**Skills with People Training for Managers and Professionals**

**Might your own management training need
be met by coming on our *Skills with People* course?**

**Yes if you agree with any of the following**

* The skills and enthusiasm that have served me well in my career so far are now no longer enough.
* Now that I have wider responsibilities my ability to influence others and take them with me matters more than it ever did before. To continue being successful I need to improve my skills with people.
* I need to communicate more clearly so that I can tune in more successfully to other people's wave-length and make sure they're tuned in to mine.
* I need to know how to get the best out of people.
* I need to be a better listener.
* I need to know how to give effective feedback to people, to praise them and criticise them in a way that motivates them to do better.
* I need to learn how to be firm but fair in demanding high standards from my people.
* I need to learn how to manage upwards, to get those above me to take me seriously and make them realise I'm supporting them in what they're trying to achieve.
* I need to learn how to deal successfully with difficult people.

**What you'll take away from this skills with people training course**

The ability to treat speak up for yourself with firmness, clarity and integrity while treating others with respect and understanding. We'll give you a high-powered skill-set that’ll transform your most challenging relationships, conversations and meetings.

**What this session will do for you**

In this session we'll aim to give you something practical you can use right away that'll help you handle a difficult situation more successfully at work. All you need do to **prepare for this session** is think about the kinds of situations you want to be able to handle more successfully.

**FAQs**

You'll find answers to many of your questions about the content and method of this course under **FAQs** (in the main menu above).

**How the skills you'll practise on this course
will make you much more successful
with people**

Here we describe the experiences of two people who've been through the *Skills with People* course. These examples illustrate how the course can help you replace the old habits that hinder performance with new skills that enhance it.

**First example - A manager who was finding it hard to delegate**

He was a senior manager who was better at solving problems than anyone else in his team, but the more he solved the longer was the queue at his door. His director was getting worried because the manager was working very long hours, and beginning to show signs of strain. He was missing some of his deadlines. And he was finding it necessary, when managerial vacancies occurred in his department, to recruit from outside rather than to promote from within because there was no-one ready in the department to fill the vacancies.

Although he started out showing great promise it was beginning to look as though he might not be able to go as far in his career as both he and others had hoped. The director had told him he needed to change his style of management – to delegate more and to concentrate on developing his team - but although he tried, and in spite of his good intentions, he did not seem able to keep it up.

**He always led from the front**

He was very good at solving problems, and it was this that made him so successful in the early days. So much so that it had become a habit. As soon as someone brought him a problem he would mentally take it over and solve it. Unfortunately the effect this habit had on others was to prevent them from developing their own ability to solve problems. It resulted in them lacking confidence in their ability to think for themselves and in them becoming increasingly dependent on him. This in turn caused him to lose confidence in them, and so things went from bad to worse.

The irony was that by being so good at solving problems he was digging a pit from which it was becoming harder and harder to escape. His compulsive problem-solving had become a habit that was threatening his career, and although the habit was a hard one to break he was going to have to change.

**Mental habits or hidden assumptions making it hard for him to delegate and develop others**

For this manager there were two main mental obstacles to change, and both would have to be overcome if the change was to be genuine and lasting. The first was his strong but deep seated conviction that if he couldn't produce the answer himself he would be seen to be failing in his job. The second was the pace at which he worked - his permanent sense of time pressure.

He always felt he didn't have time to coach others - that it would be much quicker to sort the problem out himself. So no change would be possible or permanent unless he was able to give up the need to be seen to be the one providing the answer, and unless he was able to slow down his responses when faced with a problem.

**New skills that enabled him to enhance his performance**

He first needed to be made clearly aware of the specific habits that were causing him the problem, and of the specific mental obstacles he would have to overcome. He needed to realise and accept that although it started out as a strength, it had, in effect, become an obstacle to progress, that changing a habit is not easy, but that his career depended on it.

Then he needed to learn how to shift the focus of his attention when someone brought him a difficulty from tackling it himself to finding out what was stopping them tackle it. This was an entirely different way of listening. He had never listened like this before, and at first he felt strange and uncomfortable doing it. But with specific coaching, encouragement, practice and persistence he learned how to slow down, set aside his own thoughts about how to solve a problem, and pay attention instead to other people’s thoughts.

In this way he was able to start coaching people, win back control over his working day, change his style of management, and rescue his career.

