

# THE EMERALD COAST TRAINER



The Newsletter of the  
**EMERALD COAST CHAPTER**

**August 2004**

**Juda McAdoo**  
President

**Linking People, Learning & Performance**

A “SUMMER PICNIC” WILL BE THE THEME OF OUR AUGUST MEETING! Pam Thompson, Vice-President of Hospitality, and her committee have planned a “picnic” style luncheon at the **JobsPlus One-Stop Center** in Fort Walton Beach. This promises to be a very exciting meeting and also a great opportunity for members to see a comprehensive one-stop center. Thank you JobsPlus staff! If you haven’t made reservations yet for this “fun” meeting, please do so ASAP!! Chris McChesney, FranklinCovey Co-manager for the Southeast Region, will be our presenter. The topic: “Helping Your Organization Execute Its Highest Priorities.”

**Mark your calendars!** As we enjoy the last days of summer, Leigh Grantham has already scheduled *impressive* speakers for the months of September through January. Lenn Millbower, President of Offbeat Training, will present “Show-Biz Training: Tools and Techniques for Engaging Distracted Learners” in September, and Bob Lucus, Creative Presentation Resources, Inc., will present “The Creative Trainer” in October at the luncheon meeting and also in a workshop that afternoon (You won’t want to miss this “first” ASTD Emerald Coast Chapter workshop on October 19<sup>th</sup>). In November, Gayle Lantz will present “Developing an Internal Career Development Program” and, of course, we always end the year with Networking/“Tool Time” and special awards and recognitions at our December meeting. You can find detailed information on these great meetings in **The Emerald Coast Trainer**, our chapter newsletter. Also, *you may want to clip the calendar on the back of the newsletter and give it to a colleague — what a great way to advertise our chapter!*

Elections are almost upon us — not the national elections but our very own chapter elections for next year’s Board of Directors. The nominating committee may be approaching you to *volunteer* to serve on the board. Please give careful consideration to their request since the board works on behalf of the members. *Remember that the members and volunteers in our chapter ensure our continuation and success in the future.*

Juda B. McAdoo  
President

# Helping Your Organization Execute Its Highest Priorities

**Chris McChesney**  
Co-Manager, Southeast Region  
FranklinCovey



Are the right people focusing on the right details at the right time within your organization?

McChesney will examine the common root causes of critical execution breakdowns, look at the role training and development plays in driving the execution of corporate strategy, and explore three organizational disciplines critical for creating a culture of execution. This session will explore reviews of a two-year study conducted by FranklinCovey, McKinsey and Co., and Harris Polling on critical execution breakdowns.

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Chris McChesney began working for Stephen R. Covey in 1992 as his publicist when *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* hit #1 on *The New York Times* Bestsellers List. He subsequently worked with the Covey Leadership Center, and most recently in the FranklinCovey Consulting and Organizational Solutions division. The focus of that division is helping organizations get results by helping people execute strategy. McChesney has been heavily involved in numerous organizational change efforts.

Sponsored by ASTD's Emerald Coast Chapter



## When?

11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Tuesday,  
August 10, 2004

## Where?

JobsPlus One-Stop  
490 NE Racetrack Road  
Fort Walton Beach  
(behind Albertson's)

## Cost

\$10 for Chapter Members  
\$15 for non-members  
(includes lunch)

## RSVP

No later than noon  
August 6, 2004

To Pam Thompson

[pthompson@](mailto:pthompson@jobsplus02.com)

[jobsplus02.com](http://jobsplus02.com)

or

(850) 833-7587 x252



There are eight principles and action steps of Learnertainment™ :

- Emotion creates memory – Evoke Emotion
- Laughter produces positive energy – Harness Humor
- Visuals aid retention – Present with Props
- Suggestions guide outcomes – Make It Magical
- Auditory signals trump visuals – Mix in Music
- Multiple perspectives deepen meaning – Layer Learning
- The performance sends a message – Stage the Surroundings
- The performer sends a message – Perfect the Performance

### Learnertainment™ Principle Eight, The Performer Sends a Message, and the corresponding action step, Perfect the Performance.

*“Little as I knew about movies, I knew that nothing transcended personality.”*

Charlie Chaplin

One presenter enters the stage. His presence is expert-centric. He is the authority and the focus. His material is detailed. He discusses each nuance. It is evident that he cares deeply about the subject. Unfortunately, he is the only one. The audience is asleep.

