

The Three E's

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The managing of change is a process that progresses through stages. Dr. Glasser suggests that three major conditions must occur for quality work to become a regular practice rather than an occasional result. They are: quality work can only be achieved in a warm, friendly, non-coercive environment; quality must be discussed, displayed and expected; and self-evaluation is the key to quality.

The purpose of this article is to share a tip that I have found effective in teaching the Quality School concepts. I made the change to the Three E's in July, 1993. I found that they increase the effectiveness of my teaching of Dr. Glasser's concepts. At the same time, they have eliminated many of the negative perceptions and emotions that are barriers to the understanding of his theories.

The Three E's are:

Environment
Expectations
Evaluation

Environment refers to the physically and psychologically safe environment that is necessary for quality work and self-evaluation to occur.

Expectations of quality work must be managed for, discussed and displayed. Students must learn what quality work is and how to demonstrate and explain how the knowledge and skills are useful to them. The existing system of one objective per class per day, whether or not the students learn, does not produce quality work and/or much learning.

Evaluation refers to the learners developing the skill of evaluating their work. In conjunction with the proper environment and expectations, this can be accomplished through self-evaluation or concurrent evaluation (with the teacher). It should not be oversimplified by requiring the learners to just "put a grade on your paper".

There are few companies, schools or agencies that can claim they have fully implemented or achieved the changes that Dr. Glasser suggests. With that in mind, one of the regular criticisms of Dr. Glasser's assertions is that we can't just immediately change to self-evaluation and non-coercion.

Dr. Glasser has never stated that all of the changes can be implemented and completed immediately. What he has said, is that everyone should be talking about quality and taking advantage of the opportunities to begin making these changes.

In assisting others through the change process, it is helpful to put the three areas on a continuum. This enables people to look at where they are in the process and to determine if they are moving in the right direction. Also, by removing the descriptors from the concepts, one has a very simple method of remembering and using Dr. Glasser's three points. The Three "E's".

Environment

Coercive

Inconsistent

Supportive

Expectations

Others set

Shared

Self-Directed

Evaluation

Others evaluate

Shared

Self-Evaluation

By using these three categories, people are able to look at where they are and plan what they need to do to move toward their goals.

My experience is that the three E's tend to be less "emotionally charged". When I ask, "Do you want to create a noncoercive environment?" I hear that the word noncoercive carries a negative, fearful connotation. Some educators tell me that non coercion will lead to the kids taking over the school. That is not what we are advocating. We are talking about focusing on creating an environment where learners and educators are comfortable and willing to take the risks necessary to learn and grow.

Because change is difficult, the questions that one must ask for continuous improvement are:

Are we taking advantage of the opportunities to include others in creating a positive, supportive environment?

What are we doing to create an environment that is positive, supportive and encourages risk-taking?

Are we taking advantage of opportunities to include others in setting expectations and discussing quality?

What are we doing to teach our learners to create quality work?

Are we taking advantage of opportunities to include others in concurrent-evaluation?

Are we taking advantage of opportunities to ask others to evaluate their work?

What are we doing to evaluate the environment, expectations and evaluation of our classrooms, school and/or district?

In discussing and evaluating the Three E's, there are many questions that can be asked to help a school, business or agency evaluate where they are and where they would like to be, in the above continuum.

This simplified presentation of the concepts of quality may be helpful to managers committed to constant improvement.

References:

Crawford, Bodine, Hoglund. (1993) *The School for Quality Learning: Managing the School and Classroom the Deming Way*. Champaign, IL: Research Press.

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