

Confidence and Power in Dealing with People

By Les Giblin

Reviewed by William Gross 4/14/2005

The Common Need

On the surface, *Confidence and Power* looks like a knock-off of Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. That's only on the surface. What Les Giblin describes is human nature. If two people describe the same animal, there are going to be a lot of similarities in their descriptions. What I like about Les's book is that he lets you know exactly what to do to change yourself, and to obtain what you want from other people.

His introduction is terrific! So I'm going to begin there. Les makes no bones about (and no apologies for) wanting something from other people. In fact, they want something from us in return. This is both natural and right. Everybody wants success and happiness. And happiness is based in large part on the sort of relationships we have with other people. So if there's a way to build those relationships, and to strengthen and maintain them, then we want to know how to do that for the sake of our own happiness and the happiness of others. This is not selfishness. "Successful human relations means giving the other fellow something he wants in return for something you want. Any other method of dealing with people simply doesn't work."

Les tells us that we cannot live in isolation. We need other people - we need what they have, and they need what we have. There are 3 basic ways we can deal with others: we can be a taker, a beggar, or a trader.

Takers are usually thugs, criminals, and con artists. They take what they want from other people with or without their permission. Their marriages disintegrate. Their children despise them. Their friends abandon them.

Beggars are leaches. They bleed other people dry by playing on their pity, or by acting as passive manipulators. They get you to do things for them by feigning weakness or incompetence. They usually wind up in co-dependent relationships. Their marriages disintegrate. Their children despise them. Their friends abandon them.

Traders are *realists*. They obtain things of value and offer them in trade for other things of value. They usually give added value to what they have and what they offer. They are creative and tend to multiply what they have. It's because of this type of person that a society grows and flourishes. They "operate upon a basis of fair exchange, or give-and-take." They are entrepreneurs and capitalists and proud of it.

"One of the big reasons so many people lack confidence in dealing with others is that they do not understand what they are dealing with... An understanding of human nature and an understanding of the basic principles behind human behavior will [give you confidence in dealing with people]."

Here's Les Giblin's insight on human nature: "A happy human being is more likely to spread happiness than an unhappy human being. A prosperous human being is more likely to benefit those with whom he deals than is a chronic failure. A person who has reasonably satisfied his own desires is much more generous and considerate... than a person whose every desire has been frustrated... Most of the trouble and misery in this world is caused by unhappy people." (That's why our next book is *Being Happy!*)

Les tells us that we have hidden assets in abundance that other people want. He is going to help us discover what they are, and how to trade them for what we want. We're going to learn how to create win-win situations with other people on a daily basis. As we become more skilled at doing that, we will become more confident in ourselves, and more upbeat about the world around us. "*The big trouble with*

the world isn't that people are made the way they are, but that we too often ignore the hungers of the people with whom we deal."

Next we'll learn the key to success and happiness as we learn to deal honestly with people the way they are, not the way we think they ought to be.

Dealing with People

Les points out that 85% of our business success, and 99% of our personal happiness are based on one thing: **our ability to deal with people - not our ability to get along with them.** That little difference is the key to everything Les will teach us in this book. We need to *deal* with people, trade with them, give and take with them. When you deal, you set up an opportunity for both sides to gain. Whether you deal cards, deal drugs, deal automobiles, or deal stocks, you are in the business of setting up a mutual exchange. Both sides should walk away with what they agreed to

Some people are shy and retiring. Others are outgoing and bossy. Neither is able to deal with other people successfully. It isn't a personality problem. Personality problems are actually problems in dealing with people. Personality, Les tells us, is nothing more than our ability to *interest* and *serve* other people. We do that well or we do it poorly. We want to do it well. Why? Our ability to deal with other people is a stronger determining factor for our success than either craft or knowledge. If we can't do it, we are far more likely to fail in the business world. Therefore it is the one skill we should desire above all others if we are to achieve our dream.

Like any other skill, this one is based not only on knowing *what* to do, but *why* we do it. We need to understand certain basic principles about human relations to be effective in dealing with people. We can't use a canned approach. "Influencing people is an art, not a gimmick." And besides, we are too interdependent today to think that we can survive and thrive without learning to deal with people. Disruptive emotional problems tend to have their root in not being able to deal with people.

Such fear of rejection and inadequacy can cripple us. It can rob us of success. So we're going to put our fear away, learn how to deal with people, and get on that highway to success. Now we'll learn some things about influencing people.

