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CIAN



NEWS

**CONFLICT COACHING A JOURNEY OF REFLECTION,
CORRECTION AND CONTINUOUS LEARNING**

Paul Lennox

While alternative dispute resolution (ADR) in its many forms continues to take hold within the federal government and be viewed as a productive way to resolve conflict, its primary use has been to provide options that address existing conflict more constructively. With the Public Service Modernization Act now in place, deputy heads are required to implement an informal conflict management system. Leadership, infrastructure, skills and tools will be put in place to manage the different faces of conflict and introduce solutions at the earliest stages possible.

There is need for more of a systems approach to constructively working together to deliver more complex and demanding objectives, all the while building a healthier workplace. That is not to suggest that conflict is bad and it need be eliminated. In fact, it is hard to imagine challenging the status quo, or a creative and innovative work environment, without conflict as a partner. The problem often begins innocently, but if not properly identified and managed, can escalate to levels of conflict that, at a minimum, result in a workplace where important initiatives and careers are derailed and which many employees prefer to avoid.

The current climate within the public service results in executives, from deputy heads on down, being asked to lead and deliver near impossible agendas. That they are not given the time and/or resources to achieve these near impossible tasks is not new territory for most executives. However, it is currently too often accompanied by an operational climate that is lacking in appreciation, trust, and respect. All of these dynamics add tension and stress to a system already crowded with conflicting demands, conflicting timetables, conflicting

agendas and conflicting relationships. The strain on most managers is obvious, and part of the tension is not having the support and tools required for success. Whether a manager is seen as a good, bad, or indifferent performer, it is difficult to be motivated and motivate others, when he or she feels set-up for failure. Those who have experienced, or are simply familiar, with the principles of the “balanced scorecard” appreciate that there is a direct correlation between employee satisfaction and client/customer satisfaction. If the federal government wants civil servants to have a citizen-

centred service mindset, then it needs to invest in the training and development of its leaders at all levels to ensure they have the conflict management competencies that help create an environment where employees feel safe and motivated to perform.

It is clear to many decision-makers that, while the ability to positively manage existing conflict is a valued competence, it is not enough. Leaders must now expand their skills to anticipate and proactively address the seeds of potential conflict at much earlier stages.

A Career at a Crossroad

Jane was an ambitious executive who had been promoted quickly and was now a Director General. While everyone respected Jane on a personal level, as DG she came across as a bully; someone who used her intellect not only to 'win' her position but to embarrass a colleague or subordinate in the process. While her considerable strengths had gotten her this far, how she got things done was now creating problems and issues with peers and superiors. Her ADM was beginning to resent that she now had to manage the fallout and was changing her perception of Jane as a top performer. Jane was fortunate to receive this feedback, although she received mixed signals. Being proactive, she retained a coach to collect and deliver the tough messages from her co-workers. Constructive feedback, based on data from a 360° feedback process, clearly identified that there were perceptions that didn't align with Jane's



FOUR MORE YEARS: ONE OF THE IMPLICATIONS FOR CANADA'S FOREIGN POLICY

When I was in Azerbaijan in the spring of 1997, I was implored by Azeri women to come back to Canada and tell the truth about the Azeri-Armenian conflict playing out in Nagorno Karabakh. The more I listened; the more I silently questioned, "Whose truth? What truth?"

Fast forward to post-November 2nd. A number of exit polls showed that values played a determining role in the outcome of the American presidential election. For some reason, it is the Republicans who can lay claim to being a value-based party, if any number of pundits is to be believed. Like the Azeri-Armenian situation, I advance that we pose the questions, "Whose values and, perhaps more importantly, what values?" The Democrats would surely argue that they, too, are a value-based party.

What relevancy does this have for peacebuilders, dispute resolution practitioners, Canadians and Canada? For one, Canada is in the throes of an international policy review. Foreign Affairs Canada's last policy review in 1995, *Canada in the World*, outlined three primary goals to be pursued internationally; one of which was the transfer of Canadian values and culture internationally. In fact, the policy claimed that, "Canadian values, and their projection abroad, are key to the achievement of prosperity within Canada and to the protection of global security."¹ One can anticipate that Canada's "new" foreign policy will be housed in values, as it was in 1995.

At the same time, there is a substantially strong push in some quarters for our foreign policy to be essentially framed by relations with our immediate southern neighbour or as Jennifer Welsh articulates it, "Foreign Policy as Canada-U.S. Relations".² Whether it is this image of Canada that prevails (and this writer certainly hopes not) in the upcoming review or other contending visions, it is abundantly clear that our 21st century relationship with the US needs careful analysis and deliberation, particularly in light of the prevailing values that can be deduced from the actions of the Bush administration. Moreover, given the November 2nd vote, one might conclude that a good number of American people share those values.

