

Weekly EMP Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 16, 2022



CLAUDE AND BETTY LOU LAVAL
ENTREPRENEUR
MENTOR
PROGRAM

The Significance of Persuasive Communication by Briseyda Dominguez– Presiding Mentee

Today we enjoyed a delicious Chinese Chicken Salad from *Four Seasons Chinese Restaurant* in Clovis. Our luncheon hosts were mentees, Dirk Tharpe and Timofey Volkov. Dirk shared that Four Seasons is one of his favorite local restaurants and that the family of his 8th-grade best friend owns the restaurant!

Mentee Colton Cunningham kicked off our session by providing the results of a survey completed during the week by the mentees on professional characteristics. The objective of the survey was to collectively decide what we feel are key characteristics of professionalism. We know this list may be modified in the coming weeks, but this provided us with a shorter list that we could begin to examine in more detail. Our next step is to begin to analyze and translate the meaning behind these characteristics.

A good leader....

- is ethical
- has integrity
- is an active listener
- is emotionally intelligent
- is humble
- is knowledgeable and skilled
- has a positive attitude
- is virtuous



Mentee, Colton Cunningham



Discussion and Collaboration

After spending the first three weeks discussing professionalism and leadership basics, **Dr. Koenig** set the stage for our discussion on the "art of persuasion," an essential skill for all leaders. At its most basic level, persuasion is about communication. When we communicate, we persuade others to listen, accept, understand and act. The art of persuasion is just one skill required of leaders — but it's a crucial one. We examined how we can become persuasive leaders.

We looked at two specific areas of persuasion:

- How to present ourselves to others by crafting a succinct and persuasive introduction, and
- How to solve an organizational issue through persuasion.

"The quintessential skill of being a leader is the skill of persuasion"--Dr. Neil Koegnig



How to present yourself to others

Walking into a room full of strangers and being expected to mix and mingle with strangers can make some people break out in a cold sweat. Awkward conversations and self-promotion can be really difficult! However, with practice, like many skills, you can gain confidence to learn to enjoy these types of situations.

How you briefly describe yourself professionally (formally and casually) impacts the first impressions you make on others. Strengthen this impression by practicing out loud, including various lengths and focus so that you can speak about yourself confidently and concisely in various situations. You never want to sound robotic; instead of memorizing, practice key talking points until you can speak well on them without hesitation.

The goal is to establish yourself as someone worth knowing. Find ways to resonate with others- ask questions you genuinely care about; find common ground. Look for ways to add value to the conversation. Practice, practice, and practice, which will help your confidence grow over time.

With the upcoming EMP Mixer on September 20th, we discussed how this event is an excellent opportunity to practice the skill of persuasion. The event allows us to meet a large number of community professionals that will be in attendance.

To prepare, we organized into five groups and began crafting our 1-2 minute self-introduction. The ultimate goal of our self-introduction is to make others say, "Tell me more!". By working in groups, we helped each other and practiced until we felt more natural and authentic. After working with our group, we moved around the meeting room, "practicing" our persuasive introduction.



Feedback from Mentees after practice

Kara Hernandez: "It's hard to talk about myself--very uncomfortable. I learned that speaking about myself confidently and concisely is a skill I can work on and improve."

Marcus Beh: "I'm from Malaysia, and we are taught not to interrupt people" It was difficult trying to "break into" a conversation. I learned that I need to participate more in the conversation and can enter into a conversation without being disrespectful".



Kevin Robles "I was able to speak from my heart and not off a script which made my self introduction much more authentic. I learned it's important to be genuine."



Zeferino Oshiro: "I noticed that I tend to laugh when I am trying to have a serious conversation. The laugh is out of nervousness but can come across as inappropriate and can be off setting. The practice made me aware of this habit so I could improve."

Problem Solving and Persuasion

Whether you start a business or work for an organization, you must communicate effectively with a wide range of people. Persuasive communication skills enable you to be more productive and influential at work and in all your relationships.

After practicing our self-introductions, we moved to the importance of persuasion to solve an organizational issue. Dr. Koenig indicated that the ability to convince people to agree with you and influence their behaviors is a valuable tool for solving organizational challenges. When used well, persuasion is a valuable soft skill that can significantly impact any workplace.

In business, persuasion often is used to present ideas to customers, team members (colleagues/other employees), or upper management. Persuasion in the workplace is the skill of getting others to agree with you and adopt your ideas.

To illustrate this point, Dr. Koenig framed a scenario for us to work collaboratively in small teams to develop a persuasive approach to solve an important organizational issue. We worked together to form a clear and compelling presentation that would solve an important problem for a female banker facing significant challenges due to changes in her personal life. In teams, we needed to think about how we could convince a senior manager in Human Resources to approve our recommendation on assisting "our" colleague.

We were then mixed into different groups, and each group presented its appeal.



“In order to “win a man to your cause, you must first reach his heart--the great high road to his reason.”

--Abraham Lincoln

The Art of Persuasion

Persuasion is the art of convincing others to do what you want them to do *because they want to, not because they are forced*. The basics of persuasion include the following elements:

- Start with a compelling purpose that draws attention and interest.
- Direct the brain (logical reasoning), and appeal to the heart--Both of the above are critically necessary and can precede the other.
- Achieve agreement/buy-in/cooperation.
- Agree on measuring results of what has been achieved.
- Celebrate, if possible; show respect at a minimum.

Today's role-play exercises provided an excellent opportunity for us to learn by doing. Learning persuasive communication skills can help us more effectively take our ideas and move them to implementation.

An optional session with Tyler Turk, Business Owner, EMP, and Fresno State Alum

Fall 2022 EMP Mentees will attend the Collegiate Entrepreneurship Conference(CEO), "Frame your Future." in Chicago in late October. All attendees will participate in one of three activities: Market Simulation, Venture Capital Tournament, or pitching an idea or product. In addition to these activities, this Conference will provide an excellent way to bring new people into the mentees' network, learn more about the entrepreneurial mindset and skillset, participate in great breakout sessions and hear nationally recognized keynote speakers. To get the most out of this experience, Tyler Turk joined us to help us understand the importance of approaching this Conference with focus and intentionality.

Conferences are all about professional development. To prepare to get the most value out of the CEO experience, Tyler shared his experience and answered questions.



Tyler Turk and EMP Mentees discuss the Collegiate Entrepreneurship Conference.