

STATE OF COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Office of Organizational Learning & Development

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A belated thank you for providing such a valuable tool to support our learning programs! I suppose the silver lining is that I can provide long-term results over approximately four years.

The first initiative assigned to me by CDOT in 2003 was to prepare and roll out curriculum for our approximately 500 supervisors. I thought I was ready – then I learned about EDSI's *Increasing Personal Effectiveness (IPE)*. I asked to see the course in its entirety, then proceeded to invite a group of senior managers that I would dub as cynical, at best. One Director challenged our presenter by saying, "I've heard it all. You can't possibly teach me anything new." After the two days, she fully acknowledged that she not only learned several new things, but she was determined to practice her new skills the following day (which I happen to know she did).

We were so impressed with this course's outcomes, that, along with our *Values* course, *IPE* has become the foundation for our required supervisor curriculum. We refer to *IPE* lessons throughout our curriculum, so we often recommend, and in some cases require, *IPE* as a prerequisite.

This course conveys communication essentials and how the choices we make have an impact on how well, or how poorly, a conversation flows. Such a powerful message merits emphasis, so we internally named the course *Powerful Choices*. It's been such a hit with supervisors, about 400 of whom have attended, that at their request, we delivered several sessions for their own intact work groups, even before the course was open to the general employee population.

And success stories abound! It's "now I get it –it's a style issue, rather than a trust issue." Many participants have shared stories on how much their relationships improved after they took personal responsibility for how they communicated with their peers, co-workers, teams, etc. This was often followed by a marked improvement in working relationships and, consequently, on the efficient use of time when communicating plans or business cases, or when resolving business issues. One unit, after attending the course, was so motivated to improve their communication styles, they've considerably cut back on the turnaround time for their orders.

It's important to note that my original curriculum included several stand-alone courses. *IPE* weaved in so many messages covered in those stand-alone courses, that we effectively cover in two days what I'd originally thought would take three or more days to cover. This has allowed us to maximize the use of our resources, especially the human ones.

I highly recommend *IPE* for covering essential interpersonal communication skills and how well they contribute to working more productively.

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