Secret of Influence

Here's a fact that once you recognize what it means, gives you enormous confidence and power in dealing with other people: *their ego is enormously important to them.* The one unforgivable sin, as far as human relations is concerned, is to trample on another person's ego. That's the negative side of it. The positive side is that if you build another person's ego, you gain tremendous influence - because they willingly allow you that influence. They want to hear more positive about themselves that will feed their ego. They are starved for it. They are willing to offer you influence in return for it.

Here we go again: are we into manipulation? No! Les said in his introduction that we are not after gimmicks that give us the ability to play with people like puppets. Rather, we are seeking basic principles about human nature that help us better understand people, and better deal with them on a give and take basis. "There is something deep in the heart of every man and woman that *is* important, and *demand*s respect." This produces a drive in every one of us to protect and preserve our individuality. That's the ego. We aren't talking about pride. We're talking about identity and personal worth.

Whenever we speak with people, we want to say things that protect and preserve that person's unique value in the world. We uplift and encourage them because they deserve our respect. Why? Because their personal worth is a gift from God. They are a child of God, made in his image. What we get in return for recognizing that fact is an open door, a bridge to their heart and mind that allows us to influence them, and that allows them to influence us as well.

Les correctly points out that in a communist state, there is no God, and therefore the individual has no personal value. They are the property of the state. The state may do with them as it pleases. In America we believe that we have a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. All power that has been given to the state has been given by the consent of the people, and it is only rightly exercised when it is done in the fear of God who ordained it. That's our heritage. That's our constitution, regardless of what you may have heard from the media or been taught in school.

Les says that when we recognize that our unique value is the result of God's grace, we develop a healthy self-esteem. He's so very right. Everyone needs significance. If you don't recognize that your significance lies in the fact that you are a child of God, then you may think you have to create your own significance. You may try to do that by seeking power, fame, or fortune any way you can get them. It will never work. When your self-esteem is secure, you are secure in how you deal with other people. When you like yourself, you'll be able to like others. Where have we heard this before? The key to your success is *you*. So do everything you can to build a better you.

If we understand how important that is for ourselves, then to build better relationships with others, we need to *help the other guy like himself better*. How? "Feed his ego... not with insincere flattery, but with genuine compliments and real praise." Now let's talk about habits again: "Look for good points in those you deal with - points that you can praise them about. *Form the habit of paying at least five sincere compliments each day - and watch how much smoother your relations with others become.*"

Leadership principle: If you want a better world, composed of better nations, inhabited by better states, filled with better counties, made up of better cities, comprised of better neighborhoods, illuminated by better churches, populated with better families, ***then you have to start by becoming a better person.***

Tony Evans.

Hidden Assets

Everyone has a hunger. And everyone has food to feed that hunger in someone else. The hunger is the desire for the 4 A's: admiration (we have personal worth and importance), affirmation (it's OK to be who we are, doing what we're doing), appreciation (a sense of gratitude that we're here), and acceptance (we're fine just the way we are). We all have the ability to feed that hunger in others. What many of us lack is the willingness. It's the willingness that uncovers our hidden assets and enables us to deal effectively with other people.

Les reminds us that we shouldn't be stingy about feeding the hunger, nor should we discriminate about who we give it to. We shouldn't bargain with it either. Bribery never works. Just give it away. It won't run out. All of our social graces and courtesies are based on acknowledging the importance of the other person. Recognition of that is crucial. How can we be sure we're ready to do that?

1. *Think* other people are important ("Always consider others better than yourself" Philippians 2:3). If you don't believe it, you won't act on it. Everyone is in some way our superior.

2. *Notice* other people - if you don't see them, and watch them, you'll never learn enough about them to value who they are and what they are doing. We "take note" of them and that in itself honors them. Adults, like children, will do whatever is necessary to gain attention, whether good or bad. So give them the attention they crave before they resort to negative behavior.

3. *Don't lord it over people.* (Mt. 20:25-26) Because everyone has this hunger, including us, there is a temptation to draw attention to ourselves instead of giving it to others. That's self-defeating. Don't compete with other people to make yourself seem better or more important at their expense. Simply acknowledge their achievements, wisdom, and observations - even when they are nonsense. It won't diminish you.

That's 3 simple steps to unleashing your hidden assets.

