



MEDIA RELEASE

Has poor training put your business health at risk? Business health at risk from self-diagnosis

Monday December 17, 2012. Founder and principal of boutique leadership & team building consultancy Kameleons, Mr. Michael Peiniger said managers could use their training budgets far more effectively if they thought about problems in their business the same way as they thought about their own health. In a time when money is tight and training budgets are precious,

Michael Peiniger said 'part of the problem is that Managers often self-diagnose a problem in their business and go straight to the remedy, without often considering what all the symptoms are'

If you were ill, you might live with the illness for a while and try and plough through it, thinking that it will go away over time. But if the illness is a little more serious, only then do you go to the Doctor. It might seem obvious, but the Doctor doesn't just hear what you have to say and then prescribe medication. To do their job properly, they ask questions, run some basic tests and confirm their thoughts with relevant data. If the illness is more serious, they may refer you to a specialist for further tests

Peiniger says 'The same applies to business. Managers often self-diagnose a problem and go looking for the quickest remedy, often without considering all of the symptoms first. The question should be 'what are the behaviours that I need to address and change?', not 'What course will fix the problem?' With the right diagnosis, the right prognosis and remedy can be provided.

Finding the right training solution to address a problem is the same as seeking a specialist to diagnose and treat an illness. A specialist training organization can ask the right questions and conduct the right tests to identify the root cause of a problem in your business, not just a symptom.

Michael Peiniger said 'I was asked recently to provide a quote for a 2-day leadership course. While part of me was more than happy to provide a proposal for two days of training, the most obvious question hadn't been addressed - 'What leadership behaviours are the Supervisors not currently doing to the required level?' Was it implementing strategy, communicating to team members or effective delegation? Was it time management, not meeting targets or having difficult conversations? After completing our diagnostic tool, we agreed that the main problem was the cohesion between supervisors and the differing values and decisions that were being applied to the same workforce, causing confusion and frustration. Without this diagnosis, much of a two-day training course would have been wasted addressing a problem that wasn't there, rather than focusing on the core issue.'

So how do we avoid this situation? Michael Peiniger suggests 5 steps to avoid self-diagnosis and potential waste of training funds.

1. Focus on the behaviour that you want to improve rather than the remedy. Put into words what you actually want your people to be able to do and consider how you will recognize this change. Do you want your people to 'be better at communicating' or do you want them to 'provide constructive feedback to their staff and superiors on a weekly basis'. If you can't describe the behaviour that needs improving, refer to Pt. 2.

2. Get the right test, diagnostic or interview to advise you on what behaviour you want to improve. Just like a good doctor, a good facilitator or training organisation will take the time to diagnose the problem you face. Would a GP prescribe medication before asking a question or taking your temperature / blood pressure etc? If the proposed provider hasn't asked questions and moves straight to the solution, the chances of success are less likely.

3. Ensure the training provider is also focused on the required behaviours improvement. Good training organisations will assess the skill level of your staff before training takes place and be able to measure improvement once it is completed. Whether this is an interview, 360 degree feedback tool or online assessment, the training organisation should discuss how they will demonstrate improvement.

4. When selecting a training provider, go to the right specialist. A GP is a generalist who will refer to a specialist when your problem is specific. Unfortunately, training organisations rarely refer to others when they are out of their depth. Just because you have used a training organisation for sales training does not mean that they will also be good at project management or leadership. Also check their credentials – ask for references, testimonials and look for recommendations on LinkedIn. If other businesses haven't trusted their business health with the provider, why should you?

5. Make sure you feel good at the end of the process. If this was a medical problem you would know when you felt better - it would be when the symptoms stopped. Make sure you apply the same for your business. Has the behaviour that was being addressed improved? If not, what needs to change? Have you received a return on investment?

'There is no need for a common cold to turn into business pneumonia because of lack of attention or misdiagnosis of a problem. Equally, there is no need for ongoing business health problems because of a poorly prescribed training initiative. Take the time to understand what you need and research your provider – the health of your business may depend on it.'

ENDS

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Notes to the editor: About Michael Peiniger

Michael Peiniger is the founder of Kameleons, a boutique leadership & team building consultancy committed to providing businesses and individuals with the expertise and solutions that they need to succeed in today's ever changing work environment.

Passionate about leadership and the need for businesses to harness individuals', Michael develops the natural skills of individuals so that they can fulfil their full potential.

Michael has a broad professional background that includes leadership and team facilitation, leadership course design, management consulting, change management and senior manager coaching and development.

Key skills include his ability to weave complex leadership theories and the strategic 'big picture' into simple and practical leadership solutions through his honest, direct and results oriented style.

Michael's career began with Royal Australian Air Force where he succeeded in a wide variety of challenging roles, including an exchange with the Royal Air Force in Scotland.

During his defence career, Michael won the prestigious Air Force Association leadership sword in 1998 and progressed to the rank of Squadron Leader ahead of his peers.

As the senior instructor at the Air Force Officers' Training School, Michael trained more than 1500 junior officers to meet the demanding requirements of leadership and adaptation to change that is required of a leader in the dynamic military environment.

Since leaving the Air Force, Michael has used his extensive leadership and management experience to provide tailored leadership consultancy services and dynamic facilitation for a wide variety of organisations. These include:

APIA
Australian Unity
CitiPower / Powercor
City West Water
Dept. of Defence
Dept. of Justice
Fosters Group
Jetstar

The Laminex Group
Lonely Planet Publications
The Meinhardt Group
Melbourne Water
Sensis
Shannons Insurance
realestate.com
Victorian Workcover Authority.

Michael holds a Master of Business Administration (HR / Leadership) and a Bachelor of Physics. He is a Fellow of the Institute for Learning Practitioners and holds a Diploma in Assessment & Training Systems as well as the Certificate IV in Training & Assessment.