

# the LETTER

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THE PACIFIC INSTITUTE®

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## THE SOCIAL SERVICE INITIATIVE with Special Attention to Anecdotal Data

Dr. Glenn Terrell, Ph.D.

The Summer 1998 and Winter 1998 issues of THE LETTER featured the theory and research conducted thus far on the *Organizational Culture And Effectiveness Survey (OCES)* with respect to its usefulness in determining the impact of *Investment in Excellence*® on our client organizations. The Summer 1998 issue summarized the impact of *OCES*, among other things, in determining the influence of individual and leadership effectiveness on the culture of an organization. This, in turn, contributes to overall organizational effectiveness of leaders and non-leaders, as well as their organizations.

In the Winter 1998 issue, Steve Gandara contributed the lead article, describing in very convincing terms the value of *OCES* in his work with a major client, an automobile agency. Steve's article, along with the effective use of *OCES* with other clients, convinces this editor that *OCES* will help us in analyzing the needs of our clients and in designing an approach appropriate to those needs.

The theme of this Spring 1999 issue centers on our Social Service Initiative, a focus that is central to our mission, with an emphasis on some of the research that has already been done by our clients (in some instances, with our assistance) as well as a few studies by others working within self-efficacy theory. Let's take a look at our Mission Statement (above, right).

*"We affirm the right of all individuals to achieve their god-given potential. The application of our education empowers people to recognize their ability to choose growth, freedom and personal excellence. We commit ourselves to providing this education through all means that are just and appropriate."*

The studies abstracted for this issue provide support for the effectiveness of our programs with social service groups. Subsequent issues will contain abstracts of additional studies performed with the cooperation of our social service clients. (Our plan is to take a more aggressive approach on the value of outcome studies with our clients in the social services groups, since the awarding of grants by foundations and other private and public agencies will be heavily influenced by documentation supporting our work.) You will note that the studies include the use of the questionnaire, interview, rating scale and, in some instances, data derived from anecdotes that can be very convincing personal statements made by participants about the impact of our curricula on their individual lives and the effectiveness of the concepts we

teach on their collective lives. The term "collective lives" refers to families, communities, schools, churches, public and private sector organizations and groups of competitive team sports, among others.

Some may argue that anecdotal data have no place in educational and social science research. This editor believes this to be a misconception of what constitutes useful, scientific data. The necessary criteria for inclusion of data in research in any scientific discipline are a) quantification, i.e., the data must be expressed in terms of a number system, and b) the data must be derived from the measurement of concepts that are clearly defined so that any researcher anywhere in the world can replicate the study in order to support the study or dispute it. Anecdotal data, if expressed in quantitative terms and derived from a clear description of the operations the researcher uses in generating the anecdotes, meet these two criteria. Furthermore, some of the most con-

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# Emperical Data

by John McNeil and Mark Schlosser

Working with the Private Industry Council in Stanislaus County in California, we used the derivative programs *Achieving Your Potential (AYP)* and the *Comprehensive Objective Assessment Process (COAP)* as an integrated program.

This integrated program is well-suited for work with welfare recipients who are being prepared for work under the guidance of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The program places much emphasis on the attitudes and expectations that are necessary to move into the work world. Dramatic improvements were made by the participants in five of the six measures of job success: Follow-up Employment, Adult Follow-up Employment, Adult weekly Earnings, Youth Employment, and Youth Employment Enhancement. Due to this outstanding performance, the PIC of Stanislaus County received an incentive bonus for exceeding standards.

*To further illustrate the effectiveness of our work with the PIC, we provide a quote of Kris Stadlman, the Executive Director of PIC in Stanislaus County. "Welfare reform*

*requires people to change their belief system. That's the reason The Pacific Institute has created one perfect system for us."*

The graph below is the third quarter results of Stanislaus County's 98/99 fiscal year ending June 30th, 1999. It reflects their excellence in placing people in jobs and keeping them there because of great front-end training and coaching. (Dept. of Labor sets the Standards.)

| MEASURE                              | STANDARD | ACTUAL   |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|
| Adult Follow-up at 13 weeks          | 53.83%   | 78.90%   |
| Adult Follow-up – Welfare (13 weeks) | 48.98%   | 83.40%   |
| Youth entered employment             | 68.99%   | 71.95%   |
| Adult weekly earnings after 13 weeks | \$286.00 | \$381.00 |
| Adult welfare follow-up (13 weeks)   | \$266.00 | \$344.00 |
| Youth employment enhancement         | 68.99%   | 71.95%   |

Since making three of the six performance standards in year 93/94, Stanislaus has gone to six of six and is a member of The Enterprise Council [The Enterprise Council requires 80 % retention at 13 weeks and 75 % customer satisfaction on an independent (non-govt.) phone survey. The agency must also write a narrative on how they are conducting continuous quality improvement. It is based on the Malcom Baldrige Award criteria for the private sector.] for both Title II and Title III, making it one of the best agencies in California and the United States. Stanislaus uses *Achieving Your Potential-Adult*, for both Title II and Title III dislocated workers with outstanding results. The staff is fully trained in *Investment in Excellence*®, as well as Vision Building.



