

San Pasa's Tips on Effectiveness

According to Webster's dictionary, **effective** is "having an expected or intended effect." Personal and professional effectiveness includes not only having the desired effect as an outcome of your words and deeds but also avoiding *unintended*, or, at least, *undesired* effects. There are many important topics bearing on your effectiveness you should investigate.

For example:

DO SOME INNER "HOUSECLEANING"

Get rid of inner "clutter" and improve your self image. You're on your way to improving your effectiveness *just by seeing yourself as more effective!* You are in charge of your thoughts, including your thoughts about *yourself!* Discard your negative self images—inner "saboteurs"—which you may have picked up from others. *Let go of stored up resentment and grudges*, they're energy wasters. Do what it takes to *heal old wounds* and free yourself from their distraction. Stop thinking in terms of past "mistakes" and "losses." Learn to see them as *tuition*, the price you paid to learn life's lessons. *Effective people pay their tuition, learn their lessons and move on!*

CREATE A POSITIVE "INNER ENVIRONMENT"

Pay attention to your thoughts and thought processes! Your *perspectives* and the *attitudes* you hold are keys to your effectiveness and to your success. They determine your *focus*—that is, where you put your attention—and how you view and interact with the world "out there." Where your attention goes your energy flows. Learn to *use affirmations* to create an appropriate mind set about yourself and your undertakings.

Learn to *harness your creative subconscious*. Creative people use their creative subconscious to solve problems and to come up with new ideas or new combinations of old ideas. Albert Einstein's creative subconscious provided him ideas when he least expected them—so, he had to take care while shaving not to cut himself with his razor because of being startled by surprising new insights!

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Improve your goal setting and decision making by learning how the hemispheres of your brain work—the “left brain” and the “right brain.” Learn when to use your analytical powers and when not to use them. And ***develop your intuition***—learn how to listen to and trust your “inner voice”—people with “uncanny business savvy” do this.

There are books, courses and exercises on positive thinking, on how to develop and use affirmations effectively, on how to harness the power of your creative subconscious, on goal setting, and on how to develop your intuition. Look into some of them. They are bound to improve your effectiveness.

KNOW YOURSELF

This does not require entering a monastery but it does require *attention*. You should be the one *most* interested in *your* effectiveness and you should be willing to do some “homework” on *yourself*. For example, ***find out your personality type*** and how it shapes and affects your communications, your work habits, your leadership “style,” and your relationships. Take some tests to ***map your aptitudes***. Knowing your strengths, potentials and areas to improve is important in helping you create and shape your world and to be effective in it. ***Do a values inventory***. Effective people know their values and demonstrate them in their lives. Think about your goals and then ***write an autobiography*** describing the life you want to create.

Remember: If you’re trying to be someone other than you, you’re trying to do the impossible and you’re wasting precious life. ***Effectiveness increases with authenticity***. Eliminate unnecessary pressure: ***learn to be yourself*** with humility but without apology.

AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT...

Learn to ***use words rightly***. Words (written or spoken) can amplify your effectiveness or undermine it. ***Acquire assertive communication skills***. If necessary, take some courses in oral and written communication. They can improve your effectiveness. Consider ***keeping a personal journal*** to track

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improvements in your effectiveness and the lessons you have learned. And, if you have time after doing all this, consider reading a time management book or taking a time management course!

Notice that all of these possibilities for improving *your* effectiveness are within *your* “sphere of influence.” ’Nuff said.



Effectiveness includes. . .

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Don't assume you know what another person is thinking or feeling: *check it out* with him or her.

Don't “gunnysack” (store up) or deny anger or other so-called negative feelings and then unload on someone “later.” Stay current with yourself and with others. It may be uncomfortable, at first, but it pays off well in the long run.

In order to maintain effective communications, follow the three Rs:

1. Take **responsibility** for yourself. You are responsible for **all** of your thoughts, feelings, actions and words. You are **not** responsible for **any** of the thoughts, feelings, actions or words of others.
2. **Respect** your own humanity and respect the humanity of others.
3. Practice **reciprocity**, based on responsibility and mutual respect.

When you're stressed, focus on keeping your breathing relaxed and rhythmic. It often helps to “count to ten” before speaking.

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Also, it helps to be aware of how communication can be effected by these and other **filters**:

The Environment

Enthusiastic
Interested
Indifferent
Restless
Bored
Hostile

<i>The Speaker</i>	<i>The Message</i>	<i>The Listener</i>
Age	Agree	Age
Sex	Disagree	Sex
Experience	Uncertain	Experience
Education	Confused	Education
Personality	Indifferent	Personality
Intellect	Receptive	Intellect
Culture	Open minded	Culture
Motives	Antagonistic	Motives

Attitudes Toward Each Other

Friendly
Receptive
Curious
Amused
Embarrassed
Contemptuous

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Effective communication includes. . .

