

KNOWLEDGE BEANS-24

a human resource newsletter



HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS ISSUE

- Sophia Stepf emphasizes on practicing theatre as a medium of training
- Abhishek Thapar gives insights on theatre as a universal form of human expression
- Niket Karajagi reinforces the importance of experiential learning with his article on 'video based learning as a "high impact training" option'

Sophia Stepf



theatre champion

THEATRE as a TRAINING METHOD

We have a thousand facebook friends, drive cars, and have fully automatic washing machines. Beneath our electronic extensions, though, we are still human beings. Our face-to-face communication skills, empathy, and capacity for teamwork define the success of our work much more than a machine ever could.

Enter the theatre. The most basic theatrical formula is "A does B for C", meaning that an actor performs an action for an audience. For example, I watch a sweeper sweeping the room. I understand intellectually what he or she is doing but I do not really learn what it means. If I take the broom and sweep the room, letting the sweeper watch me instead, I will immediately feel the back pain, experience the power dynamic, endure the monotony, and learn the importance of a good broom.

With theatre training, we create this type of fully experiential learning within a safe environment. We bring people into a physical space where they are fully present in body, mind, and spirit. We use theatre exercises for team building, to practise communication

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Sophia Stepf has an MA in Dramaturgy for theatre and media from the HMT, Leipzig and Toronto's York University and qualified as a Business Cultural Trainer from IH London. She has developed and managed theatre projects for the Goethe Institute, MMB in India and conducts intercultural theatre workshops and does journalistic writing about India. She works for international festivals as a Dramaturge. She is actively involved in programming, writing, translation and hosting public talks. As an expert on theatre, she has conducted research for German Federal Endowment for Arts and the Goethe Institute in New Delhi. She has worked as an intercultural trainer in education and business.



THE EDITOR'S COLUMN

Deeksha Jawa

Deeksha Jawa, Head – Project Management, Atyaasaa Consulting Private Limited, is a post graduate in Management HR and Green Belt in Six Sigma with a background in Psychology. She has a passion for behavioural sciences and combines her knowledge of psychometric testing with her management expertise to manage projects end to end and design & develop workshops in order to meet the changing needs of businesses.



This edition talks of the importance of "Experiential Learning" induced by incorporating theatre, role plays and multimedia in training programs. It emphasizes on the importance of adding of some characterisation of a drama / theatre text, so learners become personally and fully involved in the learning process, in a context in which it is possible for learners to feel less self-conscious and more empowered to express themselves through the multiple voices of the differing characters.

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skills, to find solutions to conflicts by enacting them and to understand other people's views by standing in their shoes—and all this while having fun.

Theatre is playing. We learn through play when we are young. Play involves every aspect of our being. It helps us practice new behaviour strategies and increases our self-confidence. Through play, we develop to our full potential.

At some point in our lives, we stop playing and begin learning by watching the sweeper. We feed our brains through cognitive learning with an infinite amount of knowledge, much of which remains unused or is quickly forgotten. This is the power of training with theatre: it brings us back to a fully experiential learning experience that is both enjoyable and highly effective.



bean tip Deeksha Jawa

MAKE YOUR LEARNING MEMORABLE AND EXPERIENTIAL

In order to make your learning memorable and experiential in nature, track the following:

- To start with, always remember the Chinese proverb, 'I hear and I forget, I listen and I remember, I do and I understand'. This is in essence why theatre is a powerful classroom tool, as it works through our experiential senses
- Get involved in something that will bring out the subject from the 'text book' to the 'real world'
- Don't be a passive recipient, rather, be an active meaning maker

It is certain, when you are a part of theatre sessions, you will often hear yourselves telling the facilitator that you actually enjoyed the experience; that you forgot it was a theatre, and found it the most powerful learning you've ever experienced!



theatre experts speak

THEATRE - a UNIVERSAL FORM OF HUMAN EXPRESSION

Abhishek Thapar



I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being **Oscar Wilde**

Theatre is a beautiful and magical metaphor which has the power to transform lives; It has the power to change perceptions, behaviours and create better human beings; Human beings who understand themselves, their environment and the society in a more conscious way.

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Abhishek Thapar is a post graduate in management, a theatre actor and director, currently based out of Pune. He started a theatre group in Punjab in 2003 during his college days. He has worked extensively on various projects with theatre companies like Evam in Chennai, The Primetime Theatre Co. in Mumbai and Adishakti in Pondicherry. He is currently setting up FLAME School of performing Arts in Pune. In 2010, he plans to pursue higher studies at London International School of Performing Arts, UK.