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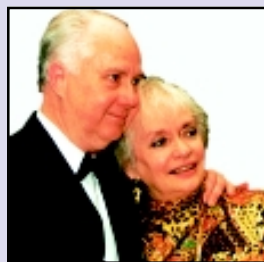
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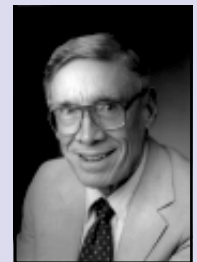
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*We all, The Pacific Institute family, in our endeavor to fulfill the mission statement of The Pacific Institute, are in the constant process of improving ourselves in order to better serve those we are committed to reach. The translation of research into practical application is a continuous and dynamic effort and we trust that The Letter, will help each of us stay involved in that process.*



### About The Authors...

**Dr. Glenn Terrell** earned his B.A. in Political Science from Davidson College, his M.S. in Psychology from Florida State University, and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. Dr. Terrell served as Chairman of the Department of Psychology, University of Colorado, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and as Dean of Faculties at the University of Illinois in Chicago before an 18-year tenure as President of Washington State University.

**John McNeil** is Managing Director of The Pacific Institute's Social Justice Sector. **Mark Schlosser** is Executive Director of The Pacific Institute's Social Service Initiative. John's primary purpose with The Pacific Institute is to deliver the psychological tools necessary for individuals and organizations to obtain the results they choose for their lives. John has been a keynote speaker at international, national, state and local conferences, and is prepared to do whatever it takes to reverse the effects of the hopelessness, worthlessness, hostility and paralysis associated with change and replace it with effective, cooperative, prosperous thinking and actions.

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vincing data we have in support of the impact of our education are found in testimonials

The first study summarized here is very important because it demonstrates that even preschool children are quite capable of engaging in self-talk, perhaps the most important thinking skill we teach.

1. *Delay of Gratification in Children* Mischel, W., Shoda, Y., and Rodriguez, M., Science, Vol. 244, 1989.

The children in this study, four year olds, demonstrate that they can exercise the control necessary in choosing a more highly valued, but delayed, goal instead of a less valued, but immediate, goal, if they use effective self-talk.

The experimenter showed several toys to the children and told them that they could play with the toys later. Then the experimenter told them that they were to play a game that consisted of the experimenter leaving the room, but that he or she would return immediately if the child rings a bell. The children were also shown the rewards (two marshmallows versus one; two small cookies versus five pretzels). The children were then told that to get the reward they preferred they must wait until the experimenter returned, but that they could, if they wished, select the less preferred reward and avoid further delay by ringing the bell. The rewards selected for the study were, through pre-testing, selected near enough in value as to create some conflict in the children.

Results and conclusions of this and follow-up studies: a) Many of the children waited for the preferred goal if they used cognitive strategies, i.e. self-talk, as instructed by the researcher. These strategies came in the

form of encouraging the children to think of the arousing features of the less preferred goal, or, alternatively, to think about the more abstract, informative features of the preferred goal for which they were willing to delay gratification. b) Those children who waited longer for the preferred goal were described ten years later by their parents as more cognitively and socially advanced, better able to handle stress and frustration, better able to concentrate and think ahead (forethought), and more verbally fluent than their peers.

2. *Effect of the Steps To Excellence For Personal Success® (STEPS) curriculum on the Personal Development of Head Start Parents In The Areas Of Leadership And Community Development*, an abstract of Linda Ketchum's doctoral thesis at Seattle University.

After more than 25 years, Head Start leaders are agreed that the main reason for the success of the program is the intimate involvement of the parents. The Pacific Institute has worked effectively with Region 10 of the Department of Health and Human Services for several years, with the focus on the Head Start program. John McNeil and Mark Schlosser are joint project directors on this program. Fifty-six Region 10 Head Start staff members are facilitators and 700 Head Start parents have attended the STEPS program.

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of attendance in the STEPS program on leadership and community involvement. The criteria of leadership development included leadership training, participation in policy-making and program governance, and workshop presentations.

Community involvement included participation in public schools,

fundraising, membership in organizations that assist in the improvement of the community, and advocating programs for children and families.

