

Choose Flexibility

December 2009

Flexibility - Don't Let Life Kill...

Laura Novakowski Page 1

Is Flexibility One of Your Talents?

Leanne Hoagland-Smith Page 3

Flexible Goals are O.K.

Steve Sisselman Page 4

Staying Flexible with Your Healthy Habits

Judy Rienzi Page 5

Flexibility

David Sorin Page 6



Flexibility - Don't Let Life Kill The Dream You Dreamed

Laura Novakowski

There is a saying that "*hindsight is 20/20.*" In looking back over our lives we often find mistakes we have made, challenges we could have overcome, opportunities that we failed to capitalize on or dreams that we have not fulfilled. Life goes on, the years pass us by and we often feel stuck. We become less and less flexible and believe that life has failed us.

Flexibility is defined by *Merriam-Webster.com/dictionary* as being "*characterized by a ready capability to adapt to new, different, or changing requirement.*"

What comes to mind, as I think of our loss of flexibility is the character *Fantine* a tragic figure from *Les Miserables*. She sings a beautiful song called "*I Dreamed a Dream.*" As I listened to the song and read the lyrics, I was struck the how much this song coincides with changes in our flexibility as time marches on.

Early in the song, as early in life:

*"There was a time, when ...
The world was a song,
And the song was exciting...*

*Then I was young and unafraid
And dreams were made and used and wasted...*

When we are young, our power and passion motivate us to live a life of excitement and energy. We actually are willing to take risks, challenge ourselves, feel deeply and live!

Then other forces set in:

*But the tigers come at night
With their voices soft as thunder
As they turn your hope apart
As they turn your dreams to shame...*

As we mature, inner and outer forces, voices affect our dreams. We become fearful of what others will think or say. We believe in others and lose faith in ourselves. We feel less, do less and in the process pull life down with us. We become so fixed that we are immobilized.

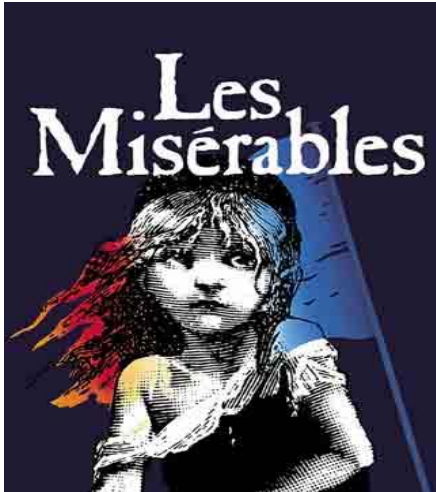


Laura R. Novakowski, RN, MBA, President
Positive Power Strategies, Inc.
A National Organizational and Personal Development Firm
3 Thorny Apple Drive, Hunlock Creek, PA 18621
Phone: 570.477.3388 or check out the website:
<http://www.positivepowerinc.com>
Inspiring People to Discover Their Capacity

Finally,

*I had a dream my life would be
So different from this hell I'm living
So different now from what it seemed
Now life has killed the dream I dreamed.*

At the end of our life, we realize that we allowed limitations and fear to hold us back and cause us to stay stuck or to settle for less. At the final analysis, so many dreams are often unfulfilled.



Do we want life to *kill the dream we dreamed*? Or do we want to look at what life has thrown us and make major changes. Whatever the dream what had, are we willing to adapt our mindset, our behaviors, our talents and interests and go after the dream that cause us to feel excitement and passion again?

I choose flexibility - I don't intend to let the life I am living kill the dream or dreams that I have dreamed. How about you?

What dreams have you put on hold?

Where can you become more flexible and create changes that will help you live the life that is restoring your dream or dreams?

Is Flexibility One of Your Talents?

Leanne Hoagland-Smith

“Prepare yourself for the world, as the athletes used to do for their exercise; oil your mind and your manners, to give them the necessary suppleness and flexibility, strength alone will not do.”

Lord Chesterfield (1694-1773)

Do you view flexibility as a talent? And more importantly is being flexible necessary in your current role? These are two critical questions that everyone needs to be able to answer.

