

Description:

It's time to win with training! Mike Connell, MRA Learning & Development Instructor, is here to ensure you are engaging in the current top-of-the-line training practices. We'll go over training opportunities for companies, how to keep people engaged during training sessions, and how the evolution of training affects you and your success.

Key Takeaways:

- "If you want to have success, figure out what things you need to do every day that will lead to that success."
- Keep generations in mind when training - think about background, experience, and motivators.
- Training is a two-way street! Participants have as much as an active role as the instructor.

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[Guest Bio - Mike Connell](#)

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[Host Bio - Sophie Boler](#)

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Transcript:

Transcripts are computer generated -- not 100% accurate word-for-word.

00:00:00:01 - 00:00:03:10

Hello everybody and welcome to 30 minute Thrive,

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your go to podcast for anything and everything HR.

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Powered by MRA, the Management Association



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looking to stay on top of the ever changing world of HR?

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MRA has got you covered.

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We'll be the first to tell you what's hot and what's not.

00:00:17:16 - 00:00:21:03

I'm your host, Sophie Boler and we are so glad you're here.

00:00:21:04 - 00:00:23:01

Now it's time to thrive.

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Welcome to this episode of 30 Minute Thrive.

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We're happy you're here, and I'm excited to talk about training to win today

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with Mike Connell.

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He's our learning and development instructor here at MRA.

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And if you aren't familiar with Mike, he has over 30 years

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of professional experience and has been an entrepreneur and manager

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in manufacturing, banking and asset management, real estate,

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franchise restaurants and powersports dealerships.

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And in addition to being a learning and development instructor at MRA,

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Mike has also coached high school and college football for over 20 years.

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So he comes with a lot of experience and today

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he'll really be highlighting his coaching and training background.

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So thanks for being on the podcast today, Mike.

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Excited to talk with you.

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I am as well. Cool.

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Well, I want to start off

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by asking how you really incorporate your coaching background to your training.

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I think the thing that's probably closest between them is I'm

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a proponent of individualization, so

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even though, you know,

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I might have 60 football players

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and you know, generally as a football coach

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between high school and college 15 to 22 year old young men.

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So a lot of similarities in that regard.





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But still,

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you know, kind of individualizing what they're teaching, what we're doing.

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Same thing in the classroom.

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You know, I obviously I've got 20 people in their managers or leads.

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They all in different backgrounds, experiences, things like that.

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So I try to incorporate a lot of things that will

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potentially provide the learning for everyone there.

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So flexing the different communication styles,

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you know, just different folks, how they communicate,

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motivation, you know, why they're there and what they're trying to get out of it.

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And so I'm trying to figure out, you know, what that is

00:02:18:14 - 00:02:21:13

and give it to them whenever possible.

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Yeah, absolutely.

00:02:22:20 - 00:02:25:14

So we'll be talking about coaching and training today.

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So can you kind of give a little overview on the difference between

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coaching and training coaching?

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It's funny because probably in the last ten years

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I see all these books on leadership and management.

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It's coaching coaching coach at your own term.

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And I think a lot of ways it becomes the catch all, you know, where it's like

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that's sort of everything we say, Well, that's conflict management or that's

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where everything's kind of coaching.

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I would say

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probably the biggest commonality in the way I view them is,

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you know, whether it's coaching or training, it's making someone better.

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Number one is whether it's football or management training, it's

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participation sports.

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So I always tell all the classes before we begin, I have two rules.

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So and the first one is this is participation, right?



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This is not a spectator sport.

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So we're going to participate.

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So obviously football, that's the key to their spectators,

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but they're just not on the team. Right.

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Very similar in that regard.

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When people are trained, they need to have responsibility

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for their role in it as well.

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I'm no different than a player, You know, in executing, so

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I think that's similar in those regards.

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Yeah, for sure.

00:03:42:02 - 00:03:45:19

When we're talking about training, it's really evolved over the years.

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We're now we have remote training options and in-person and hybrid options even.

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So how do you think it's really evolved over the years

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and has it become more of a necessity now, would you say?

