

## **Training Professionals – The Amazing Approach You Are Not (yet) Using!**

- As a trainer, coach, designer, or developer, would you like a new and powerful technique to increase the application of positive behaviors following your training programs?
- Would you like to be able to influence or persuade people to do what is ultimately good for them and the organization; and do so without resorting to coercion, threats, or other negative actions?

These are just two of the positive consequences of “Nudging”, a powerful new science-based approach to getting people to take action. It is being used by our own federal government, many states and cities, the British government, and loads of private sector firms in the US and beyond.

### **When could a training professional use Nudging?**

Here are just a few areas where it has been and could be applied:

- Increase the application of lessons learned in training, when participants return to the job:
  - Such as a nudge to get supervisors to use positive coaching skills and questions instead of threats or coercion
  - Or a nudge for employees who need to increase their ability to listen, solve problems, and cooperate as a team member, but find difficulty in applying these skills consistently
- Boost positive behaviors that benefit employees and employers
  - Such as nudges to increase positivity, resilience, and even improved health habits (diet and exercise)
- Decrease negative habits such as procrastination, angry outbursts, or blaming others

### **Is it based on genuine science?**

Daniel Kahneman won the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics for his work in behavioral economics (the science of how people make decisions). His work (and that of many others of course) formed the foundation for what is now known as Nudging. He was the first non-economist to ever win the Nobel for economics, for bringing 40 years of research from the behavioral, social, and cognitive sciences to prove how people really make decisions. This research has now been systemized in a set of findings that can be used by training professionals to change the behavior of those they train or coach.

Nudging is based on understanding our unconscious biases and using this knowledge (and well-designed nudges) to change behavior. You will find the science of nudging explained in many contemporary books including, *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness* by Thaler and Sunstein; *SWITCH: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* by Chip and Dan Heath; and *Predictably Irrational: The Hidden Forces that Shape Our Decisions* by Dan Ariely. Watch for an upcoming blog where I provide a brief description of five books or other sources of information about nudging (articles, brief videos, or MOOCS).

## **I know it is being used by other professionals, but is it really feasible...for talent developers?**

1. **It is inexpensive** – Nudging experiments can be conducted for little or no additional costs and with a minimum time commitment.
2. **It is a flexible technique (within current efforts or as a stand-alone tool)**

Nudging can be incorporated into your pre-training promotional efforts or orientations, or you can seamlessly fuse in into your classroom or online programs, or you can wait to employ it in your post-training application efforts.

It can also be used as a stand-alone effort to change or reinforce behaviors that support your organization's goals and objectives. Many public agencies are using it this way. They have used Nudging programs to increase employee contributions to savings plans, drive down waste of agency resources, and even encourage clients to use the organization's webpage in lieu of the contact center.

3. **Scalable (Nudges can be easily scaled up if they are effective)** – Nudges are ideally designed to be tested with small groups, validated, and then scaled up for larger enterprise-wide initiatives.

If you think that Nudging might be of use to you or your organization, consider the upcoming one day ATD Sacramento workshop or watch for and read the upcoming blogs. You will be joining a host of other forward-thinking, empirically minded, and action-oriented talent developers.

### **Upcoming Nudging One-Day Workshop – Friday, August 25 2017 at 1410 Ethan Way, The Los Rios CCD's Workforce and Economic Development Center.**

This hands-on full day workshop is another in the Fundamentals Series (professional development workshops for training professionals). The workshop is led by Bruce Winner, Custom Training Manager of the Government Training Academy, LRCCD. Bruce conducted a two hour Nudge workshop for a sold out crowd of over 60 people in Nov 2016 and the crowd asked for a follow-up. Here it is!

[Click here](#) for the featured workshop.