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*Have you ever wondered how you learn? Take a look at the P Squared training method. It is the only proven method to generate permanent, positive behavior change. After all, why else would you do training in the first place?*

*Please enjoy this week's Food for Thought and think about what it says the next time you plan for employee training.*

## **Learning... The Foundation for Your Future**

*By Scott Playfair, President of P Squared Consulting*

*Two all beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, pickles, onions, on a \_\_\_\_\_*

*Be all that you can be in the \_\_\_\_\_*

*What is 6 X 7?      What is 5 X 8?*

Why is it that you can easily remember some slogans, mottoes, and multiplication problems... and not others? It comes from a powerful learning technique called "spaced repetition". Advertisers make great use of repeating the same slogan over and over until we almost can say it in our sleep. This technique is also used at early grade levels as we repeated our multiplication tables over and over. And this learning technique has great application for learning new skills in the work place as well.

Spaced repetition is the key to learning. Just as you didn't learn the ABCs the first time you heard them, it takes time and repetition for the mind to accept and embrace any new idea or concept. Ideas that did not seem particularly applicable the first time you heard them may be the exact information you need to deal with a current situation.

There are several different ways in which we learn. Through conventional learning methods, research shows that if a person hears something once, four days later they will have forgotten 65% of the information. Thirty days later they will have forgotten 98% of the information. But if a person hears the same information six to eight times in a week, 30 days later they will remember over 92% of the details. And the best part is that fifteen years later they will remember at least 60% of the information.

We have discovered that to increase your employee's potential, three essential ingredients must be simultaneously nurtured: Attitude development, skills training, and goal setting abilities.

Studies have found that attitudes are really habits of thought. It would be convenient to think that we react to our surroundings on a "stimulus-thought-response" basis; however, in reality, 88% of the time we react based on "stimulus-response". Action results in reaction. Most of our behavior is based on reflex.

If behavior is based on attitudes, we must look at the thought process that creates that behavior. The first three words an infant learns are "mama", "dada", and "no". During the early learning phase of our lives, most of our conditioning is negative to protect us. - i.e. "Don't touch that", "Don't talk to strangers", etc. Therefore, most of our basic attitudes are more negative than positive. Interestingly, if you examine how we develop attitudes, you will find it is similar to the way we learn things, because our attitudes are learned.

Based on "spaced repetition", we have developed methods to help people change and develop more positive and effective attitudes. Moreover, armed with these new attitudes, we find that people can do more with their skills, qualification and experience.

Combined with skills training and goal setting abilities, you have an unbeatable combination. Imagine that you have a workforce that has developed positive and confident attitudes, is trained with the necessary technical and people skills, and has the ability to define, set and achieve goals. Do you believe there would be any limit to what they could achieve?

In summary, let me leave you with this last thought, ...Attitudes are nothing more than habits of thoughts... repetition can change attitudes. If attitudes are changed, then behaviors are changed – and this creates more effective employees and a more effective organization.