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October 2011: The Plague

LEAD, FOLLOW & BE LEFT BEHIND

The Plague

Where's RMA in October?

Oct 3 & 4 ASTD PM for Trainers in Houston [Join Us!](#)

Oct 4 Bausch + Lomb

Oct 7 Central Indiana Chapter PMI's Professional Development Day

Oct 12 Franklin College

Oct 13 Butler University

Oct 20 & 21 ASTD PM for Trainers in Alexandria [Join Us!](#)

Oct 25 MISO (Indianapolis)

If you can't get out of the office, join us virtually for one of our webinars:

Oct 5 Chaos Is NOT Performance: Project Management for Stability

[Register](#)

Webinar Series

Project Management for Learning Professionals: Reduce Rework

[Learn More](#)

Oct 20 Leading Yourself & Others Through Jaw Dropping Change

[Register](#)

From Cathy Muckala... Inbred Cat...



I am annoyed. The quality of my work is suffering, I am re-doing things because I screwed them up the first time, and I am exhausted and frustrated. I can see where I want my business to be in the future, and it's taking me way too long to get there. As the leader of this company, I recognize that this trend is not going the way that is best for the success of my teams or customers. As an alleged expert in Project Management, I am guilt ridden. Lucky for me, there is plenty of company for my misery. There's a plague in offices all over the country and it's killing our productivity and psyche.

Here's how we greet each other, the secret 'handshake' of those of us who have the plague: "How's it going?" "Oh my goodness, we are all so busy...", "Well, that's a good thing in this economy, right?" "Umm, ya sure. Of course it is."

Not only are we teetering on the edge of a very tall cliff, we can't tell anyone about it. It just wouldn't be right to complain. So many people out of work, so many people who's lives are much more difficult than ours.

So, we swallow our feelings, put our head down and muddle on pretending to do important, sustaining work but really checking things off as fast as we can in hopes



Continuing our bread theme (?) here is interesting artwork done by Henry Hargreaves using burnt toast. You have to see this to believe it... you've never seen the Beatles done like this. Click on STILL and pick TOASTED <http://henryhargreaves.com>

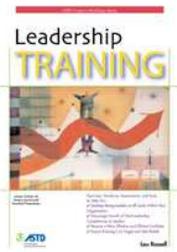
Need Leadership?

We have fast & cheap ways to help.

You may already have a copy of my book, [Leadership Training](#), published by ASTD.

Inside is everything you need to teach leadership including slides, activities and teaching notes.

Whether using a web or live approach, this book helps you help others grow their leadership prowess in times that really need more leaders.



Consider buying everything you need to hold your first session with your team. For \$1596, you will receive:

- A copy of the Leadership Training book.
- A one-hour phone coaching session with author Lou Russell on what to pick out of the material for the goals you have with your team.
- 10 combination DISC/ Workplace Motivators online assessments (as discussed in the notes and slides) and a poster to make a combined Team Model.
- 10 360 degree online assessments, a critical part of setting the base for leadership goals.

In addition, we offer the following add-on services:

- EQ assessments for decision making
- We can make the workbooks for you and ship them straight to your meeting location.
- We can also make diplomas, evaluations, pre-session background

that the list will somehow end. That email will break one day soon and be down for a while. That it really is possible to finish a project, at least one, right?

We're breaking. As our facilitator Nadine Martin always says, "Insanity is doing the same things over and over again and expecting different results." I believe we are all practicing this truism on a daily basis.

Here's more proof. My two project management books, [Project Management for Trainers](#) and [10 Steps to Successful Project Management](#), have been selling the best of all my books. That makes sense- they are about doing more with less. My students love the techniques for the Project Charter, especially the visual scope diagram. It's a great idea to use these tools to communicate to all our busy stakeholders (living lives of chaos just like we do) how complex our project is and what we're going to need to get it done with the quality expected. Notice this focus is on other people being accountable to us. Students do not like doing the Project Plan. This requires detail work, specifics, dates, and holding people accountable, especially the project manager. Hmm... that's about us being accountable to others. Oops, sorry, we don't have time. One particularly truthful student emailed me that he was too busy doing projects to learn project management.

Suddenly one of my older books, [Leadership Training](#), has been selling like crazy. We have all been way too busy for leadership for the last three years or so and it surprised me. Actually, the book has everything you need- Powerpoint, teaching notes, detailed games and interactions- to teach a 1/2 day, 1-day, or 2-day leadership workshop. Are people getting stressed enough to trigger supervisors to try to teach themselves? Or try to teach their staff? Can we check off leadership development as quickly as possible? At best that's a starting point, and we'd love to help make this easier with the package we've put into this newsletter under **Need Leadership?** However, we also need to step up and get back to being leaders more than once every few weeks.

We know life is flying by while we're distracted and distraught. We are trying to lead, follow and still we are getting left behind. For my part, here is how I am working to change my approach to work:

- Time box projects into sustained, focused amounts of time instead of bits of emails, phone calls, and conversations. Work on one, finish it, go to the next.
- Limit how many times a day I look at email to less than a handful.
- Walk away when I need to. Exercise, eat well, spend time with my family. When you're struggling, stop.
- SAY NO. I can't do everything (have proven that very well). If you're out of time and money, you have to CUT SCOPE. What will I cut?

questionnaires and provide course supplies shipped to your meeting location.

