



Dr. Kevin J. Fleming
Grey Matters
International, Inc.

Grey Solutions
(copyright 2009 Grey Matters International, Inc)

Brains + Words = Being Right

No matter how set apart, empathic, creative, or different we say our approach is....

Where there are two or more brains, and a conversation one question matters more than anything else you will invest in this year around change, growth, or development.

How do we know what we say we know?

Most answers here are inadequate to discern between true evidence and the **feeling of knowing**. Especially when the evidence we use is someone else's feeling of knowing. Whether you are a coach, trainer, or facilitator, or just someone needing alignment to execute a goal in a relationship, you likely have been

utilizing your own tools to make this happen. But how reliable are those methodologies? Put your tool kit, leadership development program, organizational change management program, facilitative techniques, or creative models to the true test---- Science. And take the fastball test.

When Words are Fastballs....

Imagine a dialogue between two people (on its simplest level) being a "pitch" of a word or meaning unit and a "decision to swing or not" as what people do everyday with their own perceptual discernment of what is coming at them, what they think they should say or do, what they actually do, etc. That is, someone throws an idea at us and we have to decide instantaneously whether we believe it is correct and either take it in and accept it as is (i.e. not swing) or respond, clarify, make a rebuttal (i.e. swing).

If we buy into this premise that there are similar perceptual mechanisms to integrating visual and motor parts of the brain (baseball) with visual, auditory and motor (conversation), lets complicate things a bit further with some of these scientific facts about a fastball coming across the plate:

- *Average velocity of a fastball can from 80-100 mph*
- *Reaction time from when image of the ball reaches the retina to when one initiates a swing is 200 ms*
- *A fastball travels 9 feet before the batter's brain processes it (full perception of the pitch takes considerably longer)*

Fact of the matter is, it is physically impossible to swing at a closely observed ball. He is swinging at previously determined probabilities. It is equally impossible to assume a listener ever achieves “full knowing” without his/her own pre-existing hidden layer of influences---no matter how many emotional intelligence training seminars or coaching sessions they have attended.

So What is Myth?

- Superstars can **consciously** reason, assess, and deliberate the “problem” of when to swing and how
- Keeping your eye on the ball matters
- You perceive time as it happens

This last point is critical for, in fact, backward projection of time is a known neurophysiological phenomenon that “smooths out” discrepancies between brain time and what we think we see in our perceived time. To prove that the batter is not perceiving the ball consciously as he thinks he is, try this experiment. Take two colored lights (A-red and B-green) and set up next to each other and proceed to turn A and B on in rapid succession. What you will see is the red turn to green about half way between the two lights, even before the green light is actually switched on. The brain gives us the feeling of continuity by borrowing from the recent past and the immediate future. *That what I see behind the plate is what the batter sees.*

This is also not true. I can see the foolery of misjudged swing and not understand why some superstar swung. I have the luxury of perceiving the whole path uninterrupted by any brain mechanisms needing to react and decide. The truth here is that need for an immediate response alters radically perception. Same in conversations----there is always an unperceived gap in time affecting comprehension. In corporate language---the distant view of the leadership and human capital data “behind the plate” is inherently skewed as a proper reflection of the truth.

“What does this have to do with my Organization and its Current Leadership Initiatives?”

This seemingly crazy metaphor of baseballs and words have a lot to do with errors of decision making, especially in areas of **increased complexity** (compared to one objectifiable baseball) of social, organizational, and global learnings. As the rate of responding to questions pinged at us in this ever-increasing informational world grows, our need to be right---an already fundamental tenet of the brain---increases silently without any feedback system. Unlike a hand touching a hot stove, a half-truth or flat out misperception will be more readily accepted. Such implications for anyone “leading through reasoning” would be:

- Knowing is a sensation and not achieved through “better delivered” logic or forums designed to supposed take away stressors to better create reasoning

