



Creating a pathway
to change

Icatlyst, LLC E-Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 12, 2008

VOLUME 4, NUMBER 4

What We Do

Icatlyst, LLC is a coaching and consulting firm that specializes in helping its clients fine tune their performance by breaking through roadblocks and limiting beliefs in order to achieve a desired outcome. We work with individuals and corporations using a variety of techniques and processes that are tailored to the specific needs of each client.

Icatlyst, LLC
Customizes Coaching
and Consulting
Services with the
Following Emphasis:

- Business Coaching
- Change Management
- Leadership Coaching
and Consulting
- Improving
organizational culture
- Leadership Transition
Management

Effective Cross-
Cultural
Communication

Public Facilitation

If you're trying to achieve, there will be roadblocks. I've had them; everybody has had them. But obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.

-- Michael Jordan

Turning Roadblocks into Opportunities for Creative Change

It's almost impossible to arrive at this time of year without contemplating the bright new horizons, and especially the opportunities to learn new things. Even the country is abuzz with new possibilities. For one, there is the upcoming presidential election with the first African-American presidential nominee and the first woman vice presidential candidate. Wherever you sit on the political aisle, there is much to consider. Also, as a nation, we seem to have turned a corner with respect to how we look at the environment and our use of energy. Serious conversations can now be had about research for alternative sources of energy beyond fossil fuels. Finally, the economy is also a big issue that looms over everything. The general uncertainty it creates has forced many of us to look at our spending through critical eyes that now routinely discern the important from the trivial.

Change is always followed or brought about by uncomfortable life adjustments. Over the past few months, an increasing number of clients, both corporate and individual, have approached us with concerns about the economic downturn. As a professional services firm, we are also very much aware of the changes in client spending and the need to operate our own organizational resources more efficiently. We believe in the added benefit we provide to our clients. Therefore we stay focused on that objective. If you are facing challenges in your business or personal life due to the economic downturn, we would like to invite you to look at those setbacks with new eyes. Go ahead, flip the paradigm you see in front of you and consider the roadblocks you are experiencing as opportunities; your chance to learn new lessons and along the way, to grow a little.

Using Challenges to Fuel Your Best Work

Lets face it, most of us learn best and in fact, become our best through challenges. During those times, we are forced to peel away the layers of excess and pretense to trust only what is essential and real. What is essential and real in your life? What is essential and real for your business? What are your core values? Renowned author, trainer and developer of the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Robert Dilts says that values are associated with worth, meaning and desire; they are a primary source of internal motivation. He goes on to suggest that when people's values are met or matched, they feel a sense of satisfaction, harmony, or rapport with the world around them. Conversely, when their values are not met or matched, people often feel dissatisfied, incongruent, or sometimes even personally violated.

The goals you set for yourself and your family are, in fact, the tangible expressions of your values. While having money is a part of that, and during economically challenging times such

Board Development

Corporate Event
Speaker

Personal
Development Services

Whole life Coaching

Personal
Development
Workshops and
Seminars

Contact us at:
info@i-catalyst.us
www.i-catalyst.us

as these it is easy to feel that a core value is being violated. Ask yourself why you want money? When challenged to look at the subject, very few people say that they want money for its own sake. For most money usually represents something deeper and more essential to their core. Money usually represents deeper values around having a sense of security, protection, and well-being. Money is the tangible belief that expresses those values. During hard economic times, when the thing you choose as the tangible expression your core values about security, protection, and well-being is at risk, you can feel like Linus in the Peanuts series - that someone is taking away your blanket. Where else can you find your security?

You might remind yourself that money is just a symbol that represents your core values. It is not, in itself, what is valuable. Money may be useful and necessary; after all we do live in a physical world. But is money essentially valuable? If you accept that conclusion, what other symbols might you use to represent your core values? If you are applying this question to your business, consider the idea of loyalty as exemplified by employees who stay with you when they could go elsewhere, for bigger paychecks and benefits, because they believe in your dreams. Consider the notion of integrity, as seen by the fact that you always pay your vendors and workers first. Or, that you are doing work that matters to you. If you want to apply this principle to a personal situation, consider perhaps that you have deep friendships grounded in mutual respect. You have people around who support your dreams. Or, perhaps, that you and those you love are well sheltered and are in good health.