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Or what are your thoughts on that?

00:04:00:13 - 00:04:04:09

Well, so before I was a trainer, when I was a manager,

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especially a young manager, somebody thought it was a really good idea

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to make me a manager in my early twenties, I don't know what they were thinking.

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That's a great idea. To tell you the truth.

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So, I mean, what it was is it's very similar to a lot of people.

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I, I had success in a role.

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So you know, typical is okay well you're good at doing the job,

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so why don't you lead Some people do without necessarily

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recognizing totally different skill set, leading people versus

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you know, I was good at selling who's good at some of the things I did there.

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And so

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I think as

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far as training and evolving in that, you know, I've been the trainer here

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for five years and so, I mean, we just went through code.



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So obviously there is some evolution there.

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We were essentially a 99.9% in person training operation

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to going 100% virtual.

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And we like to joke in our department that we have a five year plan

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to get to maybe 25 to 30% virtual.

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And the five year plan became a five week plan and it went 100%.

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So I would say that was obviously a big thing.

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But I think even prior to that and over the years, I was always,

00:05:21:18 - 00:05:25:09

I would say, like a learning junkie, something I learned from my dad

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if he was the most unbelievable, self-taught person I've ever.

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I mean, he was always just learning and open to that.

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And he was he was a self-taught engineer, which is not very typical.

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And so and he was an entrepreneur.

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And, you know, his

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dad wasn't a business owner or anything, so he had to learn a lot of that.

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So I think probably the biggest difference and I even hear it

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now, some of the older participants will come in, our class will offer about

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they'll they'll refer to the classes like a seminar.

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They'll use certain weird lingo. Yeah.

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And also that well, like this seminar, I'm like Jay or, you know, it's

00:06:04:14 - 00:06:08:01

sort of like the webinar saying people will call our Zoom training webinar.

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I'm like, This is not a webinar.

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And so for everything.

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So I think a lot of it is people are used to more

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in the past, maybe a little bit more of the seminar thing

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where there was a spectator element and we just that's not our brand.

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We don't, you know, adult learning methodology, right?

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You involve the learner.

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So I think



00:06:29:15 - 00:06:31:17

I would have loved a lot more of that.

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I got value training.

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I did that.

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Several things that I actually teach now that we share at MRA

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are things that I learned, you know, from folks long time ago.

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But I think it's a little different how we.

00:06:44:08 - 00:06:45:12

Yeah, talking about.

00:06:45:12 - 00:06:48:16

And you just mentioned your older participants

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and we've actually had a lot of conversation on the podcast.

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Generational differences.

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And so how does that really play a role in training?

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Like how do you train for different generations?

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I like to say with generations, if you actually lay out

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everything that we think is generational and I used to do this

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activity in the classroom, we had a class where we can teach

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and specifically on generation and people would go around

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and they would write things

00:07:17:11 - 00:07:20:19

they think of with different generations on flip charts.

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And then I would have them go back around and I would say,

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I want you to mark next to each one what's actually

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what you think is a true generational difference

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versus mature and not maturity

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and immature versus mature, but just like time on the earth.

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Yeah, mature and experience and all that.

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And it was crazy because we would have 75% of the chart would be mature

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where yeah that's not really right You know, you take my baby boomers,

00:07:50:14 - 00:07:53:16

you know, we think of certain things that we would say younger all, well,

00:07:53:19 - 00:07:56:15

you know rebellious teen will listen to authority and all that Well,

00:07:56:21 - 00:07:58:22

anybody paying attention to the 1960s,



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it's a lot of stuff of rebellion and that going on.

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So I think a lot of the stuff we think is

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generational has more to do with just how much experience.

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So when people come in the classroom with some of those differences,

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I think a lot of it is

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a lot of it is sort of their expectations and experience.

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And so what I try to do is, number one, just understand.

00:08:27:19 - 00:08:30:09

And now it's a little easier for me because I do have a little bit of that

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shared experience with, you know, folks who've been around for a while.

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And so I remember the command and control bosses,

00:08:38:00 - 00:08:41:16

the ones that come in and I say that because I said so.