So whose values and what values are at play here? Canada's present international policy speaks of human rights, rule of law, sustainable development, participatory systems of governance and so forth as the values upon which our foreign policy is based. Probing deeper reveals values such as tolerance, inclusiveness, plurality, justice, equity, compassion, and accountability. From what we have seen in the last four years, and particularly the direction set in the late fall 2002 Bush Doctrine, coupled with US actions and the values asserted during the presidential campaign, there is a substantial difference between the Canadian values noted above and those espoused by key actors who wield political power in the US, particularly if actions truly do speak louder than words. As we have seen, for example, international humanitarian and human rights law can be set aside in the interest of American security. Rejection of the International Criminal Court is largely based on the unwillingness to subject Americans to forms of justice outside of its own tribunals. A "go it alone" or "you are with us or against us" approach has predominated in US international relations in recent years. An unwillingness to engage in the Kyoto Accord puts American multinational interests above those of the global commons. The US administration's stance on abortion, gay marriage, gun control and its tax policies that lead to increasing levels of poverty belies the values of compassion and equity. Finally, the willingness to gain the support of one's citizens through lies and deceit, as in the justification for the invasion of Iraq, places the values inherent in democracy into serious question.

So, where does that leave us in regards to Canadian values as a major element of our foreign policy and the extent to which our policy is predicated upon our relations with the US? It is not being questioned here that Canada-US relations ought not to be an important component of Canadian foreign policy. In fact, Canada needs to take the lead; it is in our interests to do so. However, it is being asserted that we need to be vigilant during this present international policy review in order that the specific values that are so key to the fabric of Canadian society not be eroded. Given what is happening below the border and the Martin government's recognition of the need to improve Canada-US relations, the risk is certainly there. ■

CIAN NEWS

Guest Editorial

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¹Taken from Canada in the World Main Page, FAC's Website, November 12, 2004.

²Welsh, Jennifer, *At Home In The World: Canada's Global Vision For The 21st Century*, Harper Collins Publishers Ltd., Toronto, Ontario, 2004



ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT: REFLECTIONS ON A VISIT TO AUBURN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

By Heather Pincock

Between October 1st to 3rd, I spent thirty hours inside the Auburn Maximum Security Correctional Facility in Auburn, New York. I was participating in an Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) Basic Workshop. This experience not only gave me an opportunity to practice and apply skills to conflict settings unfamiliar in my own life, it provided me with a first hand look at some aspects of prison life- these aspects reinforce the arguments I have encountered through my exposure to the restorative justice movement.

AVP began in 1975 when a group of inmates at Greenhaven Prison in New York collaborated with the Quaker Project on Community Conflict to design a workshop for prisons. Since then, the project has grown and now offers workshops to over two thousand inmates each year in New York State alone. The program has expanded to forty other states and across the world. AVP also offers workshops in schools and in communities, providing non-violent options for the resolution of conflict. To find out more about AVP's history and design, visit their website at: www.avpusa.org.

The prison workshops are delivered in classes of mostly prisoners and one or two civilian volunteers. The facilitator teams include AVP volunteers from "the outside", as well as inmates from the prison who have completed all three levels of AVP workshops. In my group, I was one of two non-inmate participants. The facilitator team for my workshop consisted of two inmates and one volunteer.

The workshop focused on AVP's signature concept of "Transforming Power". We learned about ways in which to approach conflict non-violently and constructively. It is a real challenge to put these lessons into practice while inside prison and this requires great courage on the part of prisoners striving to transform themselves within a violent environment. I was humbled by the experiences they shared with me- experiences with conflict more intense than anything I have known in my own life.

The workshop also concentrated on teambuilding exercises. Many of the participants had been together at the Auburn facility for years, but had never spoken to each other. Over the three-day workshop, the normal divisions of prison life along racial, religious or other associational lines were broken down. The barriers between prisoners and civilians were also broken down as I too became part of the team.

Although the lessons about conflict and violence prevention were some of the most profound I have received in all my training in conflict resolution, I learned the most during breaks and meal times. At those times, I had the opportunity to get to know men concerned about the way they are viewed in society. They asked me to tell you that they are not animals. From my conversations, I can say that they are educated, informed about current events, thoughtful and courageous. They treated me with respect and consideration and I can only hope that they felt I responded in kind.

