

**An eLetter to the ceCommunity
from the AGTS Office of Continuing Education
April 2007**

“biblical answers...ministry empowerment...global impact...”

What's Below?

ceLines - A few words from the ceDirector

ceWhat??? Things that make you go hmmm...

ceLinks - A few web sites you can surf

ceSources - A few tools you can use

ceCourses - A few classes coming your way

ceLines:

Hello friends,

Howard Gardner, renowned psychologist who posited the idea of multiple intelligences, has a relatively new book out (2006), *Five Minds for the Future*. In it he proposes 3 cognitive and 2 relational mindsets, or rather, mind skills needed to navigate the leadership challenges facing 21st century professionals. It is a fascinating work by a well-schooled and highly skilled contemporary scholar. I believe it might be of interest for some of you to read it. However, my purpose for noting it here isn't to review or recommend the book. Rather, my intent is to highlight Gardner's primary emphasis in the book. He challenges all professionals to develop an ongoing (lifelong) learning program that pushes us to shift and change our skills and attitudes in relation to an ever changing set of global (local) realities that impact our profession.

I can't think of a more fitting "profession" to which I can/should apply this insight than ministry. To believe that one ever reaches the apex of skill or knowledge or spiritual development in the ministry is ludicrous. And yet, I see clear evidence that many of us are coasting our way through an ever increasingly complex set of life and ministry challenges. As American society continues to spiral downward, the brokenness, despair, and dysfunction of those who we are called to disciple will only get more severe. Thus, the skills, knowledge, and spiritual fortitude to deal with these people must be progressively developed.

I could write a thousand words about this issue and never exhaust it, so let me narrow my thoughts to a few words.

1) New skill sets. While better preaching, counseling, leading, managing, teaching skills are important, might I suggest that a vital (and apparently missing) skill is social/cultural awareness. Are you familiar with the language of the people in your community? Do you know what makes them tick? Have you ever considered whether, or not, the ministry model that you have developed takes their values, beliefs, desires into account? When was the last time that you spoke to someone from your community (other than in your Christian ghetto) about something important to them (besides the barometric pressure)? It's (relatively) easy to keep the same programs going for the programmed participants in your programs... (if you catch my drift) without ever asking the question about how the programs and those programmed might reach the unprogrammed people in your community.

2) Paths of least resistance. American culture pushes us into this mold. Everybody is looking for ways to cut corners, getting the most bang for their buck (metaphorically speaking) without having to pay too great a price for any service or commodity. If we're not careful, we will allow ourselves to fall into this same mindset. The call of God to make disciples of all nations is the most prestigious and challenging profession to which anyone could accede. Why is it that we are so

inadequately prepared, and thus less than passionate or able to do it? I'm not talking about working harder, though it might not hurt some of us to do so. I'm talking about working smarter, with greater skills and knowledge, and with a spiritual intensity that only comes by significant encounters with God.

If you choose to follow God in his mission in this new millennium, you must be better prepared, on the leading edge of knowledge acquirement, and full of the Holy Spirit. Anything less just will not do.

And so, take these challenging words to heart today and set your sites on a new target. Let the wind of the Spirit fill your sails as you navigate the shifting tides and currents of ministry. I believe in you and am believing God for you.

Until next time...

I wish you well,

Dr. Randy C. Walls, Director
AGTS Continuing Education

ceWhat??? Things that make you go hmmm...

Why Teams Fail

Teams fail for a number of reasons, including poor planning for the implementation of teams and a lack of training. Research by The Ken Blanchard Companies® has identified the top 10 reasons for a team failing to reach its potential.

1. Lack of a sufficient charter
2. Unsure of what requires team effort
3. Lack of mutual accountability
4. Lack of resources
5. Lack of effective and/or shared leadership
6. Lack of planning
7. Lack of management support
8. Inability to deal with conflict
9. Lack of focus on creativity and excellence
10. Lack of training

**ceLinks:
Check out these web sites!**

<https://www.peoplegroups.info/>

<http://www.cometothebrook.org/>. This is a great example of what a local church website can/should contain.

ceSources:

You can order this and/or all the textbooks for your ceCourses in the AGTS bookstore, just contact them at bookstore@agts.edu.

ceCourses:

Contact us 8am - 4:30pm CST at:
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