

by Charles Kovess

Why Trainers and Presenters have Passion

Let me put six propositions to you for consideration:

- passionate trainers are clear about their *purpose*
- passionate trainers *have unlimited amounts of energy*
- passionate trainers *have courage and can therefore speak the truth*
- passionate trainers *inspire others*
- passionate trainers are *creative and innovative*
- passionate trainers *have learned the need for self-awareness that leads to wisdom.*

In this article I will show you reasons why these six propositions might be true.

I believe it's time to be clear about and committed to the *spiritual dimensions* of business and education and the important role that passion plays.

Since 1993, in my role as "Australia's Passion Provocateur", I have been promoting the power of passion. Life would have been easier financially if I had stayed in my original profession of law, but I gave away a large income as partner in a successful law firm because of my passionate belief that Australia's future is totally dependent on the quality and behaviour of all Australians, in all fields of endeavour.

This behaviour is governed to a large degree by our passion!

And trainers influence this behaviour as effective educators in the business environment. Trainers have passion because they know, or suspect, that the above six propositions are true. If they don't have passion, then, for the reasons discussed below, they cannot sustain their performance as trainers and ultimately change careers.

The "spiritual dimension" of business is the part of business that is not of physical or mental dimensions: it encompasses culture, caring, inspiration, team spirit, fun, ethical and moral behaviour, courage, integrity and, dare I say it, love!

And what is the key to unlocking the spiritual dimension of leadership? The answer is *passion*.

What is passion?

My personal definition is:

"Passion is a source of unlimited energy from your soul (or 'spirit' or 'heart') that enables you to produce extraordinary results."

Why an "unlimited" source of energy? In my own life I have found that when I am passionate about something, I seem to be able to tap into an unlimited source of energy, don't become tired and seem to be able to go on and on until I achieve what I am seeking.

Why "extraordinary"? The results that most people generate are "ordinary", while passionate people go beyond the ordinary!

Different things for different people

I love the word "passion", but others have learned to be intimidated by the word. You may prefer words such as enthusiasm, inspiration, or desire. Each of us has learned to interpret words to mean certain things, particularly influenced by our family and community environments, so some people prefer to avoid using "passion".

It is also important to realise that each person, and trainer, demonstrates passion in his or her unique way: there is no right or wrong way to be passionate.

What do passionate trainers look like?

Because each of us demonstrates passion uniquely, I choose not to be prescriptive in my description. However, the *clues* to passion being present include:

- unlimited energy for the task at hand
- willingness to speak the truth about an issue
- persistence in creating an outstanding result
- willingness to take responsibility or accountability
- willingness to challenge others' thinking.

There can be overtly passionate trainers, and quiet, humble, introverted trainers with passion. Judging another person's passion levels solely on the basis of the way that you exhibit passion can be misleading.

Why aren't more people passionate?

As a professional speaker, I spend a lot of time in front of many different audiences. I ask each of these audiences: "How often are you impressed by the passion of the people who serve you in department stores, or in Australia's banks?"

And invariably there is spontaneous laughter! It is a very rare event indeed for customers of such large institutions to experience service from a passionate staff member. Often the comment that follows is that just finding someone to serve you at all can be difficult!

I have asked these audiences to "guesstimate" how many people are passionate about their work, and some 80% of respondents say that less than 20% of our workforce impress them as being passionate. This anecdotal evidence is persuasive, regardless of the exact definition of passion that each person may use.

And yet I cannot remember speaking to a person who was not genuinely excited, enthusiastic, indeed passionate, about starting a new job. What happens to this excitement, enthusiasm and passion? I believe that it is the quality of experience that is a fundamental factor in destroying new employees' passion, and businesses that do not understand this are damaging the futures of their organisations.

Trainers who understand this, as most seem to do, help employees to rekindle their passion by demonstrating their own passion.

The death of organisational emotion

I believe that caring for employees is a critically important factor in business success, and unless employees feel their employer cares about them, their initial passion for their jobs fades too easily. Caring is an emotional process.

And yet, the pressure on corporations to quickly generate ever-increasing returns on capital has been a key factor in the downsizing of workforces; the focus on economic rationalist philosophies where business has no other responsibility than to make profits; and treating employees as costs rather than assets.

Corporations that use trainers who are passionate help to show their employees they matter and are valued.