My interest in this program was peaked in part by my exposure to the restorative justice movement. I felt that if I was prepared to criticize traditional approaches to crime, I should expose myself as much as possible to the way the current system operates. From what I observed, prison certainly is a difficult environment for someone trying to make changes to his or her life. Taking a non-violent path can be very risky and the system does not seem to support those trying to do so. I met a man who had spent twenty-

Taking a non-violent path can be very risky and the system does not seem to support those trying to do so.

nine years in Auburn, since he was seventeen. I do not know what his crime was, but it hardly seems possible that, as a forty-six year old man, he could still be defined by the actions he took as a seventeen year old. He has been active with AVP and other programs, has a clean record inside the prison and has been denied parole twice. I cannot condemn the prison system on the basis of this one anecdote, but I raise it as an example of one story I heard that convinced me further of the inadequacies of current justice practices.

While I recognize that there are significant differences between the American and Canadian systems, I think my experience can speak to the deficiencies of both. AVP is an excellent program that fosters self-esteem among inmates, encourages non-violent approaches to conflict and builds community both inside and outside the prison. Unfortunately, it is a program that moves against the grain of the formal justice system, which seems only to dehumanize inmates, promote violence and condone division. This reality only demonstrates further the need for programs like AVP and the value that they bring to communities.

Heather Pincock is a second year PhD student in political science at the Maxwell School, Syracuse University. She is serving as the 2004-2005 Coordinator of the University's Conflict Management Center, which is housed in the Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflicts (PARC). Heather is a graduate of Carleton University in Ottawa and a former CIAN intern. ■



WHO IS THE WIZARD OF OZ?

By Peter Bishop

The movie, *The Wizard of Oz*, provides us with endless opportunity to explore human conflict and transformation. It lets us analyze the “ordinary”, real life conflicts that occur in Kansas through the archetypal symbolism and imagery of Dorothy’s journey through Oz – her journey of self-discovery, empowerment and self-determination.

Conflict begins between Dorothy and Miss Gulch who wants to take Toto to the Sheriff to be destroyed. Dorothy looks to Auntie Em and Uncle Henry to stand up to Miss Gulch, but when Miss Gulch threatens to sue them and take away their farm, Aunt Em backs down and says, “Now, we can’t go against the law, Dorothy. I’m afraid poor Toto will have to go.”

Both Aunt Em and Uncle Henry give in to the power and intimidation of Almira Gulch, believing that any attempt to appeal to the Sheriff for justice for Toto and Dorothy will end in failure. As Dorothy runs from the room, feeling abandoned and devastated, the depth of conflict and frustration within Auntie Em is revealed by her angry condemnation of Miss Gulch:

Almira Gulch, just because you own half the county doesn’t mean you have the power to run the rest of us! For twenty-three years, I’ve been dying to tell you what I thought of you! And now -- well, being a Christian woman, I can’t say it!

Isn’t it fascinating how this one short speech reveals the web of social, economic, cultural and historical conflict in which Dorothy finds herself? She feels overwhelmed, alone and powerless. So, when Toto escapes from Miss Gulch, Dorothy concludes that she has no choice but to run away. For me, this brings to mind the words of Kenneth Cloke in his excellent book, *Mediating Dangerously* (p. xii):

“I believe our role as mediators is not simply to settle conflicts or fashion agreements, but to create choices. ... people in conflict have difficulty comprehending the full range of choices available to them. They may not have genuinely listened or revealed themselves to each other. They may have failed to look deeply enough into themselves. They may have been blinded, hypnotized, and seduced by their conflicts and unable to see them clearly.”

Dorothy and Toto head off down the dusty Kansas road and, serendipitously, come upon the wagon of “Professor Marvel, Acclaimed by the Crown Heads of Europe”. Professor Marvel (played by Frank Morgan, who also plays the Wizard of Oz), the travelling con artist and proverbial snake-oil salesman, is

ideally suited to be our mediator. He well fits the mould established by Robert Benjamin in his article, “The Mediator as Trickster”.² Through his intriguing capacity for trickery, sleight-of-hand, crystal-ball gazing, empathy and intuition, he guides Dorothy to the realization of how much she and Aunt Em mean to each other and she thus decides to go back home.

However, before Dorothy returns to confront everyone and everything she had run away from, the cyclone hits - her world is turned inside-out, upside-down and she finds herself “over the rainbow” in Oz. Far from the dirty Kansas road that takes her back to the farmhouse, Dorothy finds herself on the Yellow Brick Road and “off to see the Wizard”. As Glinda says, the only person who might save Dorothy, who might help her to get home, is “the great and wonderful Wizard of Oz himself”. To her devastation, Aunt Em and Uncle Henry had proved not to be her champions. She was convinced that the Sheriff wouldn’t save her, and certainly Miss Gulch wasn’t going to.

