

# think one team™ newsletter

thinkoneteam™

## DEBRIEFING THE DEBRIEF - DO'S AND DON'TS

A debrief is a concept that has evolved from military use to a common practice in the organisational world. Unfortunately, some leaders have interpreted debrief as a tool for assigning blame.

However, if done properly, it's a highly valuable exercise that is core to the Think One Team™ practice of *'Share the Wins and Losses'*,

### A debriefing don't : Share only your 'reality'

It's a difficult concept, but an effective leader understands the notion of multiple 'truths'. Debriefs often reveal conflicting stories - so which one is right?

The answer is both. Debriefing does not find what's 'right' and what's 'wrong' - it finds the reality. The real question is why do we have multiple truths?

The answer to this question will reveal the true power of the debrief: turning the multiple truths into ways that we can learn and improve. This is the essence of *'Share the Wins and Losses'*

### A debriefing do: Involve everyone

As the saying goes, 'you don't know what you don't know'. Involve everyone in your debriefs.

This may mean shifting a paradigm - when was the last time you involved your suppliers in a debrief? Or better yet, your customers?

As long as the focus is kept on learning and improving, everyone will appreciate being involved in a debrief. Better yet, they might just offer you something constructive.

### Debriefing Tip: Choose a method for 'what actually happened?'

Groups get off-track and lose the 'learn and improve' focus when there is no structure for defining 'What actually happened?' Have logic to your discussion of events e.g.: chronological order (forward or reverse), departments taking turns, the TOT model etc. It may be effective to combine a number of these methods.

## THE FINE LINE - CHANGING BETWEEN CUSTOMER AND SUPPLIER

The Think One Team™ school of thought has a simple notion; "You can't be just a customer!" No matter what function / department, you will need to play the role of customer AND the role of supplier...sometimes both concurrently!

Teams that do this are applying the fundamentals of partnering. Here are some pointers for each role:

### Good customers take some responsibility

Want the most effective product? Then take the responsibility to help your supplier.

- Give clear and precise specifications - this may mean doing some research yourself to have the knowledge base
- Communicate changes immediately - change will happen, how quickly and effectively change is communicated is the key factor
- Provide data-based feedback - 'War stories' are no value to anyone. If you want your supplier to improve, give data.
- Let the supplier choose the best solution - you can be involved every step of the way, but you need to trust your supplier in their competence.

### Good suppliers think like a customer

The customer may not always be right, but they should always be at the front of mind.

- Actively listen to be sure of expectations- this may seem elementary, but it gets harder to do the more expert you become
- Confirm expectations in writing - don't fall into the trap of verbal agreements and assumptions
- Measure service / quality levels - a good partner is always looking to improve
- Create the opportunity for feedback - more importantly, listen and accept the feedback you receive.

## Further Details?

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when everyone in your organisation  
thinks and acts as one big team

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