A second presenter enters the stage. His presence is subject-centric. He is the messenger; the material is the focus. His material is pithy, providing both simplicity and depth. He avoids nuances that lead down side paths. He cares deeply about his audience. And the audience, sensing this, responds with a standing ovation.

Two presenters: both experts. And yet only one’s audience responds. That audience knows their presenter cares enough about them to perfect his performance.

Hollywood certainly knows that a perfect delivery correlates directly with success. Actors spend years honing their craft to obtain that delivery. And when the delivery is perfect, the public responds, often by paying to experience the same movie again and again. How many training classes would generate repeat business? How much effort goes into perfecting the performance?

In this article, I would like to offer some tips for honing your delivery craft by focusing on the three “Ps:” Planning, Practice, and Personality.

**Planning:** Planning begins with scripting. There often is a debate within training circles regarding the need for scripting. Some instructional designers argue that the words will never be spoken, so there is no point in writing dialog. Others proclaim that the only chance of documenting what should occur in the class is to write it all down, even if the trainers do not say the words. Both arguments miss the point. There is a transcending reason to script. The very act of scripting places a discipline on the performance that cannot be obtained in any other way.

To offer an example from music, Johann Sebastian Bach was a master improviser. He also placed on himself an intricate set of rules that governed every note he played. Sometimes, he would

break his own rules. When he did so, it was an informed choice made to create better music. Bach was a better improviser *because* he focused on the details. His planning made him a better improviser, and the result was some of the finest music ever created.

Another example comes from the legal profession. The stakes in a courtroom can literally be life and death. Lawyers often script their opening and closing arguments, witnesses script their testimony, and judges script the explanations of their rulings. This intense planning insures that what they say in the courtroom will be factually correct and logically thought through.

Another way to look at script writing is through the eyes of a coach. Scripting is the show biz equivalent of a professional football team's preparation. Between games, football teams study their next opponent and design a game plan targeted at their opponent's weaknesses. If the plays are brilliantly conceived and executed, the team wins. If, during the game, it becomes apparent to the team's quarterback that a specific play will not work, the quarterback calls an "audible," changing the play. The quarterback, because he knows all the options, can adapt the plan as circumstances warrant.

One must learn the rules in order to break them. Scripting provides you with a set of rules. It helps you determine exactly what you mean, how what you mean connects with what you have already said, and how what you will say leads inevitably to a grand finale where every detail of the performance connects. The answer to the discussion I posed at the start of this section is simply, *you script to plan!*

I script the minimum number of words I intend to say, even though I know I will miss lines in the spontaneity of the classroom environment. The process is more akin to documenting what I am likely to say naturally, rather than forcing a false style of speech.

When scripting for the classroom, distill your thoughts down to their essence. If your script is too long, stylized, or ornate, it will never be delivered. If however, you deliver a pithy script that hits all the high points, chances of a correct delivery rise greatly. Every sentence should, step by step, enhance your case, propelling the learning forward. By writing in this manner, you will insure fidelity to your point of view. You will also guarantee the logic of your argument, and thus aid your learners' comprehension.

You will have scripted your plan.

**Practice:** Practice brings the extremely complicated details of a performance to life. Performance, when done properly, is both extraordinarily technical and effortlessly fluid, and practice bridges the gap between the two. It is the methodical, detailed, step-by-step planning that works out every detail of the routine. There are five steps I follow in rehearsal.

- Step 1. **Gather the materials** – Once the script is written, go through the script, line by line, and create a list of all the items you will need for your performance. From that list, gather your materials.
- Step 2. **Plot the stage** – Next, determine where all the materials should be placed before and after their use. You should be able to reach for the item you need at the moment you need it without having to look for, or at, the item, and plotting the materials' location helps achieve this goal.
- Step 3. **Run the logistics** – Once the initial plotting is complete, run through the action on the stage. Run-throughs allow the performers to iron out all the details. Every detail can build the learning or detract from it. A focused run-through aligns all the details, even the subtle ones. Use your run-throughs to purposely point every action towards the learning goal.
- Step 4. **Add the dialog** – With all the logistics blocked, it is time to add the dialog. Look for holes in the flow of the words. Aggressively eliminate or shorten lines that are not necessary. Make your verbal presentation slightly less long. Leave in only the details that the audience must have. Leave out those details that fascinate you but are not critical. Leave them wanting more.
- Step 5. **Practice beyond endurance** – In entertainment, you can spot the true professionals. Those performers have mastered their material so well they look unrehearsed. Athletes call it getting in "the flow." The flow occurs when you know something so completely that you no longer

concentrate on it, much like the way your car finds itself at work in the morning. The car did not just drive you there; you have rehearsed that drive for months. In a similar manner, practice until you know your routine drives itself.

