

# Premier Issue

# BreakTime

Another Valuable NMA Membership Benefit  
July 25, 2000 Edition

Save this edition, we'll tell you why sometime in the future.

## Straight From our NMA *Toolbox*

Help out your Chapter leaders by telling them what turns you on, with respect to your membership involvement of course. Just select five of the most important areas that you believe are motivations for you and pass it along to your Membership Team Leader.

<input type="checkbox"/> It's easy for me to do	<input type="checkbox"/> I feel the task is important
<input type="checkbox"/> I have the skill to do it	<input type="checkbox"/> It leads to recognition from others
<input type="checkbox"/> Other are doing it	<input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy it; it is interesting
<input type="checkbox"/> I feel trusted and respected	<input type="checkbox"/> I am expected to do it
<input type="checkbox"/> I can help with planning	<input type="checkbox"/> I have the chance to meet others
<input type="checkbox"/> I can do most of the work at home	<input type="checkbox"/> I can grow and develop on the job
<input type="checkbox"/> I have the chance to do a good job	<input type="checkbox"/> I can take responsibility

## Management is Something We All Do

From the early days of NMA, we have frequently been asked our definition of management. For sure it has been tweaked over the years but remains fundamentally the same as when we began 75 years ago. Basically put, ***management deals with organizing resources in a specific, intelligent manner to achieve goals effectively.*** Pure and simple.

Of course the primary emphasis is on getting results through a problem-solving system based in logic. Effectiveness as managers is predicated on a willingness to discipline yourself to adhere to the system, processes and controls of the science.

NMA's President Steve Bailey says, "The management process is nothing more than an analytical system of organizing resources to get results." Steve points out that "it can be learned through study and discipline and takes a lot of practice to do it well but the rewards can be enormous".

In a recent speech to an NMA Chapter, Steve said, "we are all managers. Whether it's managing your vacation plans, handling a special assignment at work or something as complicated as translating your company's goals into specific goals and plans, we all follow the basic management process".

"Not that long ago", Steve added, "management meant you had people working for you." But today it is very different. "We have many members that are in a position of management, with no one actually working for them."

So the next time you are planning a cookout, don't forget to flow chart the process, analyze all contingencies, and follow a written plan.

## **Misconceptions about Listening**

There are a number of misconceptions about good listening. Among these is the idea that the ability depends largely on intelligence, and that in learning to read people, we automatically learn to listen. A good listener applies specific skills acquired through training or experience. If these have not been acquired, the ability to understand and retain what is heard will be low. This can happen whether people have high or low intelligence.

While some of the skills needed for good reading apply to good listening, the assumption that one goes with other is invalid. Listening is a very different activity than reading.

It is easier to concentrate while reading, watching or doing, than while listening. Distractions register more easily, in part because people think so much more quickly than people speak. This leaves the mind open to the things we heard. The average listener remembers 25% of what was said. Within eight hours a person can forget nearly one half of that! People forget more in the first few hours than they do in the next six months.

To really listen, learn how to use the spare *thinking time* more effectively. Learn to direct a maximum amount of thought to the message being received. This leaves little time for mental *sidetracking* away from the speaker's message.

When possible, write down what you are hearing. Approximately 85% of what comes into the brain is through the eyes, only 11% through the ears. Taking notes can help a person to hear with more accuracy.

One last thing about writing it down. It shows the speaker that you truly care about what is being said. Isn't that one of the requirements for good communication?

## **The Truth about Continuous Learning (at least one person's view)**

The concept of continuous learning has become quite prominent over the past decade. Organizations are changing rapidly. It's difficult to find any approach to doing anything that doesn't soon become outdated. The concept of continuous learning has become important because it places priority on noticing, adapting and learning from change.

Simply put, continuous learning is the ability to learn to learn. Learning need not be a linear event where a learner goes to a formal learning program, gains knowledge and skills about a process, and then the learning ceases. If the learner can view life (including work) as a "learning program", then the learner can continue to learn from almost everything in life. As a result, the learner continues to expand his or her capacity for living, including working.