So, thank heavens she had discovered the great and powerful Wizard of Oz who would surely be her saviour. The road is clearly marked before her; her ultimate destination is determined - all she has to do is go there.

We know what happens on Dorothy’s journey of self-discovery. Her ingenuity, her compassion and her courage – her

scarecrow, her tin man and her cowardly lion – prove to be everything she needs them to be. Dorothy, with her friends, finds a way to vanquish the Wicked Witch of the West (played by Margaret Hamilton who, of course, also plays Miss Gulch), when she inadvertently throws water on her. When they return to the Wizard, having accomplished his impossible task of getting the Witch’s broomstick, it is inevitable that he will be revealed for the faker and humbug that he is.

Upon discovering that the man behind the curtain is the “great and powerful Wizard”, Dorothy says, “You’re a very bad man,” and he replies, “Oh, no, my dear -- I’m -- I’m a very good man. I’m just a very bad Wizard.” The Wizard-Professor Marvel-trickster character then proceeds, through bluff, blarney and wit, to enable the scarecrow, the lion and the tin man to discover their true intelligence, compassion and courage. To each of them, he says:

“Back where I come from we have universities, seats of great learning -- where men go to become great thinkers. And when they come out, they think deep thoughts -- and with no more brains than you have.... But, they have one thing you haven’t got! A diploma!

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Isn't it fascinating how this one short speech reveals the web of social, economic, cultural and historical conflict in which Dorothy finds herself? She feels overwhelmed, alone and powerless.



CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES PROJECT: WHAT IMPACT?

Flaurie Storie

The Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities Project - Pakistan (CRRP) was a two-year pilot project funded by CIDA which focused on citizenship, human rights and conflict resolution education. At the same time, the overarching goal of the Project, situated in the governance domain, was to contribute to the promotion of security in Pakistan by promoting democratic governance and respect for human rights. The Project set out to determine how best the three concept areas could be integrated into youth and children's education with respect to attitudes, knowledge and skills. What has been the Project's impact, through intention or otherwise? What have we learned? Given that it was a pilot project, what should happen now?

The purpose of a short, pilot project is not to create long lasting impact in any substantial way. Yet, the CRRP has been able to do just that.

The purpose of a short, pilot project is not to create long lasting impact in any substantial way. Yet, the CRRP has been able to do just that. An implementing partner, the Institute of Educational Development of the Aga Khan University, integrated concepts of citizenship, human rights, and conflict resolution into Social Studies textbooks that they were asked to design and develop for the Sindh Textbook Board. These texts will be used by thousands of students in the province of Sindh and may have wider distribution beyond this one province. A second substantial impact of the Project was the establishment of a university-issued certificate in the teaching of citizenship, human rights, and conflict resolution, with plans for future offerings as funding sources are already being sought. Thirdly, a mapping of organizations involved in the three Project areas led to the publication of a directory and the development of a website which, it is anticipated, will lead to the founding of an active network to bring awareness of and promote the need for citizenship, human rights, and conflict resolution education. Other impacts reported on a very small scale (however, with not insignificant implications) included a transformation in the way teachers conceived of students and which changed how they work with them; an understanding of what it means to have rights and to exercise these rights and their subsequent responsibilities; a shift in the role of head teachers regarding involvement of teachers in school affairs; and a shift in pedagogy from one of strictly rote learning to one involving active, experiential and cooperative learning.

The development of materials needed to focus on educating students to "create" a democracy, not how to live in a democracy.

Below are some of the lessons learned or confirmations established through the implementation of this successful pilot project.

1. The development of materials needed to focus on educating students to "create" a democracy, not how to live in a democracy.
2. The extent to which the present nature of pedagogy (rote learning, non-questioning obedience and the dearth of creative and critical thinking) is a major challenge to integrating the three content areas into the learning of Pakistani students.
3. The level of education of the average teacher and the passing on of destructive attitudes, limited, if not distorted, knowledge and the use of an authoritarian teaching manner undermined the values inherent in the content areas. Thus, effective teacher training is an essential component of educational initiatives such as the CRRP. This problem was intensified by the many bureaucrats involved in education who presented stumbling blocks to progressive teaching and learning.
4. Building on the third lesson, there is an overwhelming need for an enabling environment that extends from the policy to the operational level, including into the classroom. As a well-known human rights and feminist activist, Dr. Rubina Saigol, claimed, "Citizenship, as taught through the CRRP, requires that existing social structures in Pakistan be challenged".
5. A major challenge is presented by the pervasive acceptance of violence as a viable option to deal with tensions and conflict, whether in the family, the school, the community or even at national and international levels.
6. Many roadblocks resulted from the politicization of education and its purpose. For example, an attempt at national curriculum reform which initially favored the efforts of the Project turned one hundred and eighty degrees in a few short weeks with negative impacts on the Project's purpose and objectives.
7. The education of the masses is largely threatening to the status quo. The elite of Pakistan and the small middle class whose status is largely dependent on the former are more focused on maintaining the status quo than on bringing about true change for the citizens of Pakistan.



