

Value Adding



Enjoyable business partnerships

October - December 1994

Kate Ramsay and Des Ryan welcome you to the third edition of Value Adding - AnD Consulting's quick and easy-to-read newsletter.

In the last edition we explored how learning takes place when a new insight (an 'aha') is followed by new behaviour and that this happens when an experience forces us to challenge an old assumption and think outside our current square.

In this edition, in **TEACHABLE MOMENTS** Kate tells some travel stories to illustrate how our assumptions can get in the way of customer service.

You can read in **VALUE ADDING IN INDUSTRY** how a manufacturing company in the building industry is adding value to their customers.

The **DID YOU KNOW?** column updates you on AnD's recent value added ventures.

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Travelling is a fun and sometimes frustrating way to be confronted by our assumptions as can be seen in the following three scenarios.

Scenario # 1

During our last trip to Bali in early October, I had a tailor re-line my leather jacket, the old lining having all but disintegrated. I was delighted with the result except when I checked the pockets, they were still in shreds as before! We have been told that the Balinese do exactly as they are asked. My error was not hearing this advice and acting on the assumption that a new lining would include new pocket linings as well. I failed to ask the tailor to re-line the jacket pockets and re-lining the jacket is exactly what the tailor did.

Scenario # 2

After a few days in Bali we flew onto Bangkok and from there to Hua Hin, a fishing town on the Thai Peninsula. For our first lunch we ate seafood at an outdoor cafe overlooking the fishing boats moored in the harbour. We ordered water and beer from the waitress, a young Thai woman who spoke little English. She brought one glass with the beer and poured it for Des and one glass for the water and poured it for me. The assumption she made about who drinks what was not what I had in mind at all!

Scenario # 3

One of our hosts in Bangkok provided this third example. On a trip back to Australia she arranged for vegetarian meals during her flight. She was served a meat free diet as requested and as a result

learned that airline's assumptions about vegetarians. As she chewed her way through dry biscuits and bland vegetables her neighbouring

passengers were indulging themselves in all manner of treats. She reflected that, according to this airline, not only do vegetarians not eat meat, they also do not eat such foods as Danish pastries for breakfast or a chocolate with dessert!

As can be seen from these examples, assumptions control behaviour. Assumptions are what form our mental maps, they provide a framework for our actions and, to achieve sustained change in behaviour, we must change our assumptions. In relation to customer service, given the diverse backgrounds of customers, we must continually check our assumptions so that we give our customers what they want, not what we think they want!

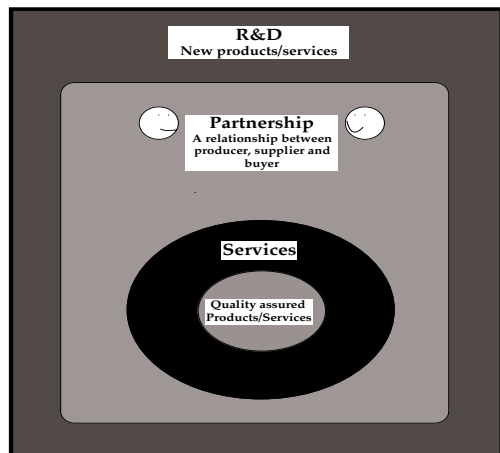
We must continually check our assumptions so that we give our customers what they want, not what we think they want

ADDING VALUE IN INDUSTRY

Providing quality products, excellent service, sound technical advice and building strong relationships with their customers is the goal for Construction Chemicals, a manufacturing company supplying products to the building industry in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

Value adding

Customer Satisfaction



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"We add value by fulfilling all orders straight away, one hundred percent of the time" Graham Smith, Managing Director of Construction Chemicals

said at an interview with Value Adding .

To fulfill this goal Construction Chemicals builds in a safety margin by making products at a 20 per cent higher standard to reduce the probability of problems. "The outcome of this" Graham Smith said "is that from both a performance and a complaint perspective our products are less problematic. This is important in our industry which does not want product problems because these lead to delays and added expense."

This philosophy of quality products has no meaning in price driven environments. "We lock ourselves out of the whole market which means only 20 per cent of customers are potentially our customers. But that's OK with us" Graham Smith said. "It separates us from the others and 'price only' buyers go elsewhere."

Being on about sustaining customer loyalty through providing quality products, excellent service and sound technical advice is clearly working for this highly successful company, proof of the pudding that adding value can add to profits too!

DID YOU KNOW?

Summer Training - using the summer months to inform and inspire people - is AnD's newest innovation. Give us a call if you'd like to talk about how Summer Training can help you.

Kathleen Dan, a Training and Development Consultant, is working interdependently with AnD Consulting as a Partner in Learning. AnD is enabling Kathleen to further her learning in the art and science of training and, with her enthusiasm and creativity, she is adding value to our training contracts.

Our plans for the **Centre for Learning Leaders in Bali** continue. Our goals include providing people who are locating themselves in one of the Asian countries a place to:

- ☛ deal with their 'Australian-ness'
- ☛ enhance their cultural sensitivity by staying in a different environment and observing people behaving differently;
- ☛ debrief their recent culture-specific experience, and
- ☛ add to their cross cultural learning through individual and team coaching in an Indonesian environment.

During our September visit to Bali we inspected a plot of land in the rice paddies at Semenyak. Our goal is to find an environment that will "uplift the spirit" but, sadly, this was not that place. Then on a walk the next day we spotted, in the early morning mist, a plot of land surrounded by coconut palms which had just the feeling we want. While our search continues for such a place for sale, we plan to rent a Balinese style house during the dry months of 1995 where learning leaders can visit.

Meanwhile we are preparing a proposal to interest corporate leaders in sponsoring our 'off shore' venture.

Learners and Toast

Since the last Value Adding we have had two breakfasts in Melbourne and Adelaide and three in Sydney. If you haven't yet had an invite and would like to connect with others having a go, yell out!

LEADERS AND WELLNESS

An effective leader is a WELL person. The wellness of a leader is important because of the dissonance that is signalled by an unwell leader.

There are seven aspects of Wellness:

1. Intellectual: What we know about
2. Emotional: Our intrapersonal (feeling) self
3. Spiritual: Our values and beliefs
4. Purpose: Our vision and goals
5. Physical: Our physical health and energy levels
6. Social: Our interpersonal self
7. Financial: Our economic wellbeing in relation to our vision/goals

One of the most powerful ways of signalling wellness is through walking our talk (congruency).

Achieving congruency between what we say and what we do involves the process of learning.

A well person has the energy to learn.

Thus, a learning leader is a well person.

Pause a moment and think about the state of your wellness:

1. Intellectual

How are you keeping up to date with your field of knowhow?

2. Emotional

What are three feeling words to describe your current emotional state?

3. Spiritual

How are your values and beliefs and how much time do you take each day to 'stop and smell the roses'?

4. Purpose

What is your light on the hill and how are you getting there?

5. Physical

Are you physically able to sustain your efforts to achieve your goals?

Do you take regular exercise that you enjoy?

6. Social

~~How much time are you giving to nurturing your~~