

6 September 2001

Effective Personal Leadership

I have recently completed the 19 week Effective Personal Leadership Training carried out by LMA in Canberra. It is still a little too early to know what the long term benefits will be from this training, but I can say that I have got "bucket loads" out of the training up to now. I had previously attended a number of smaller courses on Goal Setting and Time Management, and had very short term success due mainly to a lack of understanding behind the principles needed to maintain long term goal setting and goal achievement.

Alan Mitchell has created an environment that has allowed each of those attending to formulate not only an understanding of themselves, but also take from the shared experiences of others. We have had every thing from laughter to tears in our regular meetings, with the uninhibited expression of these feelings creating an environment for both honest and earnest discussion.

The format of the training, taking us from dreams and wishes, though creating desire (for both things we want and things we need), putting this together with forms and procedures to help us clarify and understand the problems and solutions surrounding our goals has certainly instilled a new desire within me to achieve some goals that, for what of a better word, have "haunted" me for some time.

One of my five "chosen goals" was to address what I had perceived (through feedback from those around me) as a difficulty when dealing with senior management within NEC. This difficulty was certainly not in any way associated with an inability to accept senior management decision or being able to deal with senior management policies, but more in the way that any feedback or discussion required to best support and defend issues concerning the Service Organisation in the ACT, was related back to this senior management. I also found it difficult to deal with issues, that directly affected my people (I have a staff of 19 people under me), in any sort of way that did not threaten senior management's understanding or belief in my capabilities. This "misunderstanding" had led to a situation that came very close to endangering my continued employment within NEC.

With help from my mentor, David Rose (also my immediate manager in the ACT Branch), I have made significant changes to way I deal with and interface with senior management, to the extent now that David has commented on obvious changes clearly visible, and passed this on as positive feedback to the senior managers that had been the focus of my original goal. Although the passion with which I defend and try to protect "my people" has not altered, the way with which I deal with those attempting to pass unsubstantiated blame and responsibility onto them, has taken on new (and successful) ways. I still have a way to go on this one, but without the direct influence of the EPL training well who knows.

A couple of people in my "class" have commented on the difficulty they find trying to "get into" the information each week, especially as the course has gone on. I have found it almost the opposite. I look forward to the two hour session each Tuesday or Thursday and, so far, have managed to complete all lessons on or before the required time - not a bad effort, considering I started the course thinking that it would be another drain on my already stretched time resources.

I have been very impressed with the way Alan handles the "class" environment, and am sure that a significant part of my success, up to now, is certainly due to the format and structure that he has presented the material in. (Just don't get him to do any more "guess what the C words are" - talk to him about this one !!!!!) The make up ad size of the class has also been important to our/my success, as within the five remaining attendees we have a broad range of religious/personal/work/life experiences that have enabled many and varied discussions on topics related to subject topics for each weeks lesson.

I look forward to future training opportunities with EPL, and am very confident that my outlook on life, not only during work but at home too, will take on an every evolving change based upon what I have learned in recent times.

Your Sincerely

Mark Newman

**ACT Service Manager
NEC Business Solutions**