Smoke and Mirrors

In Chapter 4, Les tells us that we control the actions and attitudes of others primarily by the actions and attitudes we display. If we are unclear about what we want, indifferent to the outcome, or unsure of ourselves or what we represent, then we breed indifference in other people. But if we exude confidence and enthusiasm, then we will instill that in others, too. The short of it is this: other people will mirror whatever we display in ourselves.

We need to watch our body language. As someone said, "If you want to *be* enthusiastic, then *act* enthusiastic!" If you want a positive response, then act as if that's what you're going to get - and you'll get it. If you have no conviction about what you're doing, how can others be convinced? Believe in yourself and others will believe in you. Expect to win, and others will help you win. "Hold up your head. Square your shoulders. Look the other person in the eye. Walk as if you had somewhere to go and meant to get there... Develop a firm but not crushing handshake..." Watch your tone of voice. Speak courageously and confidently - don't whine, and don't mumble. Keep your voice low, clear, resonant, and encouraging. Smile. Nod.

The other person will become what you expect them to become, behave the way you expect them to behave, and respond the way you expect them to respond. It's up to you. You control the situation by your own attitude and behavior. They will reflect whatever they see in you. So, be intentional about who you are and what you want.

Remember this leadership principle: people will follow you for one of three reasons: because of who you are, what you are involved in, or where you are going. Are you firmly convinced of the value of what you're involved in? If so, you need to be able to articulate that fact to other people in a way that is inviting, reassuring, and exciting. Once you can do that, you won't be able to stop the explosive growth of your relationships!

First Impressions

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. What is most important about the first impression we give is that it sets the tone for the whole rest of the conversation. If someone asks me what I do, my answer controls everything else I talk about. If I fail to answer with the one primary driving force in my life, then there is no way to transition to that later in the conversation. I've indicated by what I said that it doesn't really drive me. I've sidelined it and made it an after-thought, because based on what I said and when I said it, that's all it is. And because that's how I indicated I think about it, that's how the other person will think about it too. Remember yesterday's lesson: they will mirror our attitude.

Les tells us today that we **set the tone** by what we say and how we say it. Once the tone is set, that's how the conversation will continue. If we are playful, we can't become serious. If we are doubtful or apologetic, we can't change to confident and enthusiastic. If we are negative, we can't move them to a positive response. But if we are business-like, they will respond in a business-like manner. If we are warm and interested in what they are doing, they will become warm and interested in what we are doing. *People are waiting for you to tell them what to do.*

Les tells us how to convey what we want from them:

1. *Other people will accept our own appraisal of ourselves.* I am whomever I claim to be, and however I portray myself. If I don't have an image in my mind of who I am and what I am about before I open my mouth, I cannot change that confused image later. How I dress, how I conduct myself, the level of formality I use, all control the image I convey. I want them to see me as a successful business person,

professional in how I treat them, courteous and warm, with a vision for my future and confident that I'm going to get there - with or without them. That's the posture I want to set and maintain. I have what they want and need. I'm not out begging for affirmation from anyone, but I'm not arrogant or superior either. I want to open up an opportunity for them to join me on my journey. *Running through the back of my mind is the repeated question, "Why would they want to join me in this adventure?"*

That controls what I say and how I say it, the questions I ask of them, and the responses I give to them. *With the words and attitude I convey, I become a painter of dreams and expectations.* I want the other person to catch either the vision or the excitement - preferably the excitement. I want to give them the sense that there's a whole lot more to what I am involved in than they can get in 5-10 minutes of social banter. I am building a hunger in them to know more, and to sit down with me to find out what it is. Therefore,

2. I let them know that I am *proud* of what I am involved in and who I am involved with. I am enthusiastic about where I am going and what I intend to accomplish with my life. You'd be amazed what an impact that has on the whole conversation. *They* begin to stand straighter. *They* begin to smile. *Their* eyes begin to sparkle. Hope is resurrected. They want desperately to be around someone who's going somewhere with conviction. And they want to know how they can come along.

3. *I never bad-mouth the competition.* I shouldn't speak negatively about *anything*. People don't like negative people. It really doesn't matter what I'm talking about. No negative at all. Period. People don't want to be around someone who is energy-sucking, down in the mouth, depressed, and critical. It applies to talking about the weather, cars, houses, politics, religion, people, the workplace, social maladies, and even companies.

I have a habit of bad-mouthing Microsoft for a number of what I think are legitimate reasons. But how does that sound when I begin to talk about how I use a computer running Microsoft packages, and especially when I try to instill confidence that I know what I'm talking about? Foolish! I might say, "It's nice that whatever problems arise because of their incompetence, they're responsible to fix and maintain it, not me." That does *not* work. What I said was negative and I can't unsay it. I've already set the tone and it's all downhill from there. I'm working on that one...