**Second example - A project leader who wasn't very good at confronting difficult issues**

As a project leader she was a competent and thorough organiser, and successful enough with people who were highly motivated, understood what she wanted and were willing to co-operate. But she was less successful with those who were not. She didn’t like having to be firm with people or critical of them. She would back off and accept defeat rather than confront disagreements.

Sometimes when competing for resources she lost out to other project leaders who were more persistent in pushing for what they needed. She often felt discouraged and said very little in meetings with senior managers when they were more noisy and aggressive than her because she felt they were not taking her seriously. Her boss, who knew how ambitious and capable she was, was concerned that she was in danger of being seen by senior managers as ineffective and that this would damage her career. She was becoming discouraged.

**Habits that were hindering her performance**

She was a clever, clear and lucid thinker and speaker who always supported her points with reason, fact and logic. She was very sensitive to people's feelings and quick to notice from facial expression and tone of voice when they were resisting her point. When this happened she would try again to debate and reason with them. If this failed she would secretly feel impatient, frustrated and defeated, because she assumed that since the other person was being emotional there was nothing she could do about it.

Her one method of persuasion, relying solely on fact and logic, was unsuccessful at dealing with emotional responses. In spite of, rather pehaps because of her sensitivity to emotions she had never learned to deal with them and always did her best to avoid them.

**Mental habits or assumptions hindering her performance**

Her approach was governed by an assumption she had held deep down for as long as she could remember, that it's safer not to reveal how you feel. She also thought that it was unprofessional. She was not aware of the underlying assumptions, although she did admit them when asked. Nevertheless they often governed her approach to people, especially when she sensed she was in danger of getting into conflict. So she kept her feelings hidden in order to avoid conflict, but by doing so not only failed to get what she needed but often courted the very danger she was trying to avoid.

**The new skills that enhanced her performance**

First she needed help to become aware that restricting herself to fact and logic was a self-defeating handicap when dealing with people who were in a resistant frame of mind. She had to learn a different method of persuasion, one that helped them open their minds by letting off steam about their reservations. Second she needed her underlying assumption - that it's safer not to reveal how you feel - challenged and replaced by a quite different idea, that you can prevent misunderstandings and are more likely to achieve what you want if you talk frankly about your own feelings and show respect and understanding of the other person's.

Then she needed to learn and practise the two crucial skills, speaking assertively and listening with empathy. Finally she needed help to practise these skills in the kinds of meetings and conversations she'd been finding so difficult. This was a challenging learning experience for her because of her initial fear of revealing how she felt. But she knew she had a lot at stake and so with determination and practice over several months she was able both to be, and be seen to be, a much more effective influencer.

**Yet more reasons why you might benefit
from this training course in skills with people**

* The powerful communication skills taught on this course are so universally relevant that as well as being known as skills with people they are also known as people skills, interpersonal skills, soft skills, skills for dealing with people, people management skills, conversation skills, discussion skills, meeting skills, skills for connecting with people, collaboration skills.
* These are the skills you need for influencing and persuading, for selling, and for negotiating, for coaching and mentoring.
* They'll enable you to have genuine, honest and constructive conversations, and be positive and authentic at work.
* They'll make you more approachable, more courteous, avoid coming across as arrogant, able to win people's trust and confidence, create a harmonious, positive and friendly atmosphere around you of mutual respect and understanding.
* They'll enable you to talk straight and avoid misunderstandings and resolve disagreements.
* They'll enable you to communicate a generous attitude.
* They'll enable you to say what you want, as well as what you don't want.
* With these skills you'll be able to build better relationships, create more affinity, get closer to people.
* They are the skills that will build your confidence, increase your credibility, and improve your personal impact and effectiveness.
* Without these skills it's difficult to get through to people, change people's minds, get the best out of people, motivate people.
* These skills also enable you to get on better with people, put people at ease, create a meeting of minds.
* They even enable you to get along with people you don't like, deal with irrational people, calm people down, and handle difficult conversations, negotiate win-win agreements.
* They are the skills you need for managing your bosses, establishing mutual respect and treating them as equals.
* It's not just about how you talk and listen to people. It's also about how you see people. You're unlikely to *get the best out of* *them* unless you can *see the best in them*.
* Practising listening with empathy will help you develop your ability to see the best in people.
* Learning to speak assertively will help them see the best in you.
* These are the skills what will enable you to treat people as you like to be treated.