

Seven Strategies for Employee Self-Development

Business Perspectives on Managing World-Class Training

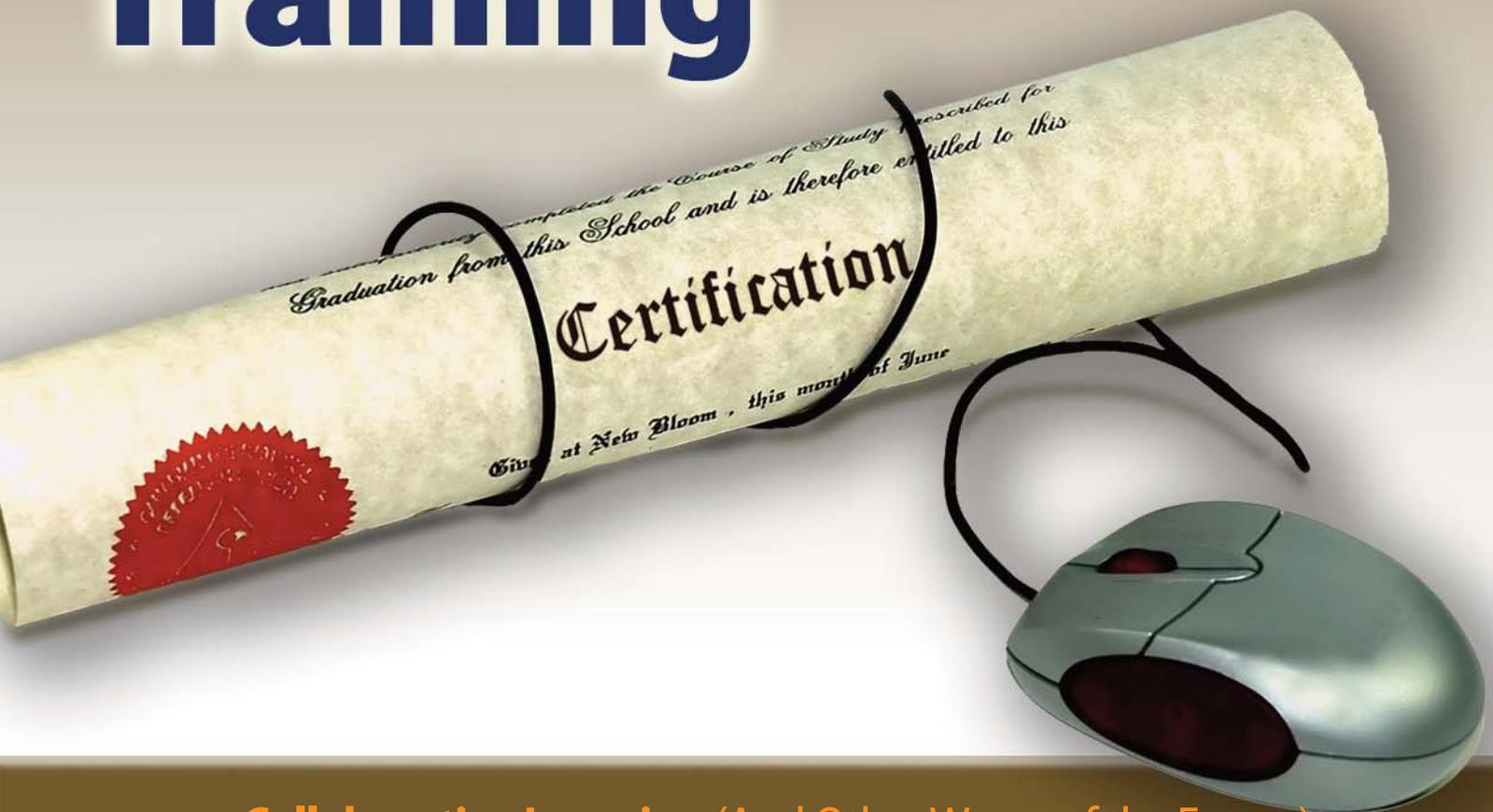
Training Industry

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Best Practices for Certification Training



- **Collaborative Learning** (And Other Waves of the Future)
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PEOPLE TEND TO BE MOTIVATED PRIMARILY BY ONE TYPE OF NEED AND SECONDARILY BY ANOTHER.

