

breakthrough

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CORPORATE PROFILE

Extraordinary Conversations! helps leaders generate breakthroughs in organizational, team and individual performance.

Since 1988, we have supported large, medium and small organizations to build environments where people can do their best work. Clear vision, commitment and responsibility, open communication, courage and the passion to accomplish meaningful goals lead to extraordinary results.

We have proven approaches that can assist you and your organization to create breakthroughs in:

- *Productivity*
- *Change Management*
- *Teamwork and Collaboration*
- *Conflict Resolution*
- *Leadership Education*
- *Organizational Communication*
- *Individual and Team Coaching*

Equip your organization with the knowledge, the skills and the will to create breakthrough results.

Extraordinary Conversations works with diverse industries including manufacturing, retail, financial institutions, entertainment and service companies. Our clients include Fortune 500 leaders, medium-sized national companies and small entrepreneurial enterprises. Our work has taken us to global corporations in North America, Europe, Asia and Australia, to the townships of South Africa and the peace process in the Middle East.



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UPCOMING COURSES

THRESHOLDS OF COLLECTIVE WISDOM

Seven Principles of Group Dynamics
October 11-15, 2006

In this intensive five-day program, Angeles Arrien and Patrick O'Neill address the universal principles and skills that build and support collective wisdom in families, teams, organizations, and institutions. Collective wisdom is created and fostered by the contribution of individual gifts, talents and diverse experiences to support a common purpose. Revitalize your ability to inspire responsibility, participation, and creativity in yourself and in others.

EXTRAORDINARY CONVERSATIONS FOR
BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS! FOUNDATION PROGRAM

May 10-12, 2006, Toronto, ON

This powerful three-day program provides individual managers and teams with the practical skills required to create a competitive advantage by building relationships where collaboration, innovation and mutual respect thrive. You will learn how to: become more proactive, listen authentically, and inspire and motivate employees. Most importantly, you will be asked what breakthrough you want to make happen in your workplace, and leave with the tools and a plan to make that dream a reality.

Early bird registration deadline: March 31, 2006.

TRIUMPH OF THE IMAGINATION™

A Journey to the Heart of Creativity
& Personal Leadership
April 28-30, July 7-9, September 8-10,
October 27-29, Tiburon, CA

In a four-weekend format, Angeles Arrien and Patrick O'Neill address the universal principles that support the alignment of the mind, heart, creative fire and character behind your life dream. Once you've identified your dream (Imagination), the program establishes a framework for you to access practical tools for manifestation (Wisdom), leave with an action plan (Manifestation), and clearly identify the resources, gifts and talents that support success (Recreation).

For more information on these course,
please contact Lynne O'Neill at 416 361 3331,
lynne@extraordinary.on.ca

The only sustainable strategic advantage
today is leadership.

the LEGACY

Organizations that build a strong tradition
of leadership and nurture leaders at all levels
consistently outperform their competition.

of LEADERS

General Electric, Procter & Gamble,
Hewlett Packard, Dell and Herman
Miller are such companies. They have
dominated their industries through
a tradition of excellent leadership. >

by PATRICK O'NEILL

THE MENTOR One important way of leaving a legacy of leadership in your organization is to develop and retain talented people through mentoring. Mentors build strong leadership cultures by instilling a passion for performance excellence, through their generous contributions of time, attention to the development of others and constructive feedback.

A mentor is someone who has:

- Skills in technical aspects of a professional pursuit and the ability to teach those skills to others.
- Skills that demonstrate competence in managing relationships.
- Character that demonstrates the ability to use power in wise and constructive ways.
- The ability to be honest and fair in assessing what's working and not working in the performance of a protégé for the purpose of strengthening and improving performance.
- The ability to give feedback that does not provoke defensiveness and cannot be ignored.

Who are the most important mentors, teachers or coaches in your personal or professional life? Why? How did they change the way you thought, felt or acted? Who are you currently helping to develop as a leader and how are you practicing the art of the mentoring?

THE PROTÉGÉ Protégé comes from the French word proteger, which means to protect. A protégé is a person under the patronage, protection or care of someone truly interested in their personal and career development. To be a protégé is a high honour. It requires not only gifts and talents and a solid character but also a singular commitment to learning and growth.

