

## 2001 CBFA CONFERENCE

### Program Abstract

## Gary Koch

### Olivet Nazarene University

#### **PROGRAM TITLE:** Catching and Rewarding: A Motivation Technique

This presentation will be a discussion forum with an Olivet Nazarene University faculty member and student, and a business representative from the local community. The purpose is to communicate a motivational method of working with students and/or employees. Discussion will focus on the use and results of applying this approach to acknowledge the positive contribution of students/employees while on the job.

Harvey Mackay noted that to get good bottom-line results management needed teamwork from its employees. As Mackay indicated we are all leaders and he focuses on concepts to facilitate or motivate cooperation between employees. He uses a concept he calls □TGIM□ (Thank God It's Monday) as an example. Another tool he calls □Catch someone doing something right and reward them□. This process includes:

- walking around the facility, sometimes known as management by walking around,
- selecting an appropriate, warranted, behavior,
- providing praise or a reward (e.g. tickets to the opera or an athletic event),
- ensuring a public display (make sure other workers are present).

The presentation will review key principles and concepts of Mackay, his motivational style and more so, his use of “Catching and Rewarding□, its consistency with many theoretical approaches, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and certain leadership styles.

In an Industrial/Organizational psychology class this spring, a CNN film clip of an interview of Harvey Mackay was used to introduce the topic of leadership and motivation. Mackay is a well-known author (i.e. *Pushing the Envelope*, *Swim with the Sharks*, etc.) and CEO of the Mackay Envelope Company. Later in the course the instructor used a modification of the same concept, “Catching and Rewarding” someone doing something right, during student presentations to reinforce the positive qualities of the presentations. After each student presentation, feedback was given from the class, including the instructor. However, students were instructed to provide only positive feedback. The intent was to focus on what each student was doing right in the presentation. This reinforced MacKay's intent to □Catch and Reward□. The intent was not to ignore improvement areas, but rather to emphasize aspects of presentations that were done well, so all students would be reinforced and motivated to improve their presentations by using those same techniques (e.g. speaking clearly, making eye contact with the audience, knowing the material well). This method is a way to help students (or employees) make improvements in their work, without criticizing them

Mackay's method of “Catching and Rewarding” is consistent with Christian beliefs. The New Testament is our plan on how to live a Christian life, by living as Christ lived. Isn't that similar to Mackay's concept? The intent is to look at a successful role model, not at what someone is doing wrong. We are blessed by having Christ as our example. Let's take Him into the work place.

# **2001 CBFA CONFERENCE Program Proposal**

**Gary Koch  
Olivet Nazarene University**

**PROGRAM TITLE:**

Catching and Rewarding: A Motivation Technique

**FORMAT:**

This presentation will be a discussion forum with an Olivet Nazarene University faculty member and student, and a business representative from the local community.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose is to communicate a motivational method of working with students and/or employees. Discussion will focus on the use and results of applying this approach to acknowledge the positive contribution of students/employees while on the job.

**PRESENTERS:**

Gary R. Koch, Ph.D., Psychology Department, and Heather Kunce, student, Olivet Nazarene University, and one or two business representatives.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- Presenters include a faculty member and student from an Industrial/Organizational Psychology class, and representatives from the local business community
- A short (three minute and 21 second) film clip will be used as a catalyst to present the motivational method.
- Results of using this method will be presented from multiple perspectives: faculty/management and student/employee.
- Discussion will focus on using this approach and its effects on students/workers, and its integration with other similar approaches. Results of using this technique were most favorable, although no intent was made to solicit responses on the presentation feedback process or on leadership and motivation. Many of the course evaluations by students indicated the presentations as one of the three things they most liked about the class. In addition, students most often selected leadership and motivation as a key learning in the class.

## DISCUSSION:

Harvey Mackay noted that to get good bottom-line results management needed teamwork from its employees. As Mackay indicated we are all leaders and he focuses on concepts to facilitate or motivate cooperation between employees. He uses a concept he calls "TGIM" (Thank God It's Monday) as an example. Another tool he calls "Catch someone doing something right and reward them". This process includes:

- walking around the facility, sometimes known as management by walking around,
- selecting an appropriate, warranted, behavior,
- providing praise or a reward (e.g. tickets to the opera or an athletic event),
- ensuring a public display (make sure other workers are present).

