

Monday Morning
March 17, 2008

ONE EIGHTY

Upcoming 2008 Events

- APQC 13th Annual Knowledge Management Conference Chicago April 28-May 2
- CAM-I Second Quarter Meeting Baltimore June 9-12

People in the News

- Many thanks to James R. Schmook for sharing this story.
- Congratulations to newly married Lisa Giuliani, La Lo Cachica Pottery

Learning to Sail

All of us at one time or another are called upon to share knowledge and expertise. It may be a workshop to train people to use a new Business Intelligence system or a PowerPoint presentation outlining new methods and alternatives for segmenting customers.

Whether it's a two day workshop or a two hour presentation, you are the professor in front of the class.

Everyone learns differently. That's important to know if called upon to instruct others.

Some people are visual learners. Others are conceptual. Many need case studies to learn while others may require an example they can work through with a pencil and paper.

Jim Schmook, a colleague and friend, tells the story "Learning to Sail" to illustrate the four primary types of learners.

People who learn by doing. For the doer, learning to sail is all about renting a boat and

heading for deep water. Doers learn best by participation and getting their hands dirty. They need a problem to solve or an exercise to do.

People who learn by observation. The observer stands on the beach and watches what the crew does and how it affects the sail and direction of the boat. Observers learn best with case studies and real life examples.

People who learn by instruction. Like the doer, learning to sail is all about renting a sailboat and heading for deep water, but this time with an instructor and guide. They learn best when you give them "one on one" time, feedback, and instruction.

People who learn by reading. Analytical people need material to read and study. In learning to sail they buy books on sailing, research the internet, and subscribe to sailing magazines. Readers need clear and detailed training materials.

Jim is in this last category

of learners. In learning to sail he spent several weeks reading a large stack of books. He learned everything he needed to know before his maiden voyage.

As he and his 12 year old instructor depart from the dock, Jim began to name several of the sailboat parts and talk about sailing maneuvers.

Finally the kid says "Mister, I don't know what you're talking about. If you want to sail you move the sail like this and the rudder like this. Ya' just do it! You don't need to read a book".

Everyone learns differently but both learned to sail.

We all have the responsibility to teach others and to pass on our experiences. To be a better instructor, keep in mind that people learn differently and that you must appeal to range of learning styles.

Good Sailing...

John A. Miller

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