00:08:42:15 - 00:08:45:20

And whereas younger people, that's maybe a little more foreign,

00:08:46:02 - 00:08:48:16

you know, it's a little bit more collaborative environments.

00:08:48:16 - 00:08:52:03

And then and so just sort of working to

00:08:53:14 - 00:08:55:10



some might say, to

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try to bridge that gap is

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I don't really necessarily buy into the old school, new school.

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You know, we hear that a lot.

00:09:03:22 - 00:09:06:03

Like, yeah, old school, new school.

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What I say is there's things we've gotten away with in the past, right?

00:09:09:16 - 00:09:14:08

So when unemployment is double digits, people move jobs.

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It's a little different, right?

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We haven't had that for the last few years.

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Definitely an employee market in terms of their services.

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And so we do things different because of that.

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I think good leadership has always been good leadership right

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through throughout time.

00:09:28:06 - 00:09:31:02

And so I try to bring, no matter what the generation or try

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to bring the training back to what's what's just the right thing we should do.

00:09:34:09 - 00:09:36:00
Yeah, that's a good point.

00:09:36:00 - 00:09:40:12
So this next question is probably a hard one to answer because there's probably

00:09:40:12 - 00:09:45:09
so many things, but what is really your favorite part about training

00:09:47:06 - 00:09:47:21
or coaching?

00:09:47:21 - 00:09:49:11
Others. sure.

00:09:49:11 - 00:09:51:18
I like the people

00:09:52:20 - 00:09:54:12
I would love to say.

00:09:54:12 - 00:09:56:16
So I've been in a lot of different industries.

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It's when you read my bio.

00:09:58:14 - 00:10:01:12
Yeah. Wow, insane.

00:10:01:12 - 00:10:04:06
Who would ever have a career like that, right?

00:10:05:06 - 00:10:09:07
And part of it is so looking back, I'm not a, you know, the widget.

00:10:09:07 - 00:10:12:06
And is that still a term? Yeah, right.

00:10:12:14 - 00:10:13:14
I'm not a widget.



00:10:13:14 - 00:10:15:18
I can get excited about anything.

00:10:15:20 - 00:10:19:16
I got an economics professor gave us this, you know, thing.

00:10:19:16 - 00:10:22:22
It's how a pencils made and and a particular reason

00:10:22:22 - 00:10:25:01
why you had to read that book. It's like two pages.

00:10:25:01 - 00:10:26:07
It's. It's amazing.

00:10:26:07 - 00:10:28:23
I mean, there's 17 different products and all this.

00:10:29:06 - 00:10:31:04
I'm get excited about anything.

00:10:31:04 - 00:10:36:05
I've always considered myself on the people side, on the relational side.

00:10:36:12 - 00:10:38:07
And so obviously that's

00:10:38:07 - 00:10:42:12
why I moved into management, you know, business ownership and that,

00:10:43:01 - 00:10:46:08
but not because I'm I can get passionate about any product.

00:10:46:08 - 00:10:48:12
For me, the thing that's constant is people.

00:10:48:12 - 00:10:51:08
And so with training, it's the same thing.

00:10:51:08 - 00:10:54:09
I get as much sometimes





00:10:54:09 - 00:10:56:22

more from them than than vice versa.

00:10:57:15 - 00:11:00:04

I love that it's different.

00:11:00:04 - 00:11:03:00

Every year is different. People in the classroom.

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I go out and do on sites at companies and get to meet people and just,

00:11:07:21 - 00:11:12:00

you know, and so many similarities at same time running, conflict,

00:11:12:04 - 00:11:15:05

all things, miscommunication, all that.

00:11:15:12 - 00:11:17:13

But just the people element is so different.

00:11:17:13 - 00:11:19:12

So I yeah, I love that part.

00:11:19:12 - 00:11:24:05

And kind of going off of this question do you have any fun stories you can share

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like success stories from people you've helped or coached or trained?

