

HAVING FUN DOING SERIOUS BUSINESS

A Facilitator's Dream Comes True

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After twenty years of management, consulting, and training experience, it was time to re-evaluate my career to re-discover where my passion had gone. I regularly worked with individuals helping them to re-claim their passion and creativity, now it was time for me to work the magic on myself.

Even though I had enjoyed doing many things over the years, the end roles of "preacher" and "teacher" (motivator and corporate trainer) were just not fun for me anymore. It was time for a change. I decided to take a sabbatical and decide again what I want to be when I grow up.

Over the years the most fun I had experienced was when I saw my clients being creative, letting their "inner children" come out to play in team-building and other sessions. The participants played games, drew with crayons (sometimes for the first time since primary school), built "skyscrapers" from plastic straws, created spider webs of colored twine in tracing communication channels, went on adventure trips (sometimes in their minds and sometimes for real), participated in exotic "ropes courses", among many other fun exercises. I personally found delight in just being the observer and the "instigator of fun".

As I re-created my career focus I decided that the bottom line for me was FUN!! If it wasn't fun for me I didn't want to do it anymore – no matter how much clients were willing to pay me!

I guess I was finally becoming conscious of the REAL ME, and in honoring myself in a conscious, whole, balanced way, I re-directed my focus and the tools that I would utilize.

In all the years of offering my clients great customer service, I was an expert at leading serious meetings and helping clients solve involved and serious problems with people, processes, machines. I facilitated organizations to make decisions that dramatically affected their people and their bottom lines, and I helped them to pick up the pieces after major reorganizations and change had swept them out of balance. I was good at being serious. Now I wanted to inject some FUN into the ratio!!

Back in the beginning of my own days as a manager I took the role so seriously that people often reminded me to smile. Maybe it was because most of my subordinates and many clients were much older than I was that made me play that role. Well, I'm glad I'm past that stage in life, because now it is time to have FUN!!

As humans we have choices. We can adjust our attitudes around any issue to be positive or negative; around any project we can have fun or treat it as a boring task; around relationships we can connect and feel nurtured or disconnect and feel isolated. Doing business we can have FUN or we can just take it all seriously. What is your choice?

My choice is to have fun doing my "work", and to facilitate others to have fun along with me.

When a client hires me to facilitate an important meeting with a serious business theme, of course I intend to get them the results that they expect, and, I also want to add in the FUN component.

Many facilitation techniques lend themselves to having a good time while getting results. They range from just creating a space where people can genuinely and safely be themselves to coming in costume to a festive gathering place around a make-believe theme while focusing on a real business issue. Why not have a good time while problems are being solved, issues are debated,

decisions are being made? After all, aren't many major business deals finalized on the golf courses of the world?

People spend many hours per day, per week, per month with their work colleagues. My role is to guide them to be efficient in fun ways, creative in playful ways, team-minded as though they were playing a game together, productive as though working for the fun of it and looking forward to the celebratory events that reward their good service.

Traditional boring yet required meeting sessions turn into fun explorations where the ideas come from the people rather than the facilitator. Strategic planning, team-building, leadership development, and other specific business themes are facilitated so that there is FUN as the topics are generated and discussed, problems are solved, decisions and plans are made, teams are formed for follow-through. The sky is the limit in just how creative one can be, and even the planning part is FUN!!

I have re-discovered my own passion and now I am helping others to do the same. Life is short, business days are long, more time is often spent at work than at home, so why not inject FUN into the "doing business" pattern? It might cut the rate of Monday morning heart attacks in our society as it helps people to enjoy their jobs and the meetings they attend.

There are many ways that I'd like to have fun with your employees. If this sounds appealing to you, then contact me at merakel@arielagroup.com and we can design an "event" that gets the job done!



In the meantime, why not adjust your own attitude, and think of ways to make whatever you do more enjoyable. It is really about ATTITUDE, so give yourself an attitude adjustment.

Before undertaking any task, be it business or personal, take a moment to FEEL. Do you feel light inside? Does the thought of the task seem easy? Are you looking forward to doing whatever it is? If not, then how can you adjust the task so that it FEELS better to you?? With the intention of getting to the end result, how can you perform the task differently and have more FUN while getting the same results?? Some tasks may take more soul-searching than others, but in the long run, by taking a pause to align yourself with each task you are then able to create a win-win-win situation for all concerned.

I wish you well on your journey to re-ignite your own passion and sense of FUN in your life!! It has paid off BIG TIME for me, and I'm sure you will be rewarded for taking a few moments here and there to FEEL.