EFFECTIVE LISTENING

Good Listening Habits

1. Stop talking.
2. Put the speaker at ease.
3. Show him/her you want to listen.
4. Remove distractions.
5. Empathize with the speaker.
6. Be patient.
7. Hold your temper.
8. Go easy on argument and criticism.
9. Ask courteous questions.
10. Stop talking.



Effectiveness in communications includes having. . .

WORKING GUIDELINES

Working guidelines are statements of behavior, which, if mutually understood, accepted, and supported by members of a group or team, improve the flow of useful information and create a climate for increased effectiveness and enjoyment of work.

Some sample guidelines:

I take responsibility to tell it as I see it:

- what it means to me
- what I see, feel, know or believe
- how what is happening affects me
- what I am willing and not willing to do
- what I need from others

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I communicate with others by focusing on:

- issues, situations, and tasks—not on persons
- observable behavior and events
- the here and now
- specifics as opposed to generalities

I follow the “Shoads Rule” and keep my communications:

Simple
Honest
Open
Appropriate
Direct
Specific

I speak for myself:

- I avoid saying “we” or “you” when I mean “I”
- I use “we” by permission or when expressing the corporate “we”

I take responsibility to:

- listen, listen, listen
- check it out (facts and feelings)
- work toward understanding, acceptance and support
- close the loop on ideas before moving on

When working with others, I:

- behave in a caring way
- eliminate put-downs, including put-down humor
- eliminate finding fault and pinning blame
- affirm in public and counsel in private

I suspend disbelief and give others the opportunity to succeed.

I have fun and encourage others to have fun!



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Effectiveness includes. . .

WORK ETHICS

Do the work promised

Meet or beat cost estimates

Meet or beat schedules

Conform to industry standards, rules, regulations, etc., and obey the law

Honor agreements

Do no unauthorized work

Use appropriate resources

Provide a full accounting

Do not overcharge

Exercise good judgment

Exercise intelligent initiative

Provide sound, timely advice

Maintain accurate, organized records

Take responsibility

Go the "second mile"

Make it easy to do business



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PRINCIPLES OF PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Introduction. It is difficult to separate the principles of effective leadership or effective management from the principles effective living. A person's values, attitudes, assumptions, personal history, present life situation, mood, etc., accompany her or him into the workplace. What and how you think about yourself and others and the world in general directly affects how you behave (lead or manage), whether in your role—and that's what it is—at work or in experiencing some event or situation in your private life.

Here are some touchstones of personal effectiveness. They are presented in a “straight line” in these pages but envision them as petals on a flower, rather than as linear steps. When it comes to applying them, there is probably no first “petal” or incorrect starting place.

Clarity. Clarity is essential to personal effectiveness—clarity of intention and objectives, of personal values, of personal motives and inner drivers. Not knowing your these muddies your communication, blocks your compassion, causes internal and external confusion and promotes “crossed” communications and interpersonal transactions.

Calm. Inner serenity helps facilitate clarity—and good mental and physical health, too. By acting from a calm center, you increase your chances for effective communication and for influencing others in a positive way. Besides, there is not need to panic; others will do this for you. (*Remember to breathe!*)

Compassion. This includes compassion for yourself, as well as others. Our effectiveness in interacting with others is enhanced when we regularly remind ourselves of our common humanity. Compassion and calm can be mutually reinforcing.

Curiosity. Your effectiveness will receive a boost when you exercise respectful curiosity not only about others and what they are thinking and feeling but about your own thought processes, motivations and internal

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“structures” and how they affect your situations and interactions with others. Personal responsibility requires honest, respectful curiosity about self and about others.

Communication. Effectiveness includes clear, calm, compassionate communication. (See the “Shoads Rule” above.)

Creativity. Creativity in finding solutions to problems, building and improving relationships, pioneering new approaches to situations, etc., requires openness and temporarily suspending judgment. For example, in “brainstorming” where the first goal is to generate a high volume of ideas, analysis, argument, and aggressive behavior (such as ridicule) are not allowed. The idea generation process is “wide open.” Analyzing and weighing alternatives and assessing relative merit comes afterward.

Consent. Your internal consent to “be here now” contributes to clear, calm personal effectiveness. Knowing you have, through *your* choices and the consequences of *your* own actions, arrived at where you are now reduces your resistance to communication (helps you hear others) and helps you find creative alternatives.



CONCLUSION

To benefit from the material covered here do you need to do *everything* presented—*exactly* as offered? By no means! You may—probably will—*invent your own ways* to improve your effectiveness. Must you scrap *all* old habits and create new ones *immediately*? Certainly not. But, one by one, unhelpful habits must be replaced by more effective ways of thinking and acting. You must *use* what you learn, in some way or another, to improve your effectiveness. Don't be discouraged: improving effectiveness is a lifelong process. Good luck on your journey to greater personal and professional effectiveness!