A protégé must:

- Consistently initiate learning opportunities through requests for information, feedback and advice.
- Be open to positive and corrective feedback without defensiveness.
- Manage the self-critic so that corrective feedback can be balanced with positive feedback.
- Consider the feedback that is given without dismissing or deflecting it.
- Remain committed to mentoring especially when faced with challenging feedback.
- Incorporate and demonstrate positive change from mentoring.

Who do you consistently seek out for feedback and advice? What areas of your leadership do you need to strengthen or improve? How do you know this? Do you make time for personal and professional development outside of your daily work routine?

FEEDBACK Feedback is the primary vehicle of the mentor and protégé relationship. Feedback comes from insight – the ability to see performance opportunities and obstacles that either support or hinder the personal development or career path of the protégé.

Many people think they want feedback but become resistant, defensive or dismissive when they receive it. This indicates that their real desire was for the mentor's approval rather than real feedback.

Choose as a guide one who you will admire more when you see him act than when you hear him speak.

SENECA

Former Olympic skier Steve Podborski, one of the original Crazy Canucks and the first North American to win the Alpine World Cup, once encouraged me to give him corrective feedback in his new role as a spokesman for a major corporation. "That's how I improve," he said.

Guidelines for giving feedback are:

- Provide context for the feedback you are providing, including what you see, why it's important and how change might be incorporated.
- Make sure you consider the proper time and place for the feedback so that it can be delivered confidentially, and that there is ample time to discuss how performance might be improved or changed.
- Be honest and specific so that feedback is clear, direct and easy to incorporate.
- Check-in to gauge how the protégé understands and incorporates the feedback that is being provided.
- Check back later with the protégé to ensure they have an opportunity to ask questions, share insights and voice concerns that may have occurred through reflection.

What issues or concerns do you have about giving and receiving corrective feedback? In providing corrective feedback to someone else, what has worked well? What has not worked well and why?

PATRICK O'NEILL

Founder and President,
ExtraOrdinary Conversations Inc

**Those who seek mentoring, will rule the great expanse under heaven.
Those who boast that they are greater than others will fall short.
Those who are willing to learn from others become greater.
Those who are ego-involved will be humbled and made small.**

THE SHU CHING

seven barriers to growth

Tiger Woods, the golf prodigy, has changed his swing three times as a professional. Each change brought with it a hail of criticism. Yet, Woods has persevered despite the controversy ...and continues to win. Leaders who do not look for ways to continually learn, improve and grow become a liability. "Learning is like rowing upstream," says the old proverb "not to advance is to drop back."

There are seven barriers to growth that mentors and protégés must remain vigilant to:

1

FEAR Including fears of failure, change, conflict or uncertainty that results in avoiding responsibility, confronting problems or making hard decisions.

2

PRIDE The inflated opinion of yourself that can accompany success and make you blind to the opportunities to grow and improve.

3

COMPLACENCY Smugness or satisfaction with the status quo.

4

COMFORT The unwillingness to stretch, change or try new approaches because of the accompanying discomfort.

5

BUSY-NESS The failure to make time for personal development because of the tyranny of other tasks that is interrupted only by serious consequences including burn-out, failure, loss or the experience of profound unhappiness.

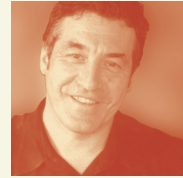
6

SUCCESS A defense against continuous improvement because of past success, recognition, or prosperity that locks people into repetitive routines rather than continuous learning.

7

DISHONESTY Surrounding yourself with people who are not honest, direct or fair with feedback either because they are afraid or manipulative rather than forthright. Beware of "Yes-Men."

The practice of Mentoring is a perennial wisdom. It has survived for thousands of years for one reason – it works. Organizations that preserve "tribal wisdom" by ensuring that knowledge, skills, values and history pass from generation to generation, leader to leader through mentoring build a sustainable learning culture. That's the kind of organization that enjoys a legacy of strong, enduring leadership and sustained success.



PATRICK O'NEILL

> Story continued from front cover