A questionnaire (Lickert type) was administered to all parents, designed to determine the effect of the STEPS program on leadership and community participation before and after the STEPS program. The increase in leadership activities was not significant, while the increase in community involvement was significant.

The failure of the parents to show significant leadership development was puzzling at first. This finding can be explained in two possible ways. One, the experiment was conducted over a two year period, which means that the time intervals between the completion of the STEPS program and the post-tests were highly variable, ranging from a few days to approximately two years. Another explanation is implicit in the fact that some mothers, especially those involved in the Head Start program, already were actively involved in leadership activity. This study needs to be replicated where these methodological factors are corrected. The community participation, on the other hand increased significantly despite the varying time interval between the parents' participation and the assessment of leadership and community changes.

3. The following group of studies are included in these abstracts because they consist of work we do in what we formerly called the "Independence Initiative," now called Social Service Initiative, since many of them include work with youth, parents and community leaders, a focal point of our interest at The Pacific Institute.

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a. The Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) study. Pre- and post-test measures were taken on both the experimental and control groups. The former received the age appropriate TPI curriculum (e.g. *STEPS*®, *PATHWAYS*®, *Changing Directions by Breaking Barriers*®). The two measures used to assess the impact of the TPI curricula were job placement rate and average wage at placement for all 1440 clients served in the study. The job placement rate for laid off workers increased significantly from 70% to 83% for those attending the TPI curriculum, while the wage average at placement increased from \$5.74 to \$6.61 in the group attending the TPI curriculum. The average wage change for the control group decreased from \$5.58 to \$5.05.

We attribute the superiority of the experimental group to the continued use of the cognitive skills we teach which in turn builds self-efficacy, internal locus of control and self-esteem. We have data to support this interpretation. Those who continue to use the skills of self-talk and affirmations continue to show superior performance, while those who discontinue the use of these skills show deficits in performance.

b. A study of the effectiveness of TPI curriculum (*Changing Directions*) in enhancing self-esteem of minors who were subjects in juvenile courts. Although getting juveniles to think of themselves in favorable terms was not easy, the study did show significant improvement in a pre-and post-test design as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale.

c. A study on enhancement of self concept in youth in maximum security, ages 12-18; mean age 15.5. Pre-and post-test design; 67 percent Caucasian, 33 percent African American.

Average education level, grade 9; 110 males, 23 female. Reasons for incarceration ranged from ungovernable behavior to murder; 39 percent for property offense.

The Peirs-Harris Self-Concept Scale was administered to both the experimental and control groups, before and after attending TPI *Changing Directions* program. There were significant differences in five of the six Peirs-Harris Scales in favor of the group attending *Changing Directions*: Behavior, Happiness and Satisfaction, very significant; the others, Intelligence, Physical Appearance, Attributes and Anxiety, less so; and Popularity not significant. It was suggested that follow-up sessions be given to peer group relations when the youth return home.

Earlier in this issue of THE LETTER, we mentioned that anecdotal data from our clients frequently convey the support of the efficacy of our services as vividly as data collected in carefully controlled studies. Your editor has been privileged to have observed some of these testimonials in the form of descriptions of personal experiences, the most recent examples at our International Conference in England. At one of the breakout sessions, several women gave exceedingly moving, life saving descriptions of their experience with IIE. To this writer, nothing could have been more convincing than their statements regarding the power of their belief in the effectiveness of what we do.

4. One example of the effective use of anecdotes in outcome studies: Quantification of anecdotes. Following a three day TPI-administered IIE Phase One session for leaders in the Texas Department of Human Services, John McNeil, Shane Nelson, Taffie Lewis and others asked the twenty participants to record their

impressions of the program and its content. Your editor quantified their responses by grouping them into three categories, along with the frequency of occurrence for each category for each participant. The categories were Personal, Professional, Family and Community. The results of this procedure appear below.

General:

- Nineteen of the 20 participants gave strong, favorable responses.
- One response was too vague to categorize.
- Personal improvement – 12 responses
- Professional improvement – 5 responses
- Family and Community improvement – 5 responses

It is obvious from the above data that the participants believed that they benefited significantly from the program. In a real anecdotal categorization, several individuals would participate in the selection of the specific categories and in the distribution of the responses within the categories.

5. One additional plan within the Social Service domain – Soledad. The Soledad definition:

*“An individual who takes a stand for justice, moves forcefully toward goals, possesses internal locus of control, is accountable and has attained freedom from dependency and for action.”*

Project Director Matt Fontana has a special interest in the Soledad project and will be applying it to a summer youth campaign.

Progress on our work with the Soledad project and others within the Social Service Initiative will be reported in subsequent issues of THE LETTER.