

The Language of Educators

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In order to effectively communicate with educators, it is important to use terminology that they understand. In previous articles and newsletters, Hoglund (1994) and Hoglund and Duncan (1993), wrote that changing terms (such as "non-coercive environment" to "Environment") could help educators grasp Glasser's concepts with less misunderstanding. Glasser's terms were further simplified to "Environment, Expectations and Evaluation," or The Three E's.

Glasser (1992) defines "Managing" as the process of persuading people that if they work hard to learn new skills and increase their knowledge, it will add quality to their lives and usually the lives of others.

How educators perceive the information that they hear is based on the knowledge and experience base that they have stored in their "All-We-Know World" (Perceived World).

To increase the connections to information that is already common and relatively agreed upon, increases the likelihood that educators will find usefulness in the concepts and principles that they learn. The effectiveness of teaching Control Theory, Reality Therapy and Quality Management to educators can be enhanced through the language that we use. To further refine this language process, I have adapted three Reality Therapy /Control Theory and Quality Management components to conform to educational terms.

Practicing NOT Role Playing.

The primary purpose of a role play has always been to practice using reality therapy questions. This practice allows each person to increase their skill and confidence. When one is "doing a role play", as we have traditionally called it, the main purpose of the "counselor role" is practicing and improving their own skills. The only person "playing a role" is the client/student. The counselor/ teacher role is one of practice. In school, we do not assign a student math problems and then ask them to role play, rather, we ask them to practice their computation and mathematical problem solving skills.

By managing and introducing role plays as practice, educators perceive the sessions to be more beneficial.

Conferencing vs. Counseling.

Teachers and administrators expect to conference with students about academics and school behavior. Teachers rarely become involved in what most people would label counseling. They do however, "conference" with students. Outside problems usually are referred to a school counselor, social worker, school psychologist and/or outside agency.

Responsible vs. Responsibility.

These two words are interchanged regularly without discussion about what each means. According to control theory, all of our behavior is a choice; therefore, we are always responsible for the choices we make. This does not mean that we are always choosing positive, effective behaviors, but we are responsible, nonetheless. Responsibility is a bigger, less-definable and often situational issue. It may mean:

- doing the right thing.
- being more aware of what others want.
- cooperating and realizing that compromise is often the best choice for the group.
- going against the group when one determines that the group is wrong
- challenging unjust laws or policies.

Responsibility is a much broader issue. It does not translate only to compliance.

System change is difficult to accomplish. Three components of educational change that must be addressed are:

- 1) what and how to teach (technical knowledge).
- 2) How to identify the barriers to accomplishing the change.
- 3) How to manage the change process (technical and personnel).

By using the language of educators, lead-managers can improve communication and reduce confusion and fear. The importance of removing the language barrier should not be minimized. In *The Control Theory Manager* (Glasser, 1994) states that companies are not failing because of their technical knowledge, they fail due to their inability to deal with and manage people. Addressing educators in their own professional language is an important step in the building trust that is the foundation of quality work and relationships.

References:

Glasser, William M.D. *The Quality School: Managing Students Without Coercion* Harper & Row New York, 1990.

Hoglund, Robert G. & Duncan, Ben. *The Three E's: Environment, Expectations and Evaluation*. Center for Quality Education, Inc., Newsletter. Fall, 1993.