



Tongue Fu!®: AAA Train

What Is Tongue Fu!®?

- A book by Sam Horn
- Martial arts for the mind and mouth
- A constructive alternative to giving a tongue-lashing or being tongue-tied
- Verbal techniques to manage conflict
- A handy skill set for the art of managing projects

Tongue Fu!® Techniques Will Help Us To:

- Demonstrate valued PM skills and be more effective at delivering results:
- Be positive and constructive in our communication
- Build rapport instead of resentment
- Build better relationships!

Critical Success Factors for Using Tongue Fu!®:

- Choose a positive attitude!
- We can't change people. We can change our response to them.
- Learning to respond, rather than react or ignore, takes practice! Start today!
- **Goal: To create light, not heat.**
- Always keep your sense of humor.

AAA Train

When someone complains, don't explain. Take the AAA Train!

- Explanations come off as excuses.
- People don't want explanations, they want to be heard AND they want solutions to their problems.

A gree/Acknowledge

A pologize

A ct

AGREE/ACKNOWLEDGE

YOU'RE RIGHT. I CAN SEE YOU'RE UPSET BY THIS.

- Defuses anger
- Douses the fire
- Recognizes their 'pain'
- Sets you up as a proponent, instead of an opponent

WHAT IF THEY'RE NOT RIGHT?

- Let them think they are right
- ACKNOWLEDGE their frustration
- Get ready to LISTEN; if it turns out they contributed to the problem, it will come to light
- COACH them on what they can do NEXT TIME to avoid the problem

APOLOGIZE

I'M SORRY.

I APOLOGIZE FOR YOUR INCONVENIENCE.

- How can they argue with 'I'm sorry'?
- Shows empathy = shows you care
- Sometimes an apology is all they want to hear

ACT 1: LISTEN

TELL ME EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED.

LET ME SUMMARIZE THIS TO MAKE SURE I'VE GOT IT RIGHT.

- Look for info instead of 'oppo'
- Ask open-ended questions
- Repeat/paraphrase to make sure you understand the problem
- **Listening builds trust**

Why Listening WORKS

- We want acknowledgment that we have been wronged
- We want those who wrong us to take responsibility, and be accountable
- After 'Victim Impact Statement' was enacted in the Judicial System, over 50% of victims did not care what the criminal's sentence was, after they had a chance to voice how they had been impacted by the crime

ACT 2: ASK for Input

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE HAPPEN?

HOW CAN WE RESOLVE THIS TO YOUR FULL SATISFACTION?

WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

- Sometimes an apology is all they want! (avoid assuming!)
- Ensures satisfaction
- Builds partnership/trust
- Starts a negotiation

ACT 3 Set EXPECTATIONS for Resolution

HERE'S WHAT I'M GOING TO DO...

- Solve immediately, if possible
- Lay out steps for resolution, and how and when follow-up will occur
- Follow-through with follow-up!
- Solve it once and for all!

Solve it Once and For All!

The mark of a successful organization isn't whether or not it has problems, it's whether it has the same problems it had last year. – John Foster Dulles

- Identify the root cause
- Conduct a brainstorming session (not a blame storming session!) to get ideas
- Create a project plan!
- Execute the plan!

ACT 4: Show APPRECIATION

THANK YOU FOR BRINGING THIS TO OUR ATTENTION!

- Thank them for identifying the problem
- Acknowledge them for saving others (and you!) time/errors/money in the future

AAA TRAIN

AGREE/ACKNOWLEDGE

APOLOGIZE

ACT

- ACT 1: LISTEN
- ACT 2: ASK for Input
- ACT 3: Set EXPECTATIONS for resolution
- ACT 4: Show APPRECIATION

SUCCESS Insurance

IF THIS ISN'T YOUR NATURAL MO, IT TAKES PRACTICE!!

- Look at each interaction as an opportunity to get better at it
- Approach it as a 'learning conversation' not an argument: your role: investigator, not interrogator
- Visualize yourself as all-day catcher for batting practice

What's Your Action Plan?

- START IMMEDIATELY!
- Think about the last time you had an argument with someone. Could using the AAA Train have helped defuse it?
- What part(s) of the AAA Train do you currently do well? What parts could you improve at?