

The Stick Factor

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Did Any of This Stuff Stick???

You're a teacher---whether of busboys, supervisors or members. Trying to get ideas across, behaviors changed.

You feel the angst, the emptiness, the futility. Haunted by doubts. Did anything stick???

Did you waste an entire day preaching and teaching to members and staff? Did you fritter away the big bucks on seminars and video tapes and prizes and books and the miscellaneous stuff of education? Did all that money and all that time go in one ear and out the other? Will they remember? Will they use it? Will anything stick?

You've just spent two hours giving a new member orientation. History of the club. House rules. Smiles all around. Hmmm. Do these corporate superstars and Westside Mammamas "get it?" Will they "do it right" or will they trash the rules?

You send two of your supervisors to a leadership seminar two hours distant. "Becoming a better you." Travel expenses. Entrance expenses. Lunch expenses. Big, three ring binders for each of the participants. Did it stick? Will they act any different after than they did before? Were the big bucks wasted?

You have questions. Will it stick? Why did it stick? Why didn't it stick? What are the tricks to making things stick?

Stick

Teaching is about making ideas, processes, procedures and behaviors "stick." Something has "stuck" when it's remembered and used.

Both the teacher and the taught want stuff to stick. It often doesn't. Why not???

Roadblocks to Stick

Roadblocks come in many forms. Might be the message. Might be the teacher. Might be the “classroom.” Might be the taught. Any or all.

Sometimes it’s the message. Good idea but the wrong club. Good idea but the wrong employee. Written when it should have been spoken. Spoken when it should have been written. If it’s the wrong message delivered in the wrong way for the target market, it won’t stick.

Sometimes it’s the student. They may be dumb as a rock. Their genes may be flawed, the synapses don’t work and nothing sticks. They may be genetically opposed to the ideas being taught---wrong psyche, wrong gray matter, wrong persona. It may be indifference to the message, to the teacher, to the passion. End result---No Stick.

Sometimes it’s the teacher. They’re boring. They talk abstractions. They don’t care. Disorganized. Confused. Diverted. Monotone. A “one shot message”---said once, never repeated. End result---No Stick.

Sometimes it’s the classroom. It may be the “little c” classroom---no windows, too hot, no fan, bad karma, no flip charts, no VCR, bad acoustics. It may be the “Big C” classroom---the club’s service culture, the employee team, the members, the community, contemporary society---that doesn’t care about what’s being taught, doesn’t reward it once stuck, is completely indifferent, cynical, or actively negative about the issues and ideas and the procedures being taught. “Big C and little c” classrooms can be barriers to stick. End result---No Stick.

You’re a teacher. Teachers want stick. Arm yourself with the Principles of Stick.

The Principles of Stick

High Stick. You expect results from the time and money you’ve invested in education---changed behaviors, new processes, heightened awareness. You need The Principles of Stick. Here goes.

Stick Needs “The Sticky.” Employees who care about the job want stuff to stick. Members who care about the club want the rules to stick. Sticky types. Filter out the indifferent. Be selective. Eject with prejudice. Select those with the potential for stick.

Stick Takes Personal. People remember stuff that affects them “right now.” The Stick Factor increases when the student knows that they benefit personally and directly from the stuff being taught.

Stick Takes Practical. Things that a student needs are remembered. Utility improves stick.

Stick Starts at Home. Home Schooling---on site, every day, eight hour classes. Teach employees in the trenches, at the club, using local examples, taught with “professors” they work with each day. Every situation an instructional opportunity. Stick improves when the stuff being taught is taught at home.

Stick Takes Examples. Current, personal and local. People learn from observing “right behavior” in others. Everyone they meet is a role model. Peers. Management. Members. If those examples are consistent with the message, taught behaviors stick.

Stick Takes Repetition. Ideas are lost without repetition. The Big Cheese needs to preach and teach “The Message.” The supervisor needs to preach and teach “The Message.” Peers need to repeat “The Message.” Repeat it enough and the message will stick.

Stick Takes Consistency. “Right behavior” needs to be “right” everywhere in the club. If the G.M. say one thing, the clubhouse manager another, the supervisor a third, the membership a fourth and the president a fifth, confusion prevails. Things stick when there’s consistency in message and behavior.

Stick Takes Stories. Stories are entertaining and enlightening. Great teachers are great story tellers. Theories are forgotten but stories are remembered. Good stories and great storytelling help the message stick.

Stick Takes Simple. K.I.S.S. helps stuff stick. Keep It Simple Stupid. “This is right, this is wrong.” “This is good, this is bad.” The message being taught should be simple, clear and unambiguous. Breezy abstractions don’t stick. Confusion doesn’t stick. Clarity sticks.

Stick Takes Small Bites. People can only digest and absorb so much at one time. Three hours classes, all day training sessions, once a year debriefs do little for Stick. Bits stick.

Stick Takes Passion. Teachers who teach with a passion are heard more clearly and listened to more intently by those being taught. Good teachers with deep passion have high stick.

Stick Takes Interactive. Bull sessions improve stick. Talking outside the classroom about the stuff being taught helps stuff stick.

Stick Takes Brew Time. Ideas stick when the stickee thinks about the issue when left on their own. Why do I do this? Why should I do that? What were they thinking when they taught me this? Brew time helps stick.

Stick Takes “Doing Professor.” People remember stuff better when they’re asked to teach others about the stuff they’ve been taught. Make everyone a professor and stuff will stick.

Stick Takes Neighborhood. Neighborhood is about “context.” The staff neighborhood. The member neighborhood. What you hear and see “in the neighborhood” effects what you do, think and say. A neighborhood that affirms “right behavior” helps stuff stick.

Stick Takes Quizzes. People love to take tests. Quiz questions are “goals” that allow clear achievement and reward. Staff and members enjoy the challenge of a short, direct, practical, focused quiz.

Stick Takes Rewards. Cash is king. Performance rewarded is performance remembered. Stuff sticks when people are rewarded for remembering and acting on stuff that’s taught.

Stick Takes Patience. Stick starts slow and then accelerates. As the foundation grows, so does stick. A foundation takes time. Little seems to stick. Then the student gets really sticky, ideas snowball, and everything starts to stick.

The Principles of Stick. They work.

From the Principles to the Practice of Stick

As a teacher, you want what’s taught to stick---to be remembered and used. Behaviors which are taught have no value without Stick.

The Principles of Stick provide the roadmap for Stick but the practices are your own, specific to your club, your personality and your team. Principles take practices to stick.

Time to get Sticky.

And enjoy the journey-----

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