The reason is many of the future jobs down the next road during the next 10 to 20 years are still unknown. Hence, being flexible appears to be an ever increasing needed skill set. So what does it mean to have flexibility as a talent? In one of the most accurate and revealing assessments, the Attribute Index published by www.innermetrix.com, flexibility is defined as:

“evaluates people’s ability to readily integrate, modify, and respond to changes with minimal personal resistance. This deals with their ability to be open to new avenues, not become locked into a rigid approach to a situation, and be willing to change direction without significant stress or pressure.”

Being flexible is being open to change. And given the human brain is designed not to be open to change presents a challenge for many individuals.

In Valparaiso, IN a fairly common Midwest city with a well known university, a higher than average annual income and educational levels, the city decided to install a roundabout or traffic circle to expedite traffic congestion. You would have thought the world had come to an end. Even after 2 years, people are still complaining about this horrendous “boon doggle.” Why all this moaning and groaning over something that hundreds of other cities use? The simple answer is change. People are not comfortable with change and because change makes people think and herein lies the problem.

Continuing with the example of the traffic circle, drivers now have to invest a couple of seconds thinking as they can no longer rely on the traffic light turning red, yellow or green. Previously, the traffic light was doing all the thinking because it handled the change. People could proceed forth on automatic pilot (conditioned response) since red mean stop, yellow indicated to slow down or caution and green was go. Now, the traffic circle is no longer doing the thinking and the burden is on their shoulders. Oh, my!

When we look to the future, changes such as the traffic circle will become far more common place. Being flexible and adaptive to change is become standard operating procedures (SOP). With knowledge continuing to expand almost exponentially, learning how to be flexible without significant physical negative reactions will be one of the new expectations in the business and personal worlds.

This talent of flexibility will need to partner with other talents including: freedom from prejudices, project and goal focus, concrete organizations, practical thinking, problem solving, problem and situation analysis, self starting ability, emotional control, persuading others, proactive thinking, confidence and balanced decision making. Through this partnership, individuals will learn to focus on what they do well and reinforce those talents.

Remember, the first key to success is awareness. When you are aware, you can move from where you are now to where you want to be. Or in other words, you can change with grace and be flexible about your future. The alternative of staying where you are may just cause you to be run over by someone who understands the traffic circles of life and business and looks forward with eager anticipation to the next one.

Leanne Hoagland-Smith, Chief Results Officer

ADVANCED SYSTEMS

International Human Capital Talent Management Firm

508 Sunshine Dr., Valparaiso, IN 46385

219.759.5601 Main or visit the website

<http://www.processspecialist.com>

Unlocking Results in the Greatest Asset – Your People



Flexible Goals Are O.K.

Stephen Sisselman

Question for the Month:
Do you have your world on a string?

I can not believe another year has passed. Take a moment to reflect on 2009 and start thinking where you want to be at the end of 2010. Are there any goals that you had at the beginning of 2009 that you need to extend into next year? Although goals need a target date it's good to allow yourself some **flexibility** and realize some goals require you to change the date as you discover new obstacles that became clearer to you as you proceeded with your goal. This **flexibility** allows you to live your life with honesty and can help boost your ability to achieve those long term goals that seem a little too far.

I want to share with all our readers this month how important having flexible goals are and how utilizing coaching can bring your life the success you desire. I started my coaching journey in 2005 and have doubled my salary since then which I wholly contribute to the techniques I personally learned. I thought that my wealth by this time was going to be from becoming a life coach myself but I had to be flexible with my life goals.

Having coaching be my number one source of income is still a huge goal for me but so is having an appropriate amount of savings for security purposes. Recently, I decided it was time to change where my career was going and get a new job. Within a month I landed a job with a 42% salary increase and an opportunity to refocus my life on my two biggest goals: having coaching be a number one source of income and to have a specific amount of money saved at all times to feel secure.

As I look at my goals I realize the importance of allowing myself **flexibility**. There is a song that has been my theme over the past few weeks and the lyrics by Michale Buble go "I've got the world on a string, I'm sitting on a rainbow..."

Is your world on a string? Is your string flexible enough to allow you to achieve all the success you deserve? Climb up on your rainbow, get out your string, tie it around your world, fling it over your shoulder and walk with confidence in to 2010 that you will achieve everything your heart desires.

**Make everyday a day to
remember!**
**Stephen Sisselman, BS, MT
(ASCP), MS**
Positive Power Strategies, Inc
ssisselman@earthlink.net
(914)456-6570



Staying Flexible with Your Healthy Habits

Judy Rienzi

Staying flexible with your plan to adopt a healthy lifestyle is the best way to accomplish your goals. My own personal experiences have shown me this many times.

