

? When is the situation “less bad”?

* * Exploration and Explanation of Exceptions

? What’s different?

? How do you explain that the problem does not happen?

* * “Positive Blame”
- Ask for explanations of the exceptions:

? How was it possible that you were able to do that?

? How did you do that?

✅ EXCEPTION QUESTIONS ELICIT

YOUR CLIENT’S SUCCESS STRATEGIES: THEY

- Are Validating
- Create Responsibility
- Build self-esteem
- Develop & Nurture Autonomy
- Empower
SECTION 6: SOLUTION FOCUSED QUESTIONS (Cont’d)

A - MIRACLE QUESTIONS SEQUENCE
B - EXCEPTION QUESTIONS SEQUENCE
C – SCALING QUESTIONS SEQUENCE

Scales are very useful to follow, “track” the client’s emotional state (ex: the client’s actual state, his development over time).

“Ups and Downs”. It is often very useful to discover exceptions:

- On a scale of 0 to 10 where were you 5 years ago, 3 years ago, 1 year, 6 months, 3 months, 1 month, 2 weeks, 1 week?
- During the last 2 weeks, where were you on the scale Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, . . . etc.?
SECTION 7:
THE THREE ELEMENTARY RULES

1. If it works, don’t fix it.

2. Do more of what works.
   ✓ Exception sequence (Ref.p.11)
   ✓ Response to tasks

3. If it doesn’t work:
   ✗ Don’t do it again; and
   ✓ Do something different.

There is no failure, only “learning”.

There is not only one solution, there are thousands.
SECTION 8: INTEGRATION EXERCISE

How can you (will you) integrate SOLUTION FOCUSED COMMUNICATION® in your workplace?

In your interventions?

In your team? (and/or in your personal life?)

1. What aspects (ideas, concepts, techniques) of this presentation have been most helpful / useful / relevant for you?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. How specifically can you (will you) apply these?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. What will be the benefit for you of these applications? (short-term, mid-term, long-term)

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. How can you (will you) ensure follow-up to this workshop?

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________________________________________________
**SECTION 9: BIBLIOGRAPHY**


**LEGEND:**

** Highly Recommended
SOLUTION FOCUSED COMMUNICATION®

THREE STYLES OF COOPERATION:

1. VISITOR (Slow)
2. COMPLAINANT (Med. Speed)
3. CUSTOMER (HIGH SPEED)

~EACH CLIENT HAS A UNIQUE WAY OF Cooperating~

SOLUTION FOCUSED COMMUNICATION®

(SUMMARIZED):

- A philosophy of cooperation based on a positive perception of life.
- Focus one’s attention on solutions (instead of the explanation of problems).
- Emphasize what is working and don’t repeat what is not working (“water the flowers, not the weeds”).
- Focus on your successes (you already know a great deal more than you think you know).
- Pacing and leading the person you are speaking to (how to slow down to speed up and how to do more with less).
- An approach of acceptance and non-resistance (resistance leads to persistence).
- An approach immediately applicable and accessible for everyone that can make a difference in relationships, at the office, at home and in everyday life.

... And even more!