The business environment now demands trainers with passion

Business is operating today in a fluid, volatile, changing, globalised environment. Competition is fierce, and time frames are shortening. Over the past decade, strategies that have succeeded are no longer available (such as downsizing, outsourcing, cost-cutting). New strategies are required in this Knowledge Age.

The key is to access the creativity, innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and energy of the most important asset of every business – its employees. These employees will thrive when they want to, and unless they want to, they will perform at a low level of true potential. Passion is a key component in creating the want or desire. An attitude that embraces change, that loves change and challenge, is now a strategic resource.

The knowledge of employees in such challenging environments is the key to business success, and this knowledge lies between their ears!

Trainers with passion know how to access this knowledge, and that's why they are in demand. The faster life changes, the greater becomes the need for educators and trainers with passion and the huge levels of energy that can be harnessed to achieve key learning outcomes.

The new work paradigm

Since the early 1990s, loyalty from larger employers towards their employees has largely diminished, and so has the concept of a career for life in the one organisation. Employees have learned the hard way of the need to look after themselves, so their loyalty is now much reduced. They are open to the next bidder, and retaining top talent is becoming one of the key challenges that leaders must master. Every employee has different motivators, and leaders who don't understand this will not generate above-average profits.

This is because the profitability of an organisation is directly linked to the energy of the people within the organisation and, in particular, to the energy of the leadership team.

What is the link between energy and profits? Money is essentially a representation of human energy. The equation can be expressed like this:

- Human beings bartered goods and services
- Money was invented to replace barter
- Goods and services were the direct result of human beings "doing things"
- The more things they did, the more they could barter
- The amount of human energy determined how much could be done (ie, each person's productivity)
- Thus, the more energy you had, the wealthier you would become.

This equation is still relevant. The productivity of employees is directly linked to energy. Leaders must increase the energy within all employees, by accessing passion and encouraging balance,

resulting in increasing profits. Trainers with passion add enormous value because of their ability to increase energy levels of employees.

Self-awareness

To be wise is to be able to distinguish between good and bad. To do this, you must first understand yourself and what is important to you ... what your passions are, what your values are, what your motivators are. You must be willing to raise your levels of self-awareness, self-knowledge and consciousness of who you are. Great leaders throughout history, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Jesus, Buddha, and Mohammed, have all taught that we grow in wisdom through increased self-knowledge...and discovering, and then pursuing, passion is one of the keys to self-knowledge.

Helping others to find their passion

Trainers have passion because their ability to help others to find their passion depends on whether, having done the work to find their own and then to pursue it, trainers inspire others to take the risks of discovering passion.

The power of passion

Passion as a source of energy, when accessed, makes a trainer powerful, confident, secure, enquiring, caring and inspirational. It changes lives, and changes the future track of organisations. Passionate trainers inspire those around them to live lives of high energy and contribution, to relate to the words of Patanjali from the 2nd Century

When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all your thoughts break their bonds. Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction, and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.

Courage

The word "courage" derives from the Latin word "cor" meaning "heart". In fact, when we follow our heart, then we are truly being courageous. Our minds are designed to protect us, and often our minds are in conflict with our hearts. A classic example of this is a soldier at war. When he is fired at, his mind says "Run!". His heart, however, says "I'm fighting for my country, so I won't run". That is courage. It is not the absence of fear, but rather it is acting despite the fear.

A successful trainer cannot be guided by fear – that's not inspirational and empowering in these tough and fast-changing times. Passion overcomes the fear and enables the trainer to "do what needs to be done"!

Charles Kovess LL.B. (Hons), LL.M., CSP, MAICD, MAITD

After 20 years of high level business experience, lawyer Charles Kovess came to realise that most people have an amazing and under-used ingredient they can use to produce unbelievable changes in both their personal and business lives. Turning his back on the law 11 years ago, he decided to share those secrets as a professional speaker and workshop facilitator, and now he's a walking example of what he has so clearly proven... that 'passion powers performance', and that 'passionate people produce'! Because he's enthused and inspired so many companies and individuals to achieve astronomical results by harnessing passion, he has earned the title of *Australia's Passion Provocateur*, and now travels the world revealing its mighty magic. Charles has authored two inspirational books, '*Passionate People Produce*', and '*Passionate Performance*', and is the co-author of '*The 7 Heavenly Virtues of Leadership*'.

www.kovess.com Ph (03) 9563 6399 email: charles@kovess.com