HOW HABITS SHAPE RESULTS

Despite the amazing capabilities of humans, our potential for greater success, and the satisfaction that accompanies it, is limited by the simple lack of a practical way to understand, anticipate and effectively respond to situations and people.

For most people, it is human nature to revert to being “creatures of habit” focused on meeting inner-motivated, needs-based fears. This has been true since ancient times, across cultures; people tend to be motivated primarily by one type of need and secondarily by another. In my work, I’ve referred to this as our “personal style.” Everyone has their own, and it’s the key to being “people smart” for more success in self-management and in dealing with others.

People are motivated either by what they need (naturally would do) or value (believe they should do). While most people are more needs-driven, they also vary with respect to the level of intensity of their needs-drives as well as their emotional state (positive or negative). Our research has shown that the source of our personal interests—the third type of personal motivation—is actually a personal type of need or value.

For anyone, regardless of their personal style, redirecting their energy (thinking, feelings, actions) from a more anxiety or fear-based negative energy state to a more positive, goal-focused state is essential for developing a pattern of sustained success in different areas of life. The simple reason is that negative energy and actions tend to focus on instinctual “fight or flight” responses, while more positive, goal-focused efforts capitalize on more rational thinking, appropriate talents and adaptability that may be required of us to succeed. In essence, positively motivated personal style actions are also more likely to result in “all-win” benefits, while negatively driven states more often produce either “win-lose” or “lose-lose” results.

Each of the four primary types of personal style patterns (as well as the combinations of primary and secondary style patterns) has its own inner challenge to manage. There is no single, best type of personal style, but those individuals who are more successful managing their own natural habits win more and lose less often. Let’s see how you can put this to work for yourself and to help others, based on the primary personal style pattern.

If someone is characterized primarily by a Dominant Director

personal style pattern, they are positively motivated to be in control of situations. A positive-thinking and acting Dominant Director is decisive and focused on how to achieve results without blocking others. They know that working with and through people to build strong relationships is a key to sustained success. By contrast, a negatively motivated Dominant Director perceives and responds to situations and people as a threat, too often being overly demanding or defiant.

The Interacting Socializer personal style pattern is also a more direct-acting pattern, though one motivated by approval and popularity with others rather than control. When positively motivated, they are viewed as warm, receptive and easy to communicate and work with—all of which contribute to a higher success rate. By contrast, negatively driven individuals with this pattern tend to flee from conflict and complexities.

For the Steady Relater personal style pattern, natural talents when positively motivated include the drive to work well with others, provide stability and follow through on tasks to completion in a steady manner. However, they also can become negatively motivated when faced with change, interpersonal tension or overwhelming expectations.

The fourth primary personal style pattern, the Cautious Thinker, is the most private and autonomy-seeking. When positively motivated, they seek their personal space and do things according to their own standards. When at their best, they often contribute to quality, precision and discretion. And, by contrast, their downside when negatively motivated is an indirectly controlling approach that minimizes winning teamwork practices and work relationships, can limit trust, and cause problems by the lack of required information-sharing.

By understanding both your own personal style and those of others, you will see more winning results in your work and non-work lives. In my next column, we will focus on how these styles relate to one another, to help you best manage for success!

Dr. Michael O’Connor is a recognized thought leader, executive coach and founder of Life Associates, Inc. Michael is the co-author of “The Leadership Bridge Program (Situational Leadership II & DISC)” and the book, “The Leader Within.” E-mail Michael at droconnor@lifeassociatesinc.com.