DOMESTIC PROGRAM UPDATE

By Heidi Ruppert

CIAN continues to offer four modules in its Practitioner Program. Each of the modules is four days in length. We have had great success with these modules and continue to receive highly complimentary feedback from participants. A sampling of recent feedback follows:

"I attended CIAN's Modules I and II consecutively. After almost two weeks of class, I felt exhilarated, not exhausted. The pre-course material was excellent preparation, and the courses themselves were a confident blend of theory and practice, delivered by personable and professional instructors whose experience was impressive. The atmosphere was collegial, with an interesting and varied blend of participant backgrounds, both public and private sector. The courses were a veritable pleasure to take part in, and far exceeded my expectations."

"This is a well developed course—well thought out. I feel ready now to mediate based on my training."

"The synergy that was evident among all three instructors really added to the classroom dynamic."

"All the trainers were very knowledgeable and very effective, as usual."

We are continually improving and updating our training programs. All modules are delivered by experienced practitioners, trainers and coaches. Participants receive extensive feedback, including one-on-one conversations with a trainer.

In Modules III and IV, we videotape all participants and provide them with a CD and the opportunity to see themselves "in action". Their interventions are reviewed privately with a trainer to provide participants with focused feedback.

One of the hallmarks of our program is the small class sizes which provide participants with plenty of opportunity to practice their skills in a safe and comfortable environment.

Participants are granted a **Certificate of Completion** after each module, an **Advanced Certificate in ADR** after the completion of Modules I to III and a **Certificate in Workplace Dispute Resolution** after the completion of Modules I to IV.

We have graduated a number of students this year with their **Advanced Certificate in ADR** who are returning for Module IV in November 2004. Congratulations to you all!

We developed a three-day workshop dealing with Communication Skills, Interest-Based Negotiation and Basic

Mediation Skills. This workshop was first delivered in October 2003 to a group of lawyers, accountants, financial planners and social workers from Sault St. Marie who were interested in participating in the Collaborative Law Process. We co-delivered this workshop with MDR Associates and MGB & Associates. Some feedback from participants on this program included: "Very informative – very adaptable," "This program should be part of all insurance companies where mediation is mandatory," "This training was excellent on all counts!"

The Ben Hoffman Scholarship was granted to Heather Cazemier in August 2004. Heather is a Child Protection Worker with the Children's Aid Society. Heather participated in Module I during our Summer Institute and she was a fantastic contributor. Heather recently sent us a letter in which she stated: "Within the past two months, I've been able to apply what I learned in Module I to the situations I have had to deal with in my role as a Child Protection Worker. Module I was a great place to begin as it laid the basic foundations for negotiations, which has benefited the children of my clients who are involved in custody and access disputes".

We are thrilled and fortunate to be working with Paul Lennox, President of Leadership Unlimited Inc. and an associate with MDR Associates Conflict Resolution Professionals. Together, we are developing a Conflict Coaching workshop. Paul has coached executives for over 15 years in the field of conflict management and leadership development. We plan to launch this workshop in early 2005. Please watch our website for upcoming dates for this workshop and other training. Paul's article, "**Conflict Coaching – A Journey of Reflection, Correction and Continuous Learning,**" is featured in this edition of the Newsletter and will soon be published in "Canadian Executive Magazine".

Module I: Conflict Theory and Introduction to Negotiation and Mediation covers the science of conflict, its analysis, the processes and skills necessary to help resolve conflicts and disputes. We look at the relationship between rights, interests and power and how to effectively communicate in situations of conflict. This Module also introduces participants to the theory and practice of interest-based negotiations. The goal of this Module is to set the foundation for participants and provide them with broad and sound theoretical knowledge in dispute resolution practice principles.