There are a few basic requirements for continuous learning where the learner:

1. Recognizes priorities or overall values about themselves and how they want to live and work—they have a personal vision.
2. Takes an active role in the world and work.
3. Continues to reflect on their experiences in the world and work.
4. Seeks ongoing feedback about the world (including work) and their activities in it (which is why working in teams, using 360 degree appraisals, etc., are so important in organizations).
5. Remains as open as possible to the feedback (which requires a fair degree of personal maturity).
6. Makes ongoing adjustments, based on ongoing feedback, to the way they live their lives and conduct their work in order to more closely meet their priorities and values.

**What continuous learning is not.** Continuous learning is a way of being in the world. It is not staying busy by continuing to attend one course after another, gathering more and more information. Someone once said that neurosis is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting to get a different result each time. (Those of us who have hundreds of books in our library might think more seriously about this definition.)

NMA's approach to continuous learning dates back 75 years, which in itself makes us rather unique. Sure we sell training materials and encourage taking courses, but NMA's continuous learning goes far beyond that.

Every time you volunteer your time for community service projects, serve on a team, become a chapter officer or participate in a chapter function, continuous learning is present. When you sit down and chat with co-members at a meeting, continuous learning has kicked in.

But remember, for continuous learning to really work for you, means you must be active in your NMA chapter and have a deep conviction to better yourself through involvement.

## **Conference Time is Just Around the Corner...**

Here's hoping that everyone is getting his or her ducks in a row to help NMA celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at the NMA National Conference, October 15-17, 2000.

Held at the Radisson Plaza in downtown Fort Worth, the meeting will feature educational forums, competition among 6 high school students for a \$10,000 first prize in NMA's American Enterprise Speech Contest, the Member of the Year, Hall of Fame, and Executive of the Year banquets, and other activities and events.

Van L. Richey, President of American Cast Iron Pipe Co. in Birmingham, AL, will be honored as NMA's Executive of the Year while Milton S. Hershey (of chocolate and philanthropy fame) will be inducted posthumously into the Management Hall of Fame. David Williams from Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth will be recognized as NMA's Member of the Year.

CEU will be offered for three forums: "Developing a Better Memory" by Bryan Dodge, "21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership" by Joe Estey, and "Emotional Intelligence and Success" by Dr. Melba Benson. Those of you living in Dallas/Fort Worth will recognize the name Suzie Humphreys – NMA's Keynote Speaker.

The Conference opens Sunday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. and concludes Tuesday night. Early bird registration fee is \$535 for non-NMA members and \$470 for members (if paid by September 25<sup>th</sup>). A special hotel rate of \$115 single/double is available at the Radisson if reserved by September 13<sup>th</sup> (800/333-3333).

Complete information has been mailed to all chapter and council presidents. May we remind you that complete information and electronic registration is available by contacting NMA at 937/294-0421, e-mail: [nma@nma1.org](mailto:nma@nma1.org), or via the website at <http://www.nma1.org>.

## **C.O.I.N.S.**

In case you haven't heard, your local NMA Chapter will now benefit directly from your membership's participation in the COINS program that was introduced as a member service by the National Management Association many months ago.

**C** Calling Cards as low as 9.9¢ per minute

**O** Outbound Long Distance at just 6.9¢ per minute, state-to-state, with NO monthly fees

**I** Inbound Toll-free service at just 6.9¢ per minute, state-to-state, with NO monthly fees

**N** New rebate plan for the local chapter to earn non-dues revenue

**S** Saving you \$\$\$\$

Effective immediately, 4% of all billed net long distance revenue will be rebated to the local NMA chapter to be used, as they desire. If you have been looking for a way to bring in non-dues revenue for your chapter's activities, this is a great opportunity.

We have a convenient sign-up procedure utilizing a toll-free number available 24 hours a day, which means no complicated forms to fill out. To get full and complete details on the long-distance program call DC Enterprises at 1-800-944-2544.