4. *I want to get them in the habit of saying "yes"* to positive things. I nod them into whatever it is I'm saying. I want to get them on a positive, agreeable footing because I know that once I do, they will continue with that type of response.

5. *I assume the other person will do what I want.* I assume they want to sit down and talk about what they want out of life. I know in my heart that they will be convinced they need to change what they're currently doing. I can see in my mind's eye that they're going to get excited about the possibilities. And I know that they're looking forward to working with me. All of that is a given before I begin to speak. It sets the tone for who I am, and what I expect.

I have an affirmation statement that I carry with me to remind myself of who I am and what I expect. Part of it says, "

"What I am doing is the best use of my time. I am confident. I am powerful. I am persuasive. I am eloquent. I am enthusiastic and it's contagious! I am outgoing. I am velvet and steel. Everything I say builds people up. I can help everyone I see. Everyone I see wants to meet me. Everyone I meet wants to talk to me. Everyone I talk to wants to join me. Everyone loves to be around me."

What is that? Some kind of prideful self-promoting clap-trap? Not at all. It is a mental image I am creating for myself. I will grow into that image, but more importantly, that is the image I want to convey when I meet someone. It doesn't matter whether it is true right now. It defines my expectations. It will become true in time. ***I am who I think I am.*** Isn't that what Les is saying? ***People will be who I expect them to be.*** That's this whole lesson in two sentences. All I have to do is act the part, and others will act their part.

And then we'll become in life what we believe in our hearts. That's great stuff! More importantly, it's absolutely true. "For as he thinks in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7 NKJV)

Becoming Attractive

In Chapter 6, Les reviews the 3 A's that make up our emotional hungers. He uses the titles acceptance, approval, and appreciation. Les goes into quite some detail about what each hunger looks like, as compared to the short phrases I threw out a few days ago. He absorbs the 4th "A" that I suggested (admiration) under the title appreciation. That's the sense of being important. Let's have a look at these 3 basic hungers. *If we have food to feed the hunger, then we will become attractive to the person who is hungry.*

Acceptance - This means taking people as they are with all their faults. We want to create a safe haven for them to be themselves without worrying about whether we'll judge them. "Give the other person the right to be themselves." That way they can relax and open up. People don't want to be put on an examining table, or subjected to an inquisition every time they walk through your door. They get enough criticism, sarcasm, fault-finding, and nagging elsewhere. Embrace them, warts and all.

Approval - this goes beyond accepting people as they are. When we approve, we don't just tolerate their differences. Instead of over-looking what we think are flaws, we begin looking for what we think are assets. These are things that we can approve of and compliment. Here's the key to giving approval that is effective: *people are more pleased at a compliment if you praise them for something that is not glaringly obvious.* Search for subtle strengths and qualities in the person, and then unwrap them like an undiscovered gift. It's a compliment because we had to be interested and observant to spot such qualities in the first place.

Appreciation - I love what Les says about this word: it means to increase in value as opposed to depreciate. We want to add to people's value by what we say to them and how we treat them. He gives 4 simple things we can do to help people appreciate in value: don't keep them waiting, let them know that you see them and that you'll be with them as soon as possible, thank them, and treat every one of them as "special."

Special means acknowledging that each person is unique, a one-of-a-kind creation of God. Don't try to pigeon-hole them or group them together with similar "types" of people. That devalues them. Don't depersonalize them by simply saying, "Hi!" Instead, say "Hi Bob! How is your wife Edith?" We need to show our care and concern for them as individuals. The way we do that is by paying attention to the details of their life.

Let's learn how to be friendly.

Getting Friendly –

We're learning how to *deal* with people, not just get along with them. We're *not* going to be friendly in hopes that the other person may be friendly too. We're actually going to *make* the other person friendly. It's a very simple 2-step process to do that. First, we're going to expect them to be friendly (and we're going to act accordingly). Second, we're going to smile a million-dollar smile. That's all there is to it.

Now, why will this work? Because of 2 principles we learned at the beginning of the book called expectations and mirroring. People will be what we *expect* them to be, and they will *mirror* what they see in us. So we're going to expect them to be friendly, and then we're going to hit them with a smile that they just can't ignore. They're going to be compelled to respond to it. And that's going to set the stage for a friendly exchange. There are a few caveats that Les lays out for us so we don't mess this up.