Module II: Mediation concentrates on the mediation process in its broader aspects from pre-mediation screening and interviewing, the mediation process itself, to the conclusion of

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intentions or values. Now aware and accepting of the need to change, Jane made adjustments in behaviour so that she now anticipates, prepares, and positively manages her interactions with others. She has put the necessary feedback mechanisms in place so that she can adjust her behaviour when her impact is not constructive. As anticipated, those who now work with Jane are more participative, productive and having more fun. Jane's career is now back on track.

It is clear to many decision-makers that, while the ability to positively manage existing conflict is a valued competence, it is not enough. Leaders must now expand their skills to anticipate and proactively address the seeds of potential conflict at much earlier stages. As well, there is a growing expectation that managers and executives build a guiding coalition of employees who are committed to building a healthier and more productive workplace. Workplace demands are expanding and more complex and these dynamics now place a premium on teamwork. Yet stovepipe management, and "making decisions from a silo" perspective, continue to be the preferred operating styles. These behaviours can result in an inconsistent application of standards and inconsistent HR and financial management practices within an organization. This results in tension and conflict within the workplace that could have been avoided. The harsh reality is that managers are so stretched in trying to cope with the issue or crisis of the day, that they have little or no time to lead and develop their team.

A healthy conflict coaching experience is a partnership that is interactive, collaborative, and developmental. It is a relationship built on mutual respect and trust, which results in long-term excellence in performance

Developing teamwork requires time and commitment, but the returns can be significant. Through the introduction of conflict coaching and 'action learning' principles, a team can make great strides toward improved performance. Healthy conflict is encouraged and each team member commits to providing and receiving constructive feedback on how to improve individual and team performance. Developing the competencies of a conflict coach creates individual and team confidence to have difficult conversations, so that performance continues to align with shifting expectations.

Loss of Motivation

Jean was seen by his peers and superiors as the kind of high flyer you wanted managing tough files. However, as he became more senior, he shared less information with his staff. Subordinates felt that they were no longer trusted and began to suspect that restructuring and/or downsizing was in the works. Rumors were rampant, staff worried about job security and

productivity dropped significantly. Jean sensed that there were issues, but no one was willing to put his or her concerns on the table. Wanting to get to the bottom of the problem, Jean brought in a conflict coach he had worked with before. Individual confidential interviews with the coach surfaced the concerns. Through conflict coaching sessions, Jean's staff saw that their best option was to approach their boss and get all the issues on the table. The conflict coach worked with each subordinate to develop the language and confidence to have difficult conversations. Jean appreciated their frankness and willingness to come forward. While the exchange was not easy, there were no unpleasant surprises. In fact, jobs were secure and there were no significant changes anticipated. The harsh reality was that Jean had been so overwhelmed with demands from his superior, without appreciating the impact, he no longer took the time to properly communicate direction and provide much needed leadership. With conflict coaching, all the team developed the confidence and competence to have difficult conversations in a timely manner. With heightened awareness of the impact of poor communications and timely feedback, Jean and his staff committed to open, transparent and timely information sharing and feedback processes. This shift in behaviour has resulted in less stress and a lot more enthusiasm for improving performance.

What Is Conflict Coaching?

Executive coaching, team building, leadership development, coaching on providing constructive feedback and having difficult discussions, training in alternative dispute resolution (ADR), supporting teams that embrace Action Learning and so on, all are interventions that build capacity to anticipate and positively respond to conflict in the workplace.

The term 'conflict coaching' is relatively new. It is a service that works well in an environment of constant flux and where strong personalities and opinions are the order of the day. Historically, interventions were handled by consultants and trainers, but over time, the processes and principles of ADR have made positive contributions to managing conflict in the workplace. Today, 'conflict coaching' is seen as a client-driven service that embraces the discipline and practice of a professional coach, draws on the rich principles of ADR and borrows from such practices and competencies as Emotional Intelligence, Action Learning, and Appreciative Inquiry. The goal is to leave the individual(s) and/or team with the skills and tools to create and maintain a well-managed environment

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that embraces positive conflict and results in an increased capacity to perform.

Whether working with an individual or team, the focus of a conflict coach is to enhance capacity to identify and anticipate conflict and to develop skills to creatively and constructively respond.

Unfortunately, too many people see conflict coaching as simply providing disputants with skills to communicate more effectively during the various stages of dispute resolution. While developing such skills is certainly beneficial, it does not go far enough. The real potential is in understanding the dynamics of conflict from a systems perspective and developing the competencies and commitment required at the individual, team, and organizational level to facilitate the delivery of team and/or corporate objectives. Some of the areas explored include:

- understanding the different faces of conflict;
- looking at issues from a systems perspective – double-loop learning;
- building capacity to anticipate and prevent;
- identifying and managing emotion and conflict in the persuasion model;
- understanding the role of culture and diversity;
- examining possibilities;
- appreciating the dynamics of constructive feedback/difficult discussions; and
- recognizing that different thinking styles require different responses.