The latter method fits with Mackay's overall management style, which he reports as including caring for, mentoring, and educating employees. It also is consistent with his view on building teamwork and camaraderie. Two ways he indicates to build camaraderie are to creating a sense of excitement among workers, whether the team is the entire workforce or a department. Another method to build camaraderie is to facilitate thinking that workers should be encouraged to think and not just do what they are told. The catching and rewarding someone doing something right facilitates the former through behavior that concretely displays appreciation for worker's quality efforts. This technique of "catching and rewarding" complements the latter point by providing positive reinforcement for creative thinking and the desire to take a risk. "Catching and Rewarding" seems to be a good method to promote interdependence and teamwork by selecting appropriate worker behaviors, which encourage these characteristics. For instance, applaud someone who has just volunteered to work in an area that is short-handed on the shift, even though it is not the worker's direct responsibility to do so.

Mackay's four principles of a successful entrepreneur are: mentoring, networking, being with people who can make one look smarter than he/she really is, and watching one's enemies. His publications include such titles as *Pushing the Envelope* (he is CEO of an envelope company), *Dig Your Well Before You're Thirsty*, and *Swim with the Sharks Without Being Eaten Alive*, and *Beware of the Naked Man Who Offers You His Shirt*. It is obvious that Mackay has a sense of humor, which also helps him relate to his employees.

Reviewing these key principles and concepts of Mackay, his motivational style and more so, his use of "Catching and Rewarding" seems to be consistent with many theoretical approaches. If he were trying to build teamwork and camaraderie, it would follow that the approach would be fair and equitable (cognitive approach). The method provides positive reinforcement not only to the employee, or employees, he is praising but to all the other employees who see or even hear about the incident. It can be a positive motivator for all of them and could be considered a behavioral approach. It also is consistent with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. The method can be interpreted as directly addressing the second and third highest levels of needs, self-esteem and social needs. The latter and third highest need, social, is considered the need to affiliate or belong with others, even companionship. "Catching and Rewarding" addresses this need directly, both in its involvement of others through public acknowledgment of the employee/s behavior and the message that we appreciate you. The

second highest level of needs is self-esteem, which this method affects by direct recognition of the employee/s. The reward can affect not only the person's esteem of her/his self but also increase the esteem of others towards the employee/s. In addition, "Catching and Rewarding" can be a part of Maslow's highest needs of self-actualization and spirituality, as workers transcend their needs to meet the needs of other workers and their employer.

Mackay's approach could also be linked to many leadership styles. A style that seems similar is transformational leadership. Leaders are identified in this classification by their effect on others. They transform others by helping employees recognize their value and importance, by stimulating the hierarchy of needs, and by empowering them to rise above self-interests for the sake of the organization. Due to this influence, workers feel trusted and respected by the leader and they are motivated to accomplish more than they originally expected to do. One of the four components of Transformational leaders is inspirational motivation. These leaders are visionary and inspirational. They challenge and push their workers to higher levels of accomplishment, but also provide the means for workers to elevate their performance.

In an Industrial/Organizational psychology class this spring, a CNN film clip of an interview of Harvey Mackay was used to introduce the topic of leadership and motivation. Mackay is a well-known author (i.e. *Pushing the Envelope*, *Swim with the Sharks*, etc.) and CEO of the Mackay Envelope Company. Later in the course the instructor used a modification of the same concept, "Catching and Rewarding" someone doing something right, during student presentations to reinforce the positive qualities of the presentations. After each student presentation, feedback was given from the class, including the instructor. However, students were instructed to provide only positive feedback. The intent was to focus on what each student was doing right in the presentation. This reinforced MacKay's intent to "Catch and Reward". The professor was available to provide improvement suggestions if any student wanted additional feedback. About fifty percent of the students took advantage of additional feedback from the instructor. The intent was not to ignore improvement areas, but rather to emphasize aspects of presentations that were done well, so all students would be reinforced and motivated to improve their presentations by using those same techniques (e.g. speaking clearly, making eye contact with the audience, knowing the material well). This method is a way to help students (or employees) make improvements in their work, without criticizing them. Also, it is similar to giving attention to children when they are behaving well, instead of rewarding negative behavior by giving attention to acting-out behaviors.

Follow up is being conducted to solicit the cooperation of local businesses to utilize this technique and collect feedback on the results. The panel will also share these results.

"Catching and Rewarding" can be seen as a Christian principle reinforcing our reliance on each other and our responsibility to others. Nehemiah 2:17 urges us to help put our vision into action. *Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace.* Philippians 2:4,5 extols believers to work together. *Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus;* James 5:16 reminds us that we need to not only work together but also pray for one another. *Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.* The New Testament is our plan on how to live a Christian life, by living as Christ lived.

Isn't that similar to Mackay's concept? The intent is to look at a successful role model, not at what someone is doing wrong. We are blessed by having Christ as our example. Let's take Him into the work place.