You've got to be convinced that the other person will like you. If you're not convinced, that is, if you don't really believe it, then two things are going to happen. First you're going to try too hard and begin to drive

them away (what Les calls the "eager beaver" syndrome). Second, you're going to go on the defensive and begin begging for acceptance. Your fear and doubt will drive the other person away too. You need to relax and take it easy. People will feel more comfortable around you if you don't push. It relaxes them and opens them up to talk with you.

The next caveat is to smile a genuine, endearing smile. This will *not* be the forced grin that we so often use to daringly show our intentions: "Hey! I'm friendly. Look at those teeth. They're visible, aren't they? Or do you wanna make sumpin' of it?" *So how do we come up with one of these million dollar smiles?* Well, Les tells us it starts between our ears and behind our eyes. It's a heart-felt kind of thing. A forced grin often makes a lie of what our eyes are saying. If the eyes speak first, then a genuine smile will follow. Let me expand on that.

Les, like Frank Bettger, says you need to practice in the mirror. You need to see what the other person sees. If what you see in the mirror isn't what you expected, then practice until you get it right - neither too broad nor too tight-lipped. However, all that gets you is the smile on the mouth. You also need to raise your eyebrows to soften your eye-line and show you're not aggressive. To a dog, showing lots of teeth is a challenge to a fight. That's because when they show their teeth, the line of their eyebrows always forms a "V" showing anger and disapproval. If you don't want a fight, *don't do that.*

On the other hand, if our eyebrows form a flat line -- -- and then we smile, it shows that we're slightly insane. That's because there's an apparent disconnect between the eyebrows, which show disinterest, and the mouth which shows friendliness. There's obviously a screw loose somewhere and that makes people nervous. We want the eyebrows up at the bridge of the nose and down at the temples: / \ . Even so, that's still not the eyes talking. It's only a picture frame for the eyes.

Eyes are incredibly revealing. It isn't just how open they are, or how round, or whether crow's feet exist at their edges. There's a sparkle that exists when your attention is focused on someone in a warm and loving way. Imagine looking into the eyes of a newborn baby. Imagine looking at your pet with love and appreciation. Imagine the first time you looked deep into the eyes of the one you fell in love with. Then smile with that same passion.

Let's try this. I want you to look in the mirror with 3 things on your mind: acceptance, approval, and appreciation. That's how you're going to look at yourself. That's how you're going to think about yourself. And that's how you're going to look at everyone you see today. We've all got those 3 hungers driving us. Feed the hungers through your eyes. If you do, your smile will confirm and multiply what your eyes say. Test it out. Remember when I asked you to do this last month? Let's run that test again keeping the hunger-food dynamic in our mind. We're going to go out there and feed some starving people what they crave most in life: the 3 A's. Watch their reactions.

Speaking Skills -

Les points out in chapter 8 that success is as dependent on our ability to talk as any other skill we possess. What he means is that if we have difficulty talking to people, or expressing our ideas, and yet we have a burning desire to be successful or happy, then we'd better overcome our shortcomings in speech. He then proceeds to lay out some gems to help us do just that.

1. Don't be afraid to be trite, trivial, and sometimes dull when you talk to people. There's a reason it's called "small talk." The weather, sports, TV shows, road works, or almost anything will serve to begin the conversation.
2. Expect that you'll have to warm up. It takes time to get rolling before the conversation becomes interesting. That's perfectly normal. Great day, isn't it? Do you live around here? How long have you been here? What do you do? That must be really interesting. What do like most about it?

3. Get the other person to talk about himself without sounding like a police interrogation. Use FORM: family, occupation, recreation, and a message (their personal areas of interest or need). Ask questions in their stated area of interest. Always turn the conversation back to the other person so you aren't focused on you and your activities. It's what Les calls the U-turn so you get the Green Light.

4. Don't talk about yourself unless you are invited to. And then keep it brief and humble. You can give them the sense that you are participating instead of pumping if you use what Les calls the "me-too" approach. Simply agree with what you hear from the other person. "*I like peace and quiet.*" "Yeah, me too. When do you get a chance to find it?" "*After the kids are in bed.*" "Yeah, me too. Is there someplace special you go to gather your thoughts?" "*I sit on the swing on my porch.*" "Yeah, I've got one in the backyard that I like to use too." And so on...

