

# *Riding the Current*

Excellence is born of preparation,  
dedication, focus, and tenacity;  
compromise on any of these and you  
become average. – John Chatterton

*Riding the Current*  
*An Introduction*

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# *Our Journey*

- Knowledge and Learning
- Boundaries
- Learning is Relational
- Preparation & Practice
- Diving Deep
- Lessons

# *Why seek new knowledge?*

- To remain viable
- To be aware
- To satisfy

# *Knowledge and Learning*

# *Boundaries*

Large enough to hold  
your dreams

Small enough to carry

# Boundaries

- Exercise to create the framework
  - If you are in a team, how has the team defined its working relationships? Are the ground rules around working relationships working? Why? What encourages members to follow the ground rules? What about them restricts action (good or bad)?
  - Alternate: If you were a manager of a seeker, what role do you think you should play overall?

# *Example: Important Trends*

*(professional goal: be valuable to my clients)*

- Growing emphasis and understanding of the power of narrative in our lives
- Aging of the work force and the resultant loss of corporate knowledge
- Shift in values of Gen X and Y
- Growing need to be both efficient and effective in a global economy
- Growing tensions in the world

# *Example: Essential Professional Fields*

- Management theory
- Narrative Studies
- Current Events especially international
- Organizational psychology
- Social constructionism
- Learning theory
- Research design

# Example: Personal Fields

- *Personal: to provide enjoyment and energy to my life while giving insights to the professional areas 'in the white spaces'*
  - Cooking
  - Gardening
  - Design
- *Strictly personal: to support keeping a great marriage exciting*
  - Ballroom dancing

# *Record and Reflect*

- Individually (3 minutes)
  - Record what you have learned so far – your learning points.
  - Reflect and note any implications that might affect your future actions.

# *Learning is Relational*

- To our context
- To our own experiences & knowledge
- To our colleagues

# Who should surround you?

- *Accompanier* for access to specialized knowledge and support – provides information to assist decisions and support the seeker
- *Practice Partners* for learning climate and social support; they ask good questions that challenge thinking, but not stifle it.
- *Fellow Seekers* for social support – provide example and encouragement

# Companions for the Journey

- Seek out those who are **expert** in your areas of need or simply practice in them
- Seek out and join or create **new communities of practice**
- Call in **peers to assist** you in your next challenge (offer to be available if they ever call you in, and certainly offer them food)
- Make it a habit to regularly ask the question, What am I **assuming** about this?
- Find a '**thinking partner**' and learn together how to be each others thinking partner (See Nancy Kline's book)

# *Preparation & Practice*

- **Exercise to discover the environment:** return to your discussion of teams and list the behaviors of teams that seemed to make them work better.
- **Alternate:** As an Accompanier, how can you help the seeker at this stage?

# *Conversation*

Different perspectives

Add energy

Provide social support

# *Observation*

R | E | A | D | I | N | G

# *Gathering Insights*

# Stocking Up

- Suggest that your team select a time when all members will come together and have an **informal coffee** (with pastries!)
- Reduce (or increase) the number of **publications** you receive
- Identify **courses, workshops, or conferences** that focus on your areas of need
- Join **List Serves** that regularly post items of interest
- Read article **summaries** and select only valuable articles to read in total.
- Maintain a **database** of valuable articles that are tagged or have key words attached to them along with the location of the article.
- Seek out **discussion spaces** on the Internet that are relevant and take time to determine if they are worth regular visits or occasional check-ins
- Review your '**bookmarks**' or 'favorites' and trim them down to those that really are useful (or organize them to speed up your searching)
- Join **Del.iciou.us** and begin tagging sites you want to return to.

# Equipping for the Dive

- Learn to '**speed read**' or 'trash read'
- Place all notes from meetings and phone calls into a bound **notebook** noting date and participants for easy reference.
- Select a computer application that will allow you to organize content (**content manager**) that is of value to you and is already in your possession or to be obtained
- Hire a **reader** who is adept at summarizing
- Create a **book club** so that reading can be shared among you
- Volunteer to be a **mentor** for a young person (learning is part of teaching, too)
- Insist on conducting **AARs** after every major activity of a project
- Learn what '**dialogue**' can be and practice the behaviors characteristic of dialogue in meetings (be prepared to wait for others to discover what you are trying to do)
- Test all the search features on your **email software** and determine if they support the kind of searching to find critical emails you need.
- Take a few hours and **organize the files** on your computer (efficiency opens up time for learning)

# *Report and Reflect*

- Individually
  - Reflect and note any implications of creating a learning environment that might affect your future actions
  - Alternate: *As an Accompanier, what role might you play now?*

# *Diving Deep*

- Deep foundation of knowledge to support them
- Strong sense of self
- Compelling call

Are you ready for the dive?

As an accompanier, how could you enhance the options for the seeker?

# Diving Deep

- Join only the most essential **societies** of your profession and then become active in them
- Propose to **speak** at conferences
- Explore **Wikipedia** to see what is already available; open up a new topic area where you begin the discussion and monitor regularly
- Set aside time for **journaling** lessons learned
- Organize an **informal symposium** where a knotty problem is put before it
- Explore the value of using **Open Space** for bringing lots of issues out for discussion
- Create a file just for **quotations** from articles that retain full references and meta data
- Seek and read **good fiction**
- Plan a **trip** to a museum, city, conference, or event to which you have never gone
- Journal or **blog** every day on what you have learned and/or observed
- Take on an assignment that you know will test your knowledge to the **limits** (take care that it is one that will permit lower performance during the learning phase)



# *Record and Reflect*

- Individually
  - Record what you have learned
  - Reflect and note implications that might affect your future actions

*The play of life is not written  
before we play it. The play of life  
is written as we play it.*

*Thank you!*

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