00:11:29:17 - 00:11:33:06

My favorite thing to have is when people contact me

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like linkedIn to enter through email and they're like,

00:11:36:17 - 00:11:40:19

not even like, Hey, it was a great class, but I have this problem.

00:11:41:00 - 00:11:41:17

Can you help me?



00:11:41:17 - 00:11:43:15

You know, just interested what you think.

00:11:43:15 - 00:11:46:09

And I eat that stuff up. I love it.

00:11:47:14 - 00:11:49:22

And I

00:11:50:05 - 00:11:54:05

probably the one that to this day, the class I taught that had

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the most universal is not what you would necessarily think

00:11:58:19 - 00:12:01:21

because you think conflict management or coaching, you know, this kind of stuff.

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So I had a company i did training for and their HR Manager

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actually was in a class we teach here and half day class called business email.

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Okay.

00:12:11:08 - 00:12:14:11

And he was in there and he comes up to me at the end of class, he goes,

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we have to do this in our company cuz we got lots issues, right?

00:12:19:04 - 00:12:19:14

Yeah.

00:12:19:14 - 00:12:23:21

And I would say you get offenders, just people who do like this stuff,

00:12:23:22 - 00:12:25:18

like the reply all yeah, right.



00:12:25:18 - 00:12:29:20

From everything or CC everybody in the company is we got lot.

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So it's just you know can you come out and he said, but here's the challenge.

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We have 75 people I want to put through this training

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and our room fits 25

00:12:39:01 - 00:12:43:12

and I don't have the budget to do three half days.

00:12:43:12 - 00:12:45:14

Can you do a one hour version?

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I was like, that's that's a lift.

00:12:47:19 - 00:12:48:12

No, that's.

00:12:48:12 - 00:12:50:13

A little bit sorry, Let me see.

00:12:50:13 - 00:12:51:13

I'll work it out.

00:12:51:13 - 00:12:54:20

It's a little more presentation, but there's still some interaction stuff.

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But I'm like, okay, let's hit the highlights.

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And we went through I got done with that class

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and I imagine there was four, six months after another company



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also sent some of their other managers to other training.

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I heard more positive feedback about a business email class.

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Yeah, Mike It's changed the culture, how people aren't doing the stuff

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that drives me crazy. Yeah. Anymore. Right?

00:13:18:08 - 00:13:19:07

It's all these things.

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And I thought, well, it's communication, right?

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I mean, even though we call it

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business email, it's really like communication issue.

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And so I would say I get a lot of great feedback, but that class to this day

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just stands out as the one probably like you changed their company culture.

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Well, that's got to be a great feeling though.

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You'll all be like, What was it?

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It does.

00:13:37:09 - 00:13:39:22

just of all the classes. Business email.



00:13:39:22 - 00:13:42:15

One hour presentation, right?

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Yeah, well, it has a great effect on people. So.

00:13:46:23 - 00:13:50:16

So how do you really keep people engaged in your trainings?

00:13:50:16 - 00:13:52:15

How do you keep them interesting?

00:13:52:15 - 00:13:56:08

Like you said, some of them are half days, some of them are full days.

00:13:56:08 - 00:14:00:16

How do you keep people energetic to learn throughout the day?

00:14:01:21 - 00:14:04:06

Well, one thing and you can probably if you talk

00:14:04:06 - 00:14:08:02

to any of the instructors around here, we would all say the same thing.

00:14:08:02 - 00:14:11:18

We're tired at the end of the day, so you have to bring your energy.

00:14:11:18 - 00:14:13:10

Yeah, that's a big part.

00:14:13:10 - 00:14:16:03

And one of the things for me and this is just something

00:14:16:03 - 00:14:20:06

I bring from management, I'm not necessarily that, you know,

00:14:21:07 - 00:14:24:10

hi, you're bouncing off the walls and I'm not.

00:14:24:15 - 00:14:26:00

Eeyore either, right?



00:14:26:00 - 00:14:28:01

I try to be pretty consistent.

00:14:28:22 - 00:14:33:15

I think the biggest thing is, is I'm having conversations with people.