5. Keep the conversation upbeat and positive. Don't fall into the temptation of talking trash about everybody at work, the feds, the cops, the kids, inflation, taxes, death, and disease. Talk about their hopes and dreams, their best vacations, the most exciting times they can remember, the things they miss most about their childhood, college, or first job, what they liked most about their spouse when they got married, etc. If you're compelled to dump trash on somebody, then write a letter and promptly tear it up - 'cause nobody wants to hear it.

6. Drop all kidding, teasing, and sarcasm from your conversation. You simply don't know how sensitive the other person will be about it. All it takes to kill the conversation and the relationship is one slip, one inappropriate comment, one misplaced joke or word. Dignity and respect cannot co-exist with put-downs, which is what kidding, teasing, and sarcasm are all about. If there is going to be humor, or the topic turns to personal failings, let it be at your own expense using yourself as the example, not someone else.

Wow! That's six easy steps to conversational brilliance. Les tells us there's only one way to get better at talking to people: do it, lots. Now that we can talk, we'll learn how to listen.

Listening Skills –

This is a great chapter. Les says if you listen well, people will think you're clever. If you don't they'll think you're self-centered. If you listen, people will tell you what they need. If you don't, you won't hear their needs.

We all need to listen more than we talk, and more importantly, we need to respond to what we hear. That means we don't ignore what someone is telling us. A winner actively listens. A loser just waits until it's his turn to talk. Les gives an outstanding example of a Dallas mayor named Ben Thornton. He always said the right thing at the right time. He never gave canned speeches. Instead, he studied his subject matter thoroughly before he met someone. He listened carefully to what people had to say, and then he brought out the appropriate facts that responded to what he heard. It sounded natural, and it indicated he was listening.

That's what we do when we meet someone and invite a conversation. We prepare ourselves in advance. We use FORM to help establish a relationship with someone. We're actively listening for the message the person wants to convey. Then we tailor our response to them based on their message. If we're always thinking about what we're going to say next, then we're not really listening. If we're not listening, we won't hear their message. *Our entire purpose in FORM is to identify a need, want, or desire!* It is not a mechanism to enable us to talk. It is a tool to enable us to listen. Now, how do we actively listen? Les lays it out for us in 7 beautiful steps:

1. Look at the person. Make eye contact without playing snake eyes. Don't look at your watch or other people walking by. If you need to break off the conversation to address an emergency, always say, "Please excuse me for just one moment. I want to hear more about what you're saying."

2. Become sincerely interested in what is being said - their message may not be in the words that are being used. Read between the lines. Which hunger are they expressing? Acceptance, Approval, or Appreciation? Feed the hunger. Nod, acknowledge, and smile.

3. Lean toward them instead of backing away with crossed arms. Watch your body language. There's a classic book called "How to Read a Person Like a Book" by Nierenberg and Calero that can help you read people's body language, and control your own. It has loads of illustrations. Of course, you need to read it in addition to the book list, not instead of it.

4. Ask questions about what has been said to display your interest, and to get them to talk more. Ask questions that require more than a yes/no response. "What would you..." "When did you..." "How did you..."

5. Don't interrupt. Instead, wait for them to complete their idea, and then ask them to expand on what they've been talking about.

6. Stick to the subject they've chosen until they're finished. My wife asked me to add something about what to do when what they're talking about is negative garbage. You have two choices:

a. Say how nice it's been talking with them and leave - that's OK to do because we're looking for positive, upbeat people to work with. There's less work involved in moving them from point A to point B. We need to protect our own mental attitude at all times. The people we associate with, and talk with, affect our mental attitude. If you feel like you need a bath when you talk to someone, get out of there!

b. Move them from the negative to the positive by how you respond. You do that by painting a picture of them to their face: how you see them a year from now. Here's an example. They're whining and moaning about work. Their boss has no grasp of how important they are to the operation and they can't get the respect they feel they deserve. You say, "You know, I can see that you care about what you do and you're trying to help others get things done right. That's really admirable. I'm sure your boss appreciates hearing an objective point of view that he may not have considered. What other things have you uncovered that you can help your boss improve?" Instead of keeping them a nay-sayer, we've turned them into a quality improvement team and adjusted their attitude toward their boss in the process.

7. When you respond, repeat back to them parts of what they've said so they know you've heard them. This is the "active" in active listening. "What I hear you saying is..." "You said that..." "Like you were saying, Bob,..." Now for Les Giblin's take on resolving disputes. It's a reminder of what we learned from Dale Carnegie.

