



Community

Service Excellence

Empowerment

PROCEEDINC.COM

National Center for Training, Support, and Technical Assistance

LET'S GO FISHING!

Achieving a Culture Change within Our Organization

Submitted by Brenda Cruz, Manager, Training Services & Special Events, NCTSTA

- Do you want to enhance teamwork within your organization?
- Would you like to raise the energy and morale level at work?
- Care to increase personal and group accountability?
- Need to improve service and boost staff performance?

If you answered YES to any or all of the questions above then READ ON and commit to spreading THE FISH PHILOSOPHY within your organization. The FISH! Philosophy can help you achieve a culture change within your organization. By integrating the FISH! key ingredients into daily life at work, employees will be happier and more productive, which, in turn, will have a positive impact on the organization's clients and services.

The FISH! Story

"Created by *John Christensen* while on a visit to Seattle as he observed how animated and happy the employees at *Seattle's Pike Place Fish Market* were in their work. They filled orders by flinging fish to each other, inciting laughter from the customers and compliments about their throwing/catching abilities, or commiseration if they missed.

Employees would often invite customers to join the fun. The Pike Place employees gave their complete attention to each of their customers and ensured each had an enjoyable visit. Christensen realized that not only were the workers making a routine errand fun for themselves and their customers, they also were selling tons of fish.

He constructed the FISH! Philosophy from his observations of Seattle Pike Place employees."

How do Seattle's Pike Place Fish Market fishmongers do it? WHAT'S THEIR SECRET?

The FISH! Philosophy Ingredients

- Choose your attitude.
- Be there.
- Make their day.
- Play.

1. Choose your attitude.

There is always a choice about the way you do your work, even if there is not a choice about the work itself. You have chosen to be at the organization you are at and the position you are in. Since you choose to be there, you have the opportunity to consciously choose your commitments and, more importantly - your attitude, as opposed to being at the mercy of other people's actions or the circumstances around you.

2. Be there.

It's about who you are being while you are doing what you're doing. Being there for others includes: looking at the speaker when they talk with you, asking questions which demonstrate that you have been an active listener and concentrating on the conversation at hand. It takes concentration to focus on the speaker without making judgments about what they are saying, but the pay-off is definitely worth it.

3. Make their day.

Understand that in every moment lies the possibility to make a positive impact on anyone you meet. Sometimes we forget that our clients and fellow co-workers deserve our very best every moment we are at work. This doesn't have to be a big production! It might be as easy as opening the door for someone whose arms are overflowing, remembering people's names even if you see them infrequently, or leaving an unexpected note to encourage a co-worker going through a rough time. It's as easy as that. Plan right now to "make someone's day" today.

4. Play.

An "all business" approach has a cost, a human cost. It's uninspiring. Some people think play is the opposite of work. You are either playing or you are working. Playing at work is usually frowned upon. It's considered counter-productive and a silly time-waster. But play, when balanced with the other 4 principles of the Fish! Philosophy can work for you! Consider play as learning, experimentation or interaction. Creativity will flourish, the workplace environment will be more enjoyable, and clients will see the difference and enjoy the work with you.

Workplace "FISH" Philosophy and Using the "FISH" Ingredients

- As you enter your place of work, please "**CHOOSE**" to make today a great day. Your coworkers, clients and yourself will be thankful.
- Find ways to "**PLAY**". We can be serious about our work without being serious about ourselves. Have some fun today.
- Stay focused in order to "**BE PRESENT**" when your clients and coworkers talk to you and most need you.
- And should you feel your energy lapsing, find someone who needs a helping hand, a word of support or encouragement, and "**MAKE THEIR DAY**".

The FISH! Philosophy can be integrated into any organization or agency as an employee campaign to enhance teamwork, raise morale, increase accountability and increase staff performance. Supervisors and Program Directors can present the FISH! story and FISH! Philosophy key components during staff meetings, supervision sessions and in-service trainings. There are many ways in which the FISH! Philosophy can be presented to employees making it fun, interesting, applicable, and productive.

When an organization decides to implement the *FISH Philosophy*, it is essential that all staff participate. Only with full buy-in, at all levels, can true success be achieved.

For more information on the FISH! Philosophy, you can learn about it on the internet or you can contact Brenda Cruz, Manager of Training Services & Special Events. Brenda Cruz can provide you with different ideas on how to incorporate the FISH! Philosophy at your organization. Ms. Cruz can also provide you with an assessment tool that can be utilized among staff to gauge how much of the FISH! Philosophy is already a part of your organization.

Source: Charthouse Learning, 2007