Understanding What Is Symbolic Versus What Is Valuable

If you take an honest look at your life and think about what you truly value, you will likely find that you have enough. You have enough, for now, to make it through the difficult times. You may not do so with the financial assurance of a Bill Gates or Warren Buffet, but you will make it through with all of who you are, so far. So slow down the train of discontent by not going too far into the future. Look at your life as it is now and then ask yourself: do I have enough of what I need for today? For most people the answer to that question will be yes. If it is not, ask yourself: what can I do now, today, to make sure that I have what is essential?

A good gardener knows that plants can only grow strong and remain healthy when they are trimmed of unnecessary branches and leaves. What is superfluous in your life? What needs to be pruned back in order allow your creativity and true essence to blossom?

Email us at info@i-catalyst.us and let us help you answer those questions, or simply to share your stories.

Coaching Corner

Identifying Values as Motivators for Change

Webster's online dictionary defines values as "principles, qualities or entities that are intrinsically valuable or desirable." But where do those intrinsically valuable principles come from? They come from a variety of places namely our experiences, what is meaningful to who we are, and generally, what is important to us.

Take a few minutes to be silent. Count to five while taking deep breaths, in then out. Be aware of your breathing. Now...

1. Write down your five most important values? Think through what experiences you have had that helped to create those values?
2. It is said that most people's core values are created by the time they're seven. Think for a moment, are the values you listed still relevant to the life you live and want to live?
3. If you found that you could not identify five values, let's do something else instead. Let's approach this exercise from a different angle. What situations make you angry, feel violated, conflicted, trapped, frustrated, undecided, or distressed? It is very likely that the occurrences that brought about those feelings had values associated with them. Those feelings should be used as key moments of insights. They are what Co-Active Coaching practices refer to as "suppressed values". When you recognize that those feelings provide deeper insights to which you are, you can become more resourceful with your reactions.

Is your life/work currently aligned with the values you identified above? If so, keep up the good work. If not, what can you begin to do today that will put you on a path to alignment?

If you think that your current path is not aligned with your values, commit to doing one thing today to begin changing. What will you do that begins today?

Contact us at info@i-catalyst.us for more information. We want to hear from you! Now you can join the online conversation at the [new Icatalyst, LLC blog!](#) Share your thoughts and insights!

We want to hear from you! Log on to the new Icatalyst, LLC blog at <http://www.i-catalyst.us/blog/> and share your thoughts.

Sincerely,

Gisele M. Michel

Gisele M. Michel
Icatalyst, LLC

About the editor...

Gisele M. Michel is the founder and President of Icatalyst, LLC, a coaching and consulting firm specializing in helping individuals and businesses optimize peak performance. Icatalyst helps businesses and organizations translate big ideas into concrete steps for action, by identifying shortcomings, and designing implementation strategies that improve leadership and organizational performance.

Icatalyst, LLC specializes in helping leaders create a framework for managing the people side of change. We offer leadership development through coaching and training, conflict resolution and organizational improvement strategies. Icatalyst, LLC offers cost-effective, user-friendly solutions to heighten individual and organizational performance. We help to troubleshoot complex problems and lay visionary plans for the success of our clients.

Gisele has an undergraduate degree in International Relations from George Washington University and a master's degree with a concentration on East European Studies and Political Economy from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a multilingual, multicultural professional with broad-based experience and training in organizational development, strategic planning, resource development, contract and budget management, negotiation, mediation, public relations, and public policy and administration. She has over 18 years of experience in most aspects of community and economic development with functions in outreach, policy development, capacity building, analysis, micro-finance management, technical assistance, program and organizational development.

Please direct questions or comments about the newsletter and/or Icatalyst, LLC to gisele@i-catalyst.us, or log on to our website at www.i-catalyst.us.