Look For A Partnership

A healthy conflict coaching experience is a partnership that is interactive, collaborative, and developmental. It is a relationship built on mutual respect and trust, which results in long-term excellence in performance. Some elements that a client should experience during conflict coaching include:

1. A successful partnership composed primarily of one-on-one interactions between a professional coach and an executive which is supported, as needed, by others.
2. Agreed-upon ground rules, time frames and specific goals and measures of success.

3. The use of tailored goals and approaches.
4. A process that includes:
 - pre-coaching needs assessment, analysis and planning,
 - data gathering,
 - goal setting,
 - conflict coaching,
 - measuring and reporting results, and
 - transitioning to long-term performance excellence through self-awareness, self-correction, and continuous learning.
5. Among others, the following practices:
 - observing while in action,
 - conversations to discover possibilities,
 - learning through inquiry and practice,
 - changing more consciously and in alignment with purpose, values, and commitments, and
 - clarification of roles, assumptions, and priorities.
6. Identification and leveraging of the executive's strengths.
7. Creation of a safe environment in which the executive can feel comfortable taking the risks necessary to learn and develop.

Sustainable Change

Whether using an internal or external conflict coach, the key output of any engagement is that the individual and/or team develop the competencies to independently build a more positive and productive work environment. The model is not to build a workplace without conflict, but rather that any negative impact is anticipated, prevented or constructively managed. For this kind of change to be sustained, the individual can only commit to possibilities that align with their values and intent. Key competencies developed are as follows:

- Self-awareness – the ability to reflect before, during, and after all engagements with others.
- Self-correction – the ability to recognize when behaviour is inconsistent with intentions, and the

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commitment to adjust in order to re-align. The ability to reflect builds the capacity to continuously self-correct.

- Continuous learning – the recognition of the need to constantly improve and put the necessary mechanisms in place to support that mindset.

Leadership

Given the challenges facing executives who must deliver the federal government's agenda, there is no longer room for management that borders on abuse of authority. An abusive operating style results in intimidation, low morale, increased levels of stress leave and absenteeism, cascading improper behaviour and change that is at best temporary because style and process have not obtained the necessary buy-in. One of the skills of a true leader is to stimulate, energize, enthuse and motivate others to attain the desired objective or future state. Tough decisions must still be made, and at times they will have a negative impact, but the implementation can often be managed much more constructively.

WHO IS THE WIZARD OF OZ?

“As for you, my fine friend -- you're a victim of disorganized thinking. You are under the unfortunate delusion that simply because you run away from danger, you have no courage. You're confusing courage with wisdom. Back where I come from, we have men who are called heroes. Once a year, they take their fortitude out of mothballs and parade it down the main street of the city. And they have no more courage than you have. But, they have one thing that you haven't got! A medal!

.....

“As for you, my galvanized friend, you want a heart! You don't know how lucky you are not to have one. Hearts will never be practical until they can be made unbreakable. I could have been a world figure, a power among men, a - a successful wizard, had I not been obstructed by a heart. ... back where I come from there are men who do nothing all day but good deeds. They are called phil...er -- er -- phil -- er, yes...good-deed-doers. And their hearts are no bigger than yours. But, they have one thing you haven't got! A testimonial!”

Build Capacity

Conflict is integral to any healthy organization. The challenge is to create an environment of positive conflict that enables accomplishment. Well-managed conflict is within the grasp of any leader who is committed to building a healthy workplace.

Choosing A Conflict Coach

Working with a coach is often a very personal experience and it is important that each executive choose someone with an operating style that works for him or her. At the same time, it is critical that the client validate that their coach has the experience and competencies to meet their individual needs and expectations. There are many people who profess to be conflict coaches, but you need to ask for references and do your homework. How do they partner? How did they make a difference? What concrete results were achieved?

Paul Lennox, MBA, LL.B, is an associate of MDR Associates Conflict Resolution Inc. He has coached executives for over 15 years in the field of conflict management and leadership development.

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Indeed, he enables Dorothy and all of us to discover the significance of the “deficiencies” and “weaknesses” we all have. But “what about Dorothy?” – how does she get home to Kansas? She's right when she says “I don't think there's anything in that black bag for me.” However, even though he was a very bad Wizard, he did succeed as a trickster-mediator in having Dorothy confront and vanquish her inner demons. This wasn't achieved by any intentional strategy on his part, but nevertheless he turned out to be a “very good” mediator.

