

Back-Forecasting

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(Revised: 31. January 2000 by Clinton Callahan)

FORMAT:

Dyads and writing.

Duration: 20 minutes

PURPOSE:

To utilize the mind's imaginative time-mobility to bypass unknown conditions and start from a conclusion, namely assuming the goal has already been accomplished. Then step by step we work backwards from the future to the present, in the process discovering how it came to pass.

SETUP:

Chairs in pairs. Writing paper is available.

INTRO / BACKGROUND:

This is a training in creative leadership. We will begin by creating a new future for ourselves and our company. We will do this using a process known as "Back Forecasting," (Hinteraussagen) which is one of the tools you will learn in Kreationstraining.

We have all heard of the technique of Forecasting, where we start from where we are in time right now, and, based on our best guesses and experiences we try to estimate and make projections about what will happen in the future. Back-Forecasting is related to but different from Forecasting.

Here is how Back-Forecasting works. We begin by relocating ourselves in time. For this exercise, relocate yourself 10 years into the future. Imagine that it is actually NOW the year 2010. Look around. Many things have changed since the Kreationstraining you attended way back in 2000. All of the goals that you set for yourself in 2000 have already successfully happened for you and your company. From the imagined perspective of now living in 2010, please write down clearly and specifically what those things are, and precisely how it worked out that these things occurred.

In the year 2010, looking backwards over the last 10 years, it is so clear and simple to see how things have come together and fallen into places to create the benefits and changes that you now experience. Let your creativity fill in the details. Do not limit yourself to only those things that can be considered reasonable and predictable. Let your mind run free and fill in the gaps with whatever it wants to. The primary criteria for you writing about how your future is that you are excited about it. It inspires you. It makes the hair stand up on the back of your neck and turns you on.

Have fun with this. Describe the future you would really love to live in, both professionally and personally. Describe it in full color, three dimensions, sights, sounds, smells, all of the details. Who is there with you? What do you spend your days doing? Where are you doing this? How does it work? Write it out how you want it, and how it came to pass as you Backcast from the future and see the way it happened.

In the center of the room are some writing implements to use. Please find an empty piece of paper on the wall. Use your full sheet of paper.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1: (5 minutes)

Cast your imagination ten years ahead of now, and imagine an ideal future for yourself, personally and professionally. Describe this future by writing it in full detail. Be specific about what projects have been completed, what you have achieved, where you live, with whom, how much money you make, what your job description is, etc.

Step 2:

Now imagine that it is actually the year 2010 and you accidentally run into one of your friends who is here in the Kreationstraining with you today. You meet them and exclaim about the goals that you envisioned here in the Kreationstraining - that they have all come true. Tell them the detailed story of how it happened.

Step 3: Write down the story that you said, the coincidences which occurred, the connections you made, the steps you took to accomplish the future you set for yourself.

Step 4:

Come back to the year 2000. Look over your description from this perspective. Circle 5 of the most inspiring elements of your future and how you got there. Write these into action steps for yourself.

DEBRIEF: