



NASS - ACR
MAKING THE MOST OF EACH MOMENT
July 26, 2008

Change is messy. It's also inevitable. You can't control the economy, people, or the weather. So, you might as well learn to improvise. Improvising means keeping your knees bent and your eyes open; communicating with creativity, spontaneity, and agility.

OUR OBJECTIVE

This interactive presentation uses a variety of improvisational exercises to allow you to explore how improvisation can help you meet the needs of others more quickly and more adeptly than you already are.

The play fostered by the games focuses on using these tools to promote communication in order to increase collaboration and innovation to more adeptly manage change.

SELF EXPRESSION AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

"While there have always been consequences associated with an unfulfilling experience of work, today there is growing awareness of them. Revelations from the health, personal growth, and psychotherapy fields have heightened public awareness of the cost of suppressing creative self-expression at work.

"Recent studies have found that unhappiness at work is the number one risk factor for heart disease-greater than smoking, high cholesterol or hypertension.

"In short, more and more people are coming to recognize that while there may be difficulties attending to the process of creative self-expression, the cost of self-denial or self-suppression can be devastating to human happiness."

From the book *Zen and the Art of Making a Living*, by Laurence G. Boldt.

Benefits of Improvisational Training

Improvisation provides the tools to:
Foster creative risk taking, a critical attribute for success in our highly volatile business environment.

Lay the foundation for continuous improvement, which has been proven to increase profits by improving the ability to better meet customer's needs.

Move participants out of the reactive phase of change to innovative problem solving allowing for numerous possible opportunities and the ability to optimize them.

Improve communication, achieve agreement and increase "give & take" in their communication.

Mission Statement

Fishladder, Inc® uses improvisation to help people navigate change by improving their ability to act intelligently and with integrity in unpredictable situations.

Company History

Fishladder, Inc. was founded by Mary Jane Pories in 1999, as a direct response to particular needs within the business community. Increasing outgoing employee issues, a volatile economy, and a quickly changing market place cry out for corporate training that is innovative, effective and fun.

Fishladder has designed, developed, and facilitated corporate training programs for clients of all sizes – including Fortune 500 corporations to non profit organizations.

Why Fishladder?

Because we all need to learn to jump over obstacles playfully, I was inspired by an actual Fish Ladder. "I watched the fish swim upstream, throw their little bodies out of the water, smack into the cement, fall back into the water and try the process all over again. Impressive persistence and resilience!

Who is Mary Jane Pories?

Mary Jane Pories, Master of Arts in Teaching and alumna of the renowned comedy theater *The Second City*, is an award-winning actor/improviser and writer.

Having devoted the last 20 years to speaking, teaching, and performing, Mary Jane now makes it her business. Learn more on our website at: www.fishladder.net

KEYS TO GOOD LISTENING

Become an active listener.

- Use encouraging head nods and inviting phrases such as "Tell me more..." or "I understand."
- Maintain good eye contact.

Pay attention to the nonverbal aspects of the message.

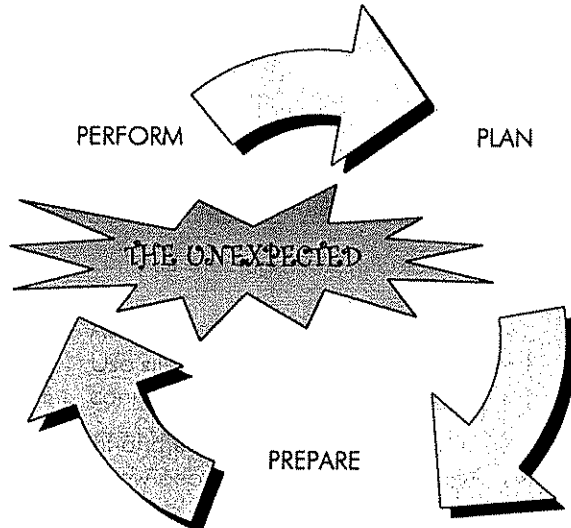
- Tune into feelings as well as fact.

Listen to the full message before coming to a conclusion.

- Avoid talking too much.
- Use silence to soak in information and connect.

Be patient and empathetic.

- Allow people to express their views, ventilate their feelings, and express themselves openly.



Once you plan and prepare, knowing how to improvise allows you to make intelligent and intentional choices when the unexpected occurs.

THE TOOLS OF IMPROVISATION

Point of concentration

Finding focus results in clear priorities, streamlined action, and divergent thinking.

Who/what/where

Continually anticipating, assessing, and adapting to the people, the issues, and the environment.

In the moment

Maintaining awareness of the present options and opportunities.

Yes and...

Agreeing and building on the ideas of others to enhance a collaborative process that has energy, variety, and innovation.

Give and take

Creating a balance that results in a free exchange of ideas and solutions.

Commit

Making a decision and taking action erases apathy and inertia.

KEYS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. ASSESS
 - know your audience
 - know their needs
2. ANTICIPATE
 - identify what they need to know
 - find your focus
3. ADJUST
 - listen to their needs
 - get to agreement
 - confirm and commit