Contact Brittney for more information
btiemann@russellmartin.com



Hold Your Spot for 2012

Project Management Virtual Peer Mentors:

Need more than training? How about a support group of peers? After a successful trial in 2011, PM Virtual Peer Mentors will begin again in 2012, polished, tightened up and with a dazzling new virtual location. This virtual community provides you with training, coaching and peer mentoring to work on your real projects without leaving your desk. You will grow your overall ability to juggle multiple projects while minimizing rework. Individuals meet with their peer mentor once a month by phone, and challenge each other through a shared discussion area as each person shares project deliverables. Webinars with engaging guest speakers and online training modules complete the service. Email lou@russellmartin.com for more information.

One PM Technique, One Hour:

Need PM help but there's no time to go to class? Starting in 2012, we will launch eight new e-learning modules on project management. Each topic can be taken alone when you need the technique, or they can be taken in order to learn the whole process of 'DARE to Properly Manage Resources'. PMI Educational PDUs will be available for these modules. Reserve your spot by emailing Brittney at btiemann@russellmartin.com

- Amount of activity does not equal my value. They have nothing to do with each other.
- Try to get my arms around being a leader in my life, in the office, in my family. Stop following. Notice others and help them, because they likely have the plague, too.

It's impressive that you've had time to read this all the way through. I'd love to hear what you are doing either at the blog, <http://insanityconstraint.blogspot.com/>, or by email to lou@russellmartin.com.



Thanks to Rhonda Tamulonis for sharing this fun site: www.iconfinder.com. Here's the one I picked when I sorted on Lou.

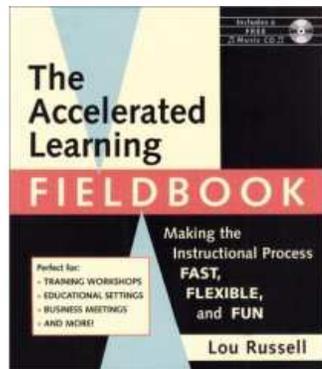


Growing Your Child's Brain

Making sure your child has fun while learning self-control is vitally important. Aamodt and Wang recommend, for instance, telling your child to pretend he or she is protecting a castle instead of just saying, "Stand still." From the book, [Welcome to Your Child's Brain](#), How the Mind Grows from Conception to College by Sandra, Ph.D. Aamodt, Sam, Ph.D. Wang and Ellen Galinsky.

"A big thing we can do for our children is to do the best to foster the development of self-control and willpower. Self-control and the ability to restrain impulses is associated with success at every age, whether it means being able to read at age 4, or being able to restrain impulses at a later age, or even when your peers think of you in high school. At all of these ages, willpower and self-control is a stronger predictor of academic success than IQ."

Monthly Contest



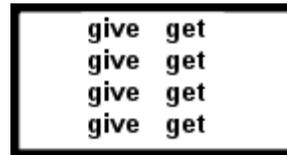
My first book, [The Accelerated Learning Fieldbook](#), has a chapter on visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners. When I did the research for the book, I found virtually no research that supported the idea that people have a preference for receiving new information in some combination of these three ways. I recently read this article <http://n.pr/qcQ3ho>:

"...Doug Rohrer, a psychologist at the University of South Florida, to look more closely at the learning style theory. When he reviewed studies of learning styles, he found no scientific evidence backing up the idea. "We have not found evidence from a randomized control trial supporting any of these," he says, "and until such evidence exists, we don't recommend that they be used." The article goes on to suggest "...it might be more useful to figure out similarities in how our brains learn, rather than differences. And, in that case, he says, there's a lot of common ground. For example, variety. "Mixing things up is something we know is scientifically supported as something that boosts attention," he says, adding that studies show that when students pay closer attention, they learn better. Recent studies find that our brains retain information better when we spread learning over a longer period of time, say months or even a year, versus cramming it into a few days or weeks. Rohrer and colleagues nationwide are currently researching what teaching methods work best for all students, but only using the evidence."

It's not hard to teach using all three, and when you do, the increased retention is obvious. For me, it's never been a question of teaching narrowly to one person, but instead teaching with a variety to all. For example, when you tell students to turn to page 3, many will ask you "What page?" Instead say "page 3" and write a large 3 on the flip chart.

In addition, there is lots of research supporting Howard Gardner's 10 Multiple Intelligences, also discussed in my book. I

This month's contest is going to be completely different. Here are three REBUS puzzles to solve which tie to the content of this month's discussions:



Each correct answer earns 15 points for the first contest of quarter 4 Email your answers to info@russellmartin.com



Here are the TOP 5 taglines for this picture from last month's contest:

Pam Fields, "Focus not on the 'clutter and noise' but on the critical path."

Dan Brandon (one of many), "Winds of change, fields of uncertainty on an ever-changing landscape, chasing after profits."

Robert Myers, "From the many scattered thought (or tasks), beauty is possible."

Amy Dinning, "Leaves represent pieces of my project, so many, floating in different directions and I'm responsible."

Alex Helt, "Every day is an evolving combination of controlled chaos sprinkled with fainting moments of serenity."

Quarter 3 Winners: Dan Brandon, Alex Helt & Robert Myers. To see the correct answers for Qtr 3 Contests,

find using this list as an audit of the flow of activities in class really helps energy levels. For example, always follow a highly social activity with a more introspective one. I'd love to hear your thoughts on this at lou@russellmartin.com.

[click here](#).

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