

## How to “Sell” Your Team on a New Idea

Again and again professionals tell us about hearing an idea at a conference or hearing a staff training idea from us that they want to share with their team. At the next team meeting they tell the idea with lots of enthusiasm. They talk about how it works and why it will be a great addition to the office procedures. But it barely makes it out of the room alive, gets locked in some mysterious idea-closet and dies a fast death from neglect.

Ideas themselves aren't worth the breath they are spoken with if you can't implement them with your team. In our practice we are determined that if you or we have a good idea and you are willing to invest the time to do your part, we can assure you that your team will give the ideas a fair shake.

How can we be so sure? Here are some do's and don'ts to help you sell any valuable idea. (Oh yeah, that is the catch; the ideas have to have merit, or solid gold bars won't convince your team to do more than prove the idea is worthless.)

- Ask questions to elicit from your team whether they see the same problem or possibilities that you do. No fair asking questions unless you are truly curious about team member's real impressions. Asking questions and then pouncing with an argument to show they are wrong is a prescription for failure.
- Appeal to the real desires and visions of your team. These are different from your practice's vision statement. What accomplishment sparks the interest of members of your team? This is where you'll find the motivation for change. How do you discover these? Ask truly curious questions.
- Try to show how your present system already incorporates some aspects of the new idea. Show your team they aren't starting from scratch.
- Acknowledge every effort to adopt the new idea. Criticizing failures is a dead-end road. Acknowledging partial successes is a powerful way to influence change.

If you want more ideas of how to help your particular team get behind changes and increase your effectiveness and productivity, give us a call. Change doesn't just happen by accident; there are well researched ways to give it a nudge.