

My Bergerac Legacy

By Niki Flacks

My original impulse in creating PowerTalk was to share the body of knowledge belonging to actors, which had been almost secret for hundreds of years. The more involved I got in developing and then teaching PowerTalk the more I realized deeper ambitions for the training.

I was really looking at the more important issue of how through training we could repair the damage done to self-esteem in so many people. Education by parents, teachers and then colleagues and managers was often a blend of being told you are always doing it wrong, or not good enough. Was it possible in two days to give people a new view of themselves? A view that said, "You can do it brilliantly!"

I wanted all of my training to do, therefore, three things:

- Give people behavior-changing skills that when executed, no matter how nervous or fearful, would dependably produce the desired behaviors. This set of skills needed to be so concrete that people could use them almost like a recipe. And I wanted the end result to be the ability to exude energy and confidence.
- Utilize the brilliant ideas of Salvatore Minuchin to design learning that challenged yet constantly celebrated every effort. It was clear to me that no one takes risks to embrace 'out of the comfort zone' behaviors unless they are given unconditional, enthusiastic support.
- Guide everyone to think from other people's points of view. We are all so trapped in our own view of things, which causes misunderstanding and conflict. It also means that most of the time no one wants to listen to us! Through teaching again and again, that we must always think from the listener's point of view I believe we also expand our learners unconscious awareness of this essential interpersonal tool.

Over the years the trainers teaching the Bergerac programs hear that the one, two or three days spent in our training have been 'life changing.' The success stories we hear are often about achievements a person never dreamed possible.

I hope my legacy will be simply that: giving people the chance to experience themselves connecting with others generously and joyously.