I have been reading and researching Vegan and Vegetarian diets. A vegan diet does not include any animal products. A vegetarian diet does include the use of dairy and eggs. I truly believe these diets to be the healthiest. However, I have not been able to maintain them for long periods of time. Without proper planning, I found myself eating more junk food or carbohydrates than I should. The more I tried to label myself with a diet style, the more trouble I had with my health habits. I realized I had to make some changes. I didn't abandon my beliefs, but I knew that being more open and flexible would help me achieve my goals. So I decided to mix things up. A few days a week I follow a vegan diet, a few days a week I follow a vegetarian diet and the rest of the time I include other animal products in my diet. Sometimes I save my meat eating days for social gatherings and holidays. With this plan, I eat a wide variety of foods that provide me with many nutrients. Choosing foods that nourish me keeps me satisfied and lessens my cravings for junk food.

If you find that following someone else's plan leaves you wanting or doesn't last very long, perhaps it's because it doesn't allow for flexibility. We tend to eat the same foods everyday especially when trying to lose weight. Boredom usually gets the best of us and prevents us from achieving our goal. Rather than eating from a food list, try creating your own diet plan. We have to eat everyday so learn about food and the effect it has on your body and your health. Pick and chose foods that support you and allow for flexibility.

Get a notebook and write down new foods you haven't tried. For example, what other protein sources of foods are there instead of animal foods? What beans and legumes are on the market that you never had before? Make a list of these and experiment. Keep it fresh and mix it up. Being flexible will keep you from feeling deprived.

If you find yourself falling off the healthy eating wagon, perhaps it's time to evaluate your existing plan. Make adjustments along the way. Be flexible and have fun with food.



Judy Rienzi RN, MS
Health Promotion Associates, LLC
Creating Strategies for a Healthy Life
www.healthpromotionassociates.com
judy@healthpromotionassociates.com



FLEXIBILITY

David Sorin

Flexibility is one of those words that has a multitude of applications. Depending on the situation, flexibility can be either good or bad.

When it comes to the criminal law, there is little flexibility. Certain acts are definitely criminal, with no wiggle room for discussion. "But your Honor, she told me she was nineteen" - Guilty!! "I was going to pay the money back. I just needed it to pay some medical bills." - Guilty!!

Then there are ethical standards- should there be flexibility when it comes to ethics? Are ethics situational, and thus flexible? Ethics, and the values that go along with them, should be inviolable. There should be little or no flexibility, because as soon as exceptions are carved out, the foundations get weak.

At a different level, there is flexibility as a leadership competency. Remembering that every competency exists on a scale or continuum, it is important for flexibility to be matched to the leadership culture of the business and the decision making style required to achieve the best results. There should be enough flexibility of thought to consider all possibilities that might lead to the best result. Rigidity, the opposite of flexibility, can blind us to the best alternatives. It can cause one to grab at the first, most obvious solution, without really thinking through all of the options and consequences. And it can undermine trust, innovation and collaboration.

However, too much flexibility reveals a lack of a solid core, an absence of beliefs and principles. It can impede decision-making, cede authority to others, and remove any semblance of leadership. It means you have no true vision, no direction you are taking your life or your business. You are willing to bend to every adversary

In these times, change is a constant. Charles Darwin's words from the nineteenth century apply even more today. "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." We all must show flexibility to adapt to the changes around us. The economy affects us all and many succumb to it. Global competition changes markets and some succumb to it. Inability to vocalize their value proposition in tough times leads others to the end of the line. Failure to adapt can be fatal.

So, where is flexibility a plus and where is it not? There are no hard and fast rules. But ethics and values guide our behavior and keep us on course. There should be less flexibility in these areas than in others. Leaders need to be more flexible when it comes to finding solutions to problems and overcoming obstacles in their business. This engages their team, and promotes a host of positive results. Remember Abraham Maslow's words, "To the man who only has a hammer, everything he encounters begins to look like a nail." A leader must make sure the tool box contains more than a hammer.



David Sorin, Esq.

Management Mpowerment Associates

National Organization for

Coaching, Leadership Training and Practice Management

658 Thomas Jefferson Rd. ~ Wayne, PA 19807

Excellence is always an option.

www.managementmpowerment.com ~ david@managementmpowerment.com ~ 610-783-5305