

THE TED^{*} LETTER

By David Emerald

January 2008



Seattle “Introducing *The Power of TED**” Seminar Rescheduled and More Cities Added

The seminar scheduled for February 15th has been rescheduled (due to a scheduling conflict) and now will take place on April 18th. For additional updates – including three new cities TED* will travel to – see “The Spread of TED*” below!

Crafting Powerful Outcomes

HAPPY 2000-GREAT! (A “tip of the hat” to my stepdaughter for this inspiring way of pronouncing the New Year.) To make it great, what are you called to create in '08? Identifying and crafting the statement of your outcome(s) is often more challenging than it may seem on the surface.

Last week, I had the opportunity to be with a group of “emerging leaders” from a successful Midwestern U.S. engineering company. On the last day of their leadership program, we worked with harnessing Dynamic Tension (check out chapter 7 in *The Power of TED**) as they planned for putting what they had learned into practice back on the job. The first step in the process was to write a clear and powerful outcome statement. Once again I was reminded that this is “easier said than done.”

Powerful outcomes meet the following criteria:

- **Stated in Present Tense** – Outcomes are statements of vision. When we envision something, we see it as complete, whole, finished – to the best of our ability. Some visions are clear and concrete, while others may be more vague with only a sense of direction to guide us. Yet, we step “into” that vision and state as if it were already here. For instance, the outcome statement for this newsletter is: “This month’s ‘TED* Letter’ is complete, succinct, inspiring and helpful to readers.” I have written it in present tense, even though it is not yet complete (I am only into the first bullet point here!).
- **Is Affirmative** – Creators focus on moving toward what they *do want*, rather than resolving or getting away from what they *don’t want*. While a problem may serve as the catalyst for creating a solution, it is the solution/outcome itself that becomes the focus. When you face a problem, it is important to identify what it is that the problem is inhibiting you from having, doing or being. Focus on what you desire and go after it. In creating the solution, the problem will be resolved. (More on this idea is in the “Putting it into Practice” section below.) This is where many of the leaders last week struggled the most. One started with “I will stop doing it all myself” and another wrote “we will reduce the number of safety violations in the plant.” Eventually, the first person stated, “I am effectively delegating tasks and projects to my staff,” while the second envisioned “We have a culture of safety in our organization.”

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- **Answers the Question: “When I create it, how will I know it?”** - As you allow yourself to revel for a few minutes in the “present tense reality” of your envisioned outcome, fine-tune it. What qualities and/or characteristics would you use to describe what you see and experience in your vision? What might be the “success criteria” by which you would be able to declare, “The outcome is complete”? The person who focused on delegating saw being with their family all weekend long (rather than her pattern of going to the office for a few hours on Saturday) and feeling excited about new projects (rather than the weight she felt added when something new emerged). Evidence of a “safety culture” included “employees are making suggestions on preventive safety ideas” and “other plants are benchmarking our practices because of our exemplary safety record.”

Following these guidelines can help you craft powerful outcomes. You may find that, as you take the baby steps in creating and accomplishing them, your vision will increase in clarity and concreteness. As you bring them into being in the coming year, you will declare “It has, indeed, been 2000-Great!”

Putting TED* into Practice: Problem Reframing

As mentioned in the preceding article, problems are often a catalyst for creating outcomes and solutions. Merely working to eliminate or resolve the problem often leads to quick fixes or reactive responses that are difficult to sustain over time. A useful technique is the Problem Reframe:

1. First, identify a problem that currently faces you. It may be personal or professional – or both. Write the problem down.
2. Now ask: “What is it that I really want?” Here’s the catch, the answer cannot be “to solve the problem.” If the answer is not quick in coming, imagine that somehow the problem was magically solved in an instant. What would the disappearance of the problem allow you to have, do, or be? By answering that question, you will have the beginning clues to what the vision is that the problem stands in the way of.
3. Then, write a powerful outcome statement using the criteria above.

Perhaps this example will help: A few years ago my wife and I were working with a group of community leaders in a major metropolitan area. One of the participants was a member of the school board for their unified school district. Their problem was the student dropout rate. “We have *got* to reduce the dropout rate,” was her problem statement. As she shared it with the group, you could see the weight of the issue reflected in her slumped shoulders, her downward gaze and hear it in the tone of her voice. After reframing the problem, she declared the outcome that, in her vision, “We have a school system that engages students who see it as relevant to them in preparing for college and/or their work lives.” As she spoke, she stood erect, her eyes



sparkled and she smiled as she further remarked, “In creating *this*, the dropout rate will cease to be a problem!” She then created an action plan and identified the baby steps for moving toward her passionately stated outcome.

The Spread of TED*

New dates have been set for the first-ever offerings of “Introducing *The Power of TED**” in Minneapolis, MN on April 23rd; Boulder, Colorado on May 17th; and Richmond, Virginia on October 11th. The Minneapolis seminar will take place at Life’s Headwaters and the Colorado seminar will take place at the newly-opened Boulder Center for Integral Living. (The Richmond location is still being determined.) Registration for these seminars will be open soon.

Registration is open for these previously confirmed seminar locations and dates:

Seattle, WA

March 14th – 16th: “Experiencing *The Power of TED**”

April 18th: “Introducing *The Power of TED**”

Dallas, TX

March 28th: “Introducing *The Power of TED**”

For more information on seminars and registration go to www.powerofted.com. Seats are being taken – so sign up today and guarantee your participation!

In addition to the coming seminars, TED* continues to make its way into a variety of groups, organizations and locations. For more information on other dates or events, [click here](#).

IF YOU OR YOUR ORGANIZATION WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR THESE OR A CUSTOM-DESIGNED TED* SEMINAR, PLEASE EMAIL US: INFO@POWEROFTED.COM TODAY!

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Have a great month!

David Emerald