- Step 6. **Focus on the big picture** – With a fully practiced routine, it is time to let the flow take over. Allow the mechanics of the performance to drive it. Pay attention to the higher meaning of the presentation instead. Focus on the emotion. Forget yourself and become the message.

**Personality:** Planning and practice deliver technical perfection, but not personal connection. For that, personality is required. Personality can be tricky. Performers have, over the years, tried to trick audiences by faking personas they thought the audience wanted. Sometimes it works, but usually not. The audience seeks genuineness and turns away when they find none. In contrast, the successful performers develop a persona that genuinely represents their own personalities.

Displaying a depth of genuineness in front of strangers can be frightening. It requires exposing your inner self with all your faults. Fortunately, it is not necessary to present all of you to the audience, just those parts of you that you wish to share. The key is to share those parts that are the genuine you. You can define your persona by following the steps listed below.

- Step 1. **Examine your personality** – A place to start is in examining your personality traits and determining which of those traits you wish to display and which you choose to downplay. Be honest with yourself. If you ignore one of your personality quirks, it will not go away. Your learners will find it anyway. In my case, the traits I chose to focus on include a zeal for my topic, a humble attitude, a stiff posture, a non-smiling face, and a dry sense of humor.
- Step 2. **Align your traits into a persona** – Once you know which personality traits you wish to highlight, mold those traits into a base character you can comfortably maintain throughout the performance. Align your character with those traits and only allow your character to behave in ways that reflect your natural makeup. In this way, you will be both genuine and focused in your performance. I have taken the traits I listed above and attempted to mold them into an everyman, one who discovered he somehow became an expert, is amused by the expertise and enjoys sharing it, is humble about himself while being passionate about his message, and is a straight-laced middle-class business person to whom zany things happen that he may or may not control. This persona allows me to play against the template of an expert and generate laughs at my own expense.

I offered my own persona as an example. Whether you agree with my persona or not, the point remains: Define your own persona. Be a character. BE YOURSELF!

We began with two presenters and the question of what made them different. The answer is simple. One was the message; the other was the messenger. One was the expert; the other was the sharer. One shared everything he knew; the other shared only what the other wanted. One exuded no personality; the other was a personality. One presented without preparation; the other focused on planning, practice, and persona. Do your trainees a favor; be the latter, not the former.



This article is based on material found in Lenn Millbower's books, *Show Biz Training*, *Training with a Beat*, and *Cartoons for Trainers*. All rights are reserved. Permission is granted to reprint this article with proper attribution to Lenn Millbower and Offbeat Training®.

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Coming Events	Mark Your Calendars!	
August 10 11:30 – 1:00	ASTD Luncheon: "Helping Your Organization Execute Its Highest Priorities"	Chris McChesney * <i>FranklinCovey</i>
September 14 11:30 – 1:00	ASTD Luncheon: "Tools & Techniques for Engaging Distracted Learners"	Lenn Millbower * <i>Offbeat Training</i>
October 19 11:30 – 1:00	ASTD Luncheon: "The Creative Trainer"	Bob Lucus * <i>Creative Presentation Resources, Inc.</i>
October 19 2:00 – 5:00	SPECIAL: "The Creative Trainer" Workshop	Bob Lucus * <i>Creative Presentation Resources, Inc.</i>
November 9 11:30 – 1:00	ASTD Luncheon: "Developing an Internal Career Development Program"	Gayle Lantz <i>Work Matters</i>
December 14 11:30 – 1:00	ASTD Luncheon: Networking/"Tool Time" Gift Exchange, Annual Awards	
Jan. 11, 2005 11:30 – 1:00	ASTD Luncheon: "Vocal Power: Is Your Voice Working For or Against You?"	Deborah Boswell <i>Professional Speech Services</i>

\* = Presenter at the 2003 ASTD International Conference

Publicize your events by sending them to Diane Merkel at [DDMerkel@cox.net](mailto:DDMerkel@cox.net).

Need an exciting, new opportunity? Check our Job Bank at [www.astd-emeraldcoast.org](http://www.astd-emeraldcoast.org)