



Executive Skills for Children

New brain scanning technology allows researchers to see how the brain works when making decisions. The Star Tribune* reported on the research being conducted with children at the University of Minnesota that provides new insights into executive skills and emotional intelligence. What can this research reveal about adult executive skills?

The ability to make choices based on another person's point of view emerges around three or four years old. While a three year old will likely make the choice to take one marshmallow now instead of two marshmallows at a later time, the same three year old will recommend the adult researcher should wait for the two marshmallows at a later time. They understand delayed gratification even when they do not use their executive skills to make that choice. The behavior is observed by looking at brain scans of the prefrontal cortex as decisions are made.

By four years old, they can make the delayed gratification choice and understand that someone else may prefer to choose to take one marshmallow now.

There is strong evidence that people can be taught to be less impulsive and more considerate of the other person's point of view even at a very young age. The ability to understand the other person's point of view, think longer term, and control their behavioral choice is seen as a way to make better decisions at all ages and even manage ADHD without as much need for medication.

It does not only apply to children. We see the understanding of the other person's point of view (OPPOV™) as a powerful awareness at any age to make better executive decisions.

Giving Hope in Threatening Times

The volatility in the stock market is only one measure of the fear and uncertainty facing the world today. How much is based on perception and how much on reality? Even if you knew the answer to the question as a leader and you told them the truth, would they believe you?

This is a time when the "authentic" in "Authentic Executive Pres-

Continued on page 2 →

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What is "Executive Function"?

*Executive function is a person's ability to translate knowledge into action. It's their ability to regulate themselves, including controlling their attention, being able to delay gratification and being able to control their actions and utterances. It can also be thought of as how you can flexibly deploy the knowledge you have.**

*Twin Cities Star Tribune, September 21, 2008

Change Masters® Events

Upcoming events:

- Carol Keers will be presenting several presentations in the United States and Europe on topics related to the book *Seeing Yourself as Others Do*.
- We will be delivering our first Video Conference Seminar to Istanbul, Turkey this fall.
- Tom Mungavan will be delivering a new seminar called "*Influence and Persuasion, Technically Speaking*" focused on technology and analytical groups.



Giving Hope in Threatening Times → Continued from page 1

ence” is tested and is the most essential to leadership. Even if you know you are authentic on the inside, others cannot see what you feel. Others make the judgments about your authenticity based on your behaviors and communications.

We see clients that have made significant sacrifices to maintain their internal authenticity and would be offended if anyone thought they were not authentic. However, as the book, *Seeing Yourself as Others Do* highlights, it is not sufficient to be internally authentic. You must also communicate and behave in a way that others see you as authentic in order to maximize your ability to lead in threatening times such as these.

Doug Lennick was an Executive Vice President of American Express during the World Trade Center disaster of September 11, 2001. When asked how the company provided such strong leadership in those difficult times he said, *“I look for commonality, to seek places where there is alignment, to do exercises to help each person remember their guiding principles and values and use that information to determine where we have common principles as a group so we remember why we need to stay together in difficult times.”*

People want to know that there is an anchor to cling to in difficult situations. You have far more impact as a leader with what you say at crucial moments than you might realize. Others scrutinize you to see how you are reacting under these stressful times. You need to acknowledge the fears and pain and put it in a bigger context that provides real hope.

Warren Evans had to be on stage to give a presentation at 9:00 a.m. at an industry association event, the day after the World Trade Center attack. He decided to set the context (a bridge statement) for the audience. A bridge statement acknowledges the feelings and then transitions to the message that needs to be delivered in a way that brings the audience with you. Here is what he said:

“One of our capacities and responsibilities as leaders is the ability to see the big picture and be aware of the major trends that are shaping our future. And while these events may change how we do some things, they will not change the fundamental evolution of our organization. And that’s what we are going to focus on looking at for the next hour . . .”

It’s the honesty, the empathy and the sincerity of the statement you make that counts. It is a key way others gauge authenticity. It is important to not ignore, gloss over or discount the feelings in the room. It is also important to not dwell on the negative. You need to shape the honest truth going forward so that it inspires hope.

If you are authentic and you communicate in a way that others see you as authentic, you will be much more likely to be believed.

We hope you will find this newsletter helpful and interesting. We appreciate your comments or questions to info@ChangeMasters.com. If you know of others that would like to be added to the newsletter subscription they may go to <http://www.changemasters.com>. If you would like to be removed from future newsletter messages, please reply to this message (newsletter@ChangeMasters.com) with the word “REMOVE” in the subject line.



It's Not About You ... Media Interviews

You may be seeking media interviews or the media may be seeking you at a most inopportune time. What are the secrets to optimizing your success in media situations?

Carol Keers was interviewed with one of the country's greatest radio stations WCCO, the CBS affiliate in Minneapolis / St. Paul. Her goal was to promote our new book, *Seeing Yourself As Others Do - Authentic Executive Presence At Any Stage In Your Career*.

(www.seeingyourselfasothersdo.com). Lucky - she worked with an excellent on-air talent, Mike Max; his gracious, seasoned producer, Jimmy Erickson, and their skillful engineer, "The Hammer".

It's easy to forget about the people who have the power to make you look good or bad - the personalities and technical talent around you. To maximize your media impact, it's critical to make an effective connection with the talent, producers and engineers you encounter by giving them what they need. They are in the midst of trying to do 15 other things (i.e., checking for time, watching the engineer, figuring out how long to pursue this line of questioning, choosing whether to take calls) as they're talking to you. Accept the multi-tasking nature of any media event - there's always a lot going on and you just need to smoothly flow with it.

Your keys to maximizing the media interview experience:

1. **Listen better than you've ever done before.** It's easy to go blank - actors call this "going up". Force your mind



to identify what they're really asking about. Is it an action, an opinion or a set of tips?

2. **Lead with your headline** - it's what the interviewer will zero in on and build upon. If you give a detailed explanation, then summarize it brilliantly, your summary may get cut off or most likely ignored.

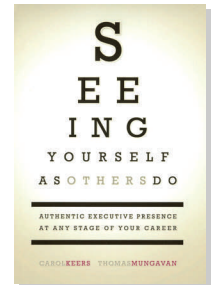
3. **Learn to be flexible.** Media is all about creating listener / viewer / reader interest based on provocative topics or by linking current hot news to your topic.

Carol was booked on a sports show about a book on executive presence. A few minutes before the show, the producer asked if they could ask some political questions. It was right after John McCain made his surprise announcement of Sarah Palin as his Vice Presidential pick. When asked to flex, you need to say "yes" and figure out your talking points. They are focused on the listening audience. It's not about you.

To listen to the radio interview, go to <http://ChangeMasters.com/news.html>

Sample Book Endorsement

"Seeing Yourself as Others Do gives you the unspoken secrets of what makes a good executive. It was a good reminder of what I learned in my coaching sessions with Change Masters. Ambition, good work habits and technical skills are a given, but many do not realize the importance of vocal patterns, body language and just being positive and upbeat with those around you. We have all seen a content driven manager who failed to communicate in large and small group settings. This book offers practical soft skills that bosses and Human Resources don't often mention and are presumed innate when often they are learned behavior."



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