Negotiation -

If we want to get someone to see our side of an argument, we *never* want to attack their ego. Instead we want to defuse their defensiveness, and then we want to make a suggestion they can accept as if it was their own idea. We don't want to debate with them, or even reason with them. We want to indirectly lead them to a conclusion. That's the strategy. Now here are the tactics:

1. Let them state their case under they are done. They must be satisfied that they have laid out every last point they want to make. Ask them to repeat their main points. Most people just want to be heard. If we let them do that, we can dissipate most of the heated emotion and get down to resolution.

2. Consider what they have said, and let them see you doing that by pausing before you give a response. Give them their due and affirm their good points. This is essential for handling objections when we present the business plan.

3. Don't insist on winning 100% of your own points. After survival, the next main issue in life is "who is in control here?" People want to know that they are capable of influencing the world around them, that they are not powerless and ineffectual. See if there isn't something in what they have said that you can agree with and concede. On the other points, use the "yes-but" approach of acknowledging their point of view, but explaining why you cannot concede the point.

4. State your own case moderately and accurately. Don't exaggerate. Don't puff. Don't misconstrue. Don't go to extremes. Don't attack them. Don't bring up unrelated items. Don't resurrect the past. Show how what you want is reasonable and restrained.

5. Speak through third parties. That is, use other people's opinions, use books, articles, news, statistics, or other factual foundations to support what you want. Don't make it a personal thing - this isn't simply something that you want for yourself. It is something that is just, and right, and perhaps unavoidable. In other words, you need to be able to justify your position in an objective way. 98% of people at age 65 are either dead or broke. That's not personal opinion. It's a statistical fact from the Social Security Administration. It is very persuasive. It speaks for itself.

6. Let the other person save face. Never embarrass them under any circumstances. Allow them to maintain their dignity and treat them with respect at all times.

a. Suggest they don't have all the facts. Once they have the full picture they'll understand your point of view and perhaps agree with much of what you say.

b. Suggest that the cause of their predicament may have been someone else who failed to inform them, or even have misled them, or just didn't give them all the facts. That way it's not their fault. Give them an out.

Les points out that it doesn't matter how we feel about this emotionally - about having to compromise on occasion. What we are doing is accepting human nature for what it is and accommodating it. It's like the law of gravity. It doesn't matter that we'd like to step off the side of the Grand Canyon and float gently down its sides. It doesn't matter that it might even be a better way to have things. The fact is, if we step off the side of the Grand Canyon we will have a rude awakening at the bottom. People as a group aren't going to change, so we might as well learn to deal with them as they are. The only thing I'd like to add to what Les has said is that there are some things we cannot compromise. We may never be able to convince some people of our viewpoint. There may be ongoing, unresolved issues that we have with them. That's life too. We cannot negotiate everything, no matter what some book title may say. We can only be true to ourselves and our fundamental beliefs, no matter where that may lead us. That's called integrity.

Cooperation -

In part 5, Les is talking about how to effectively manage people. In today's lesson he shows us how to set up a brain trust, a master mind on a small scale. When we need help doing something we need to give people a vested interest in the outcome of the enterprise. They need to buy into what we're doing. The best way to do that is to solicit their ideas as well as their labor. That way they "own" the project.

This has a number of benefits: we get a new perspective, we make use of the other person's expertise, we provide an incentive for them to work harder, and we get their support. The whole becomes greater than the parts. Les calls this *participative management*. Today we call it *empowerment*. In my workplace it is a dismal failure. Here's why: they don't really want my opinion. Les talks about that.

Going back to Dale Carnegie's book, and Les's introduction, if you're not sincere about these things they won't work. When you ask, if you're only looking for sympathy or a pat on the back, then this won't work. If you don't use the advice you've asked for, it won't be available next time you ask for it. By the same token, when someone asks, you need to determine whether they are expressing a hunger or a

need. If it's a hunger (acceptance, approval, or appreciation), then feed the hunger. If it's a need (they really want the advice), then fill the need. Don't confuse the two.

Praise –

What do you want? Energy? Vitality? Enthusiasm? Support? Friendship? Loyalty? Then pay for it. Give out praise in unlimited quantities and you'll receive these back in unlimited quantities.

We can take the events of Tuesday (9/11/2001) as an opportunity to express praise for the people who risked or gave their lives to save others. If we do, then we gain energy. We put off depression and despair. Ten police officers were found by rescue workers in the rubble tonight!