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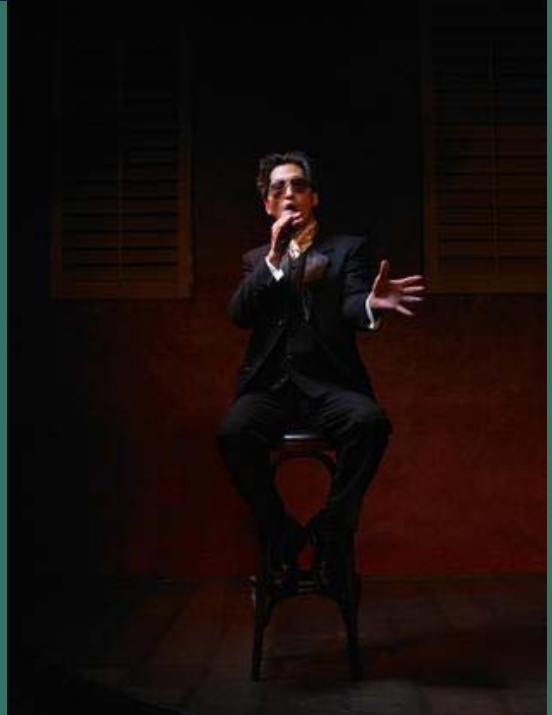
THEATRE - a UNIVERSAL FORM OF HUMAN EXPRESSION



Theatre does not differentiate between language, culture, gender or race. Drama is found in cultures all over the world and throughout history. Examples include Greek tragedies, Japanese Noh dramas, Italian commedia dell'arte, Balinese shadow puppet theatre, Natyashastra, Native American mask rituals, and the French farce comedies. People enact a number of different roles during their lifetimes, or even during the course of a single day. Preparing, rehearsing, and performing for important life events (e.g., a job interview, report presentation, or wedding) is a natural part of the human experience in any culture. Emotion, gestures, and imitation are universal forms of communication understood in all cultures. Imagination is at the core of innovation, invention, problem solving, science, business and the arts.

Theatre is considered as a power tool for training and development. Using drama as a teaching tool activates many of the innate human intelligences often neglected by traditional methods of teaching. It breaks the boundaries of traditional classroom training where the training happens at the surface level where as theatre when used as a training tool involves heart, mind, body and emotions and the training happens at the experiential level. Theatre tools like theatre games, role plays, group improvisations and various other tools of applied theatre help to understand the dynamics and functioning of work environment, the boss-subordinate relationship, subordinate-subordinate relationship, peer pressure, etc.

The way corporate culture operates today with all the pressure flowing down from the top management to the floor level and meeting the deadlines and delivering the right product to the customer on time, we have become so mechanical in our lives that we hardly care to realize that it is people who create brands and companies and if they are not able to understand each other, it becomes very hard to realize dream into reality. Theatre helps a lot in understanding the group dynamics and makes human beings realize that they are human first!



founder's note

VIDEO BASED LEARNING as a "HIGH IMPACT TRAINING" OPTION

Niket Karajagi



Niket Karajagi is the founder director of Atyaasaa Consulting Private Limited, Pune which contributes to top corporate brands globally. He is an established international management consultant and an innovative human resource trainer with niche areas of expertise & contributions. Niket is an authority on creativity & innovation, emotional intelligence and statistical methodologies apart from his operations background in understanding of management processes.



Movies and short scripts are known to alter the brain wiring as it creates a new experience in an individual's mind. It is a known fact that nervous system cannot distinguish between the unreal & the real and starts responding assuming it as real. There have been medical histories created by patients who showed dramatic recovery by using positive beliefs alone. Movies are great tools to alter beliefs of individuals.

Learning process says 50% retention of learning can be achieved by seeing & hearing and 90% by doing & experiencing. Thus videos and theatre can act as great combination or can even be used as individual learning strategies. My experience of using real life case studies in video form has resulted in taking the learning experience to a higher impact level. Adults like to learn from experiential designs like simulations, group work, multimedia tools and theatre. Role play for some reason does create discomfort at senior levels. Thus, given the fact that videos are metaphors that can change beliefs let us understand how it happens. A human being is operating at various layers which creates a behaviour that is 'see'. At the base of the triangle we have experiences of life which create our beliefs. Our beliefs create our values and attitude and the demonstrated part of the attitude is behaviour. Training programmes can create a new experience which alters the belief and also then impacts the attitude and behaviour. Once the attitude is impacted learning is fast and permanent. Video based learning can be used as a great tool to drive the otherwise challenging behavioural changes.



Videos must be real life case studies that show a result the learner wishes to experience in his life. We all like to win however our beliefs stop us from doing so. The moment we use a story in a picture form we see the outcome we desire and thus we want to emulate the protagonist. This results in a change in the human wiring at a deeper level of mind. Once this new pattern is practiced real-time it creates a new experience altering the belief and attitude forever. Fictional forms would not create a desired impact because the learner at a level of thought assumes it as untrue situation and thus does not carry conviction. This results in a lowered impact. The yes-but will always prevail in the mind leaving a feeling of incompleteness. This in turn does not create any motivation for change.

Videos are best used during a workshop as a morning session or a closing session in the evening. Inspirational and case study based videos are great in a learning process. However one must not overstretch the use. Maximum of two videos in a two day session are useful. Care must be taken they do not exceed 30 minutes. Retention can suffer. Choice of videos must be based on values/factors of importance for the participants.

Videos surely help drive the message that participants would otherwise like to argue upon as they expect a failure to be experienced should the concept be practiced. Once you demonstrate the success through a video the possibility of opposition for the new concept diminishes and the individual starts questioning his thought process which alters behaviour. Videos can create great a hypnotic appeal. It heightens the state of emotions and any input provided in this heightened state creates a permanent belief.

Though video based learning tools are experiential and I strongly suggest their use. A word of caution though; most of the videos are protected under IPR. Be sure the source you get them from does not violate the legal requirements.

Do adapt videos in learning systems they are amazing tools to transform human beings for superlative performance.