As we know, Dorothy does get back to her Kansas home. And for us, as conflict resolution types, what is forever intriguing and great about this story is that we don't know what happened after that. What happened between Dorothy and Miss Gulch? What happened to Toto? What did they all do, including Aunt Em and Uncle Henry? Some have speculated that Miss Gulch died in the tornado, but I find that very unsatisfying. For me, the story is great only when we realize that Miss Gulch is still there and will be around to again complain about Toto getting in her garden and even to take him to the Sheriff. What will happen then? ■

¹Cloke, Kenneth, *Mediating Dangerously: The Frontiers of Conflict Resolution*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001.
²Benjamin, Robert. “The Mediator as Trickster: The Folkloric Figure as Professional Role Model”, *Mediation Quarterly* 13(2) Winter 1995:131-149.
 Peter Bishop is a mediator lawyer practicing in Ottawa, Canada. We are learning about Peter's creative side.



CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES PROJECT: WHAT IMPACT?

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8. The narrow conceptualization of citizenship by many Pakistanis is one factor that restricts active participation in the governance of the country. As a whole, there has been no exposure to constructive, principled conflict resolution.

Where to from here, given that this pilot project is ending? The final product of the Project is a practical plan of action for scale up. A National Consultation was held in August 2004 with over ninety stakeholders to glean lessons from other scale up efforts, to understand needs at the policy, operational and personal level, and to elicit ideas participants had to inform scale up efforts. The plan of action speaks to two distinct strategic approaches: 1) Mainstreamed Scale Up – An Institutional Opportunistic Approach in which existing organizations would utilize the materials developed and integrate them through existing programs, and 2) Project-Based Scale Up- tailor-made to CRRP outputs and new outputs in which a new project or program building on a consolidation

of efforts to date would look to integrate citizenship, human rights, and conflict resolution education throughout Pakistan at formal and informal educational levels. At the time of writing, there have been verbal commitments from USAID, UNESCO and UNICEF, as well as the Minister of Education and specific teacher training institutions. The two Canadian organizations that formed the Canadian Executing Agency (CIAN & CBIE) hope to continue their involvement in citizenship, human rights, and conflict resolution education in Pakistan and thus support scale up efforts.

Those who made significant contributions to the Project can claim, humbly so, to have made a small contribution to the notion of self worth and dignity of the individual in Pakistan and to viable governance, so that, among other priorities, tensions can be managed in a constructive way to allow for growth and development.

Flaurie Storie is Director of CIAN's International Program and served at the Project Director for the CRRP Project. ■

DOMESTIC PROGRAM UPDATE

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written agreements and follow up procedures. Participants explore how and where the mediation process fits into the dispute resolution continuum and how it compares with and how it can be utilized within rights based processes. Participants become familiar with all stages of the mediation process and are given generous opportunity to develop mediator skills.

Module III: *Advanced Negotiation and Mediation* deepens the skills and competencies of participants in negotiation and mediation processes. Participants explore the challenges of assisting in more conflicted disputes, including multi-party, multi-issue conflicts. The focus is on developing clinical skills.

Module IV: *Dispute Resolution in the Workplace* focuses on dispute resolution processes specific to the workplace, including negotiation, mediation, workplace assessments and conflict coaching. Both unionized and non-unionized environments are explored.

For information on our training programs, designing a specialized program or the Ben Hoffman Scholarship, please refer to our web site at: www.ciian.org (click the tab "Domestic Training") or contact Heidi Ruppert directly at 613-230-8671.

Heidi Ruppert is Director of Domestic Training, CIAN & Vice President, MDR Associates ■

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UPCOMING CIAN COURSES...

- Module I** *Conflict Theory and Introduction to Negotiation and Mediation*
February 14-17, 2005 and
August 16-19, 2005
- Module II** *Mediation*
March 21-24, 2005 and
August 22-25, 2005
- Module III** *Advanced Negotiation & Mediation*
October 17-20, 2005
- Module IV** *Dispute Resolution in the Workplace*
November 21-24, 2005

All courses and dates shown above will be delivered in Ottawa. Please contact us for information on courses offered in other locations.

For course descriptions, fees or courses offered in other locations, please contact Heidi Ruppert, Director of Domestic Training Program at 613-230-8671 or toll free at 1-866-212-8022. For information on the web, see www.cian.org (Domestic Program).

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