- Perspective switching is not a mere team-building retreat-exercise to increase empathy, but a necessary exercise to confidence in one's own knowing (i.e., not situation based, as most of these exercises are pitched)
- Personality is over-rated as a predictor of success at work
- The Impact Bias (overestimating one's effect of something good on another—i.e., leadership development thinking)
- Emotional Intelligence may be misapplied if indeed the ability to be intrapersonally aligned to the extent we think is affected by brain biases and decisional illusions
- Executive assessment that implies a "resistance to feedback" as a poor prognosis falsely inflates our own knowing about our knowledge, thereby dramatically affecting our decision making of candidates on illusory bases.
- Implies the dire need to run all "good intentioned content" through a thinking purification lens to remove error variance of measures
- Alignment is a lot more ambiguous and not as binary as our strategies tend to make it

Grey Matters International's NeuroLeadership Solution

This solution provides unique Intellectual Property combining four distinct areas of expertise (neuroscience, addiction, family/organizational systems thinking, and behavioral economics) to create a model of pre-implementation and post-implementation consulting and coaching that addresses "decision illusions" in planning, executing and follow through of linguistically designed goals in personal growth and corporate development areas.

The "secret sauce" lies in the fact that these four discipline areas map out to fundamentally significant areas of a brain's decision making that explain most of the variance of "why we say one thing and do another"—arguably the greatest problem of humanity.

1. ***Neuroscience*** tells us the story of the importance of metacognition (not mere coaching) to solve problems at different levels than they which they were created
2. ***Addiction*** tells us the story of the critical nature of the reward/pain principles in craving, dissonance reduction, and the rewiring brains (i.e., how to get a brain to crave unknowns as much as chocolate)
3. ***Systems thinking*** tells us the story of what happens when we over-identify with symptoms
4. ***Behavioral Economics*** tells us the story of how "predictably irrational" we are and how we ultimately defy rationality in our day to day decisions

Nowhere in here do we hear what traditional psychology and coaching programs have over-taught at the expense of reality: ***the individual's will and influencing characteristics.***

Without subtracting out the above four areas from the individual's repertoire of influence, we are left "working out one muscle." And instead of muscle fatigue and body imbalance, we instead get over-

identification of motivation, ego, emotions, and ill-timed creativity at the expense of effectiveness

GMI's Grey Solution's strategy with clients using this blending of the above principles has **four key benefits**:

1. Universalizes the incompleteness of knowing decreases threat, groupthink, and rote automatic responding
2. Decreases costly errors of strategic decisions based on “rational data”
3. Introduces the role of “brain broker” between the information disseminator and the culture/team/person receiving the information, reducing the white noise and fuzz and laser-clarifying alignment, silent double binds, value trade offs, and execution probabilities
4. Inherently raises the psychometric bar of measurement so aptly critiqued in ROI literature around the poor return from corporate training.

GMI provides the “missing link” to enhancing personal growth and corporate development products on the market, for GMI's solution transcends traditional programs. It is the required supplemental thinking tools around the brain that are forgotten every day yet fundamental to improving accuracy of thought so as to support truer thinking around one's preferred choice of a program to address a behavior, team, or culture issue. Therefore, clients can choose their own method of development. Picture a tree---this is the trunk that provides all “neurological nourishment” to all content branches.

" ...Dr. Kevin Fleming is an extraordinary coach with the striking combination of a brilliant mind and an exceedingly warm heart. He is able to artfully apply his understanding of neuropsychology and the philosophy of science to help people with a wide array of challenges in a refreshingly practical manner. If you are looking for someone who is able to inspire lasting change and transformation, Dr. Fleming is your man. Within minutes of meeting him, it will be obvious that his Renaissance spirit has somehow managed to marry the bottom line with an elevated understanding of the greatest challenges that individuals and businesses face. Working with Dr. Fleming is an experience you will likely remember for the rest of your life...."

*Srini Pillay, M.D.
CEO, NeuroBusiness Group
Assistant Professor, Harvard
Medical School*

To contact Dr. Fleming for questions or to schedule him for your next Keynote, Executive Workshop, or Seminar, please call 1-888-883-4530 or to find out the latest news and events please visit www.GreyMattersIntl.com