00:14:34:01 - 00:14:38:01

So probably the biggest thing I would say in in the sessions

00:14:38:01 - 00:14:41:11

I do is we're just we're working through material.

00:14:41:18 - 00:14:42:06

Right.

00:14:42:06 - 00:14:48:00

But I told the classes, you know, I want all the questions.

00:14:48:23 - 00:14:51:20

I don't want everybody leaving here with something that didn't get asked.

00:14:52:06 - 00:14:54:09

And I tell them this, trust me, I'm good enough.

00:14:54:09 - 00:14:55:13

I'll get us back on track.

00:14:55:13 - 00:14:55:18

Yeah.

00:14:55:18 - 00:14:58:03

And hopefully, you know, we'll get there.

00:14:58:17 - 00:15:01:23

But the biggest thing is, you know, it's interactive.

00:15:02:03 - 00:15:07:18

So we are I'm asking questions, looking for those interactions,

00:15:07:18 - 00:15:12:23

those answers we do a lot of obviously with adult learning, we do activities.



00:15:13:01 - 00:15:13:08

Right.

00:15:13:08 - 00:15:16:04

Well, I just start a class this week on conflict management.

00:15:16:04 - 00:15:20:10

I literally hand them scenarios and sit down in groups

00:15:20:10 - 00:15:25:14

and they role play out conflict and so we do

00:15:25:14 - 00:15:28:22

a lot of things that keep it interactive and then we debrief those things.

00:15:28:22 - 00:15:31:01

But I think the big thing is just,

00:15:31:06 - 00:15:34:17

you know, don't to me, it's not a stage anymore.

00:15:34:17 - 00:15:35:13

It's not an event.

00:15:35:13 - 00:15:37:13

It's just it's training.

00:15:37:13 - 00:15:38:11

It's coaching.

00:15:38:11 - 00:15:41:06

It's no different than I would do one on one with somebody.

00:15:41:13 - 00:15:43:04

It's just with a. Group of people.

00:15:43:04 - 00:15:43:21

Yeah.

00:15:43:21 - 00:15:45:21

I like the point that you brought up on.



00:15:46:19 - 00:15:49:19

The participants have to bring their energy to like it's

00:15:49:19 - 00:15:54:02

a two way thing, you know, like if you want to attend a training,

00:15:54:02 - 00:15:57:17

you got to be ready for it and do your homework and prepare for it.

00:15:57:17 - 00:16:00:10

And if you want to get a good outcome from it.

00:16:00:10 - 00:16:01:17

So that's a good point.

00:16:01:17 - 00:16:06:18

Well, they're managing people, so you're not going to sit down and coach

00:16:07:04 - 00:16:11:01

one of your employees just, hey, come on in here.

00:16:11:01 - 00:16:13:10

Let's just have a random conversation.

00:16:13:10 - 00:16:14:21

You have a plan.

00:16:14:21 - 00:16:16:20

So I have a plan when I walk in the class.

00:16:16:20 - 00:16:20:15

But at the same time, my plan includes a lot of flexibility

00:16:20:15 - 00:16:24:20

because every class is different and I think people can tell

00:16:24:20 - 00:16:28:02

when you have that, people can tell the difference between can training.

00:16:28:02 - 00:16:30:22

And I think that's really MRA's this is what we do.

00:16:30:22 - 00:16:33:17





Our instructor staff is unbelievable.

00:16:33:23 - 00:16:39:09

We, we, we might teach the same material, but I don't know that

00:16:39:09 - 00:16:44:03

we ever teach it exactly the same way, because every class is different.

00:16:44:03 - 00:16:46:22

As we close out our episode for today,

00:16:47:12 - 00:16:49:22

the title of this episode is Spring Training.

00:16:49:22 - 00:16:51:08

It's time to Win.

00:16:51:08 - 00:16:54:23

So how would you say that you train to win?

00:16:56:03 - 00:16:58:06

That is an interesting question. Yes.

00:16:58:20 - 00:17:02:05

So I've never had winning as a goal.

00:17:02:05 - 00:17:04:00

I actually think it