If we take time to praise law enforcement for the superb job they did blocking 2 more attempts at hijacking tonight, then we gain energy. We put off depression and despair.

If we take time to praise those who are giving blood and donating to the Red Cross, then we gain energy. We put off depression and despair. A half million dollars was raised for the American Red Cross in Colorado Springs today!

Life takes place in our mind - between our ears - not in the world around us. We all have visceral reactions the moment we encounter such horrible crimes - I wrote to you about mine. But then we have to take control of our hearts and our minds and focus them on what builds up and not what tears down. It is an intentional thing. It is an act of will. It is a decision. We resolve that no one, and nothing, will master our attitude except us. We determine how we think, how we respond, how we behave. We are not puppets to be manipulated by every wind of change in our circumstances. God is in control of our circumstances. We are in control of our response to them. Choose this day whom you will serve.

Les tells us in this chapter of the miracle power of praise. It actually changes the world around us physically. We can measure its effect on people. He encourages us to make it our practice to give sincere praise to someone every day. Be kind to people with words and other signs of appreciation. Here are the rules for giving praise and thanks:

1. Be sincere about it.
2. Say it loud and clear.
3. Give it by name, mentioning what they did. Don't just give it to a department or other group in general.
4. Look at the person you're thanking. Grab their hand and let them know how grateful you are.
5. Work at it. Seek out things to praise. As Les said before, don't choose the obvious things.
6. Make it a surprise. That's called being gracious. It shouldn't seem like they earned it or obviously had something due them.

The things people do that are most helpful are often the things they do that are most common. We need to be able to identify and articulate how valuable those little things are to us. When they respond, "I didn't expect anything for just doing my job" then you know you've selected the right thing at the right time.

Les suggests we praise the activity, not the person. That way it is more specific and more sincere. It avoids the appearance of favoritism. It avoids personal embarrassment. People won't get confused and think that you're making a romantic advance. It's less likely to make them conceited, too.

Have you ever felt embarrassed when someone tells you how wonderful you are? If you agree, you're conceited. If you disagree you make a liar out of them. How can you respond? "Aw shucks ma'm, you're making me to be someone I'm not. I ain't nuthin' special..." When that happens to you, don't apologize for it or minimize it like this. Just say "thank you" and smile.

Praise, thanksgiving, and gratitude. What a tremendous cocktail for interpersonal success!

Criticize without Offending –

Criticism in the dictionary means the art of making discriminating judgements and evaluations. It means to judge the merits and faults of something, to analyze and evaluate. That sounds good, right? But its synonyms include words like condemn, blame, reprehend, and denounce. Wow. That's bad, right? So how did we move from being constructive to destructive? Les says its because of our motives and our techniques.

Too often, weak people with low self-esteem try to appear more important by criticizing other people. They think that if they belittle someone else, they can show how superior they are to them. They can't grow taller by knocking others down. Such people believe that if they can judge someone else, then surely they are superior to them. In fact, just the opposite is true. Little minds belittle others. Our motive in making corrections - i.e. criticizing - must always be to help the other person do a better job. Therefore we always address the job or the activity, never the person. We say, "I think I can help you do that better" instead of "you stink." That's the motive part of it. Now here is the technique and we're done:

1. Never criticize someone in front of someone else - ever. That's humiliating. The only reason we'd have for doing that is to build our own ego at their expense.
2. Always begin with a compliment and appreciation. Then let them know about areas that need improvement. That way they see achievement and growth before we point them to other areas of need.
3. Be impersonal. Criticize the act, not the person. Give them a quantifiable area in which they have control over the outcome. This isn't about them, or you, or personalities. It's about getting the job done right.
4. Clearly express your expectations. Instead of constantly telling them what's wrong, tell them what you really want as an outcome. They can't satisfy you if they don't know what you expect.
5. Ask for cooperation. Don't demand obedience. Give them a reputation to live up to so that they *want* to change (remember Dale Carnegie's book).
6. Don't bring up the past. Criticize only the current offense. We all have baggage, an entire history of screw-ups. We don't need reminding every time we make a mistake. That does little to encourage us to improve - why bother if the other guy only remembers what we used to do wrong?
7. Finish in a friendly fashion. The matter is settled. Now bury it. Be sure the relationship is still healthy and unaffected by the corrected course of action.

These are valuable lessons. I intend to put them into practice throughout my day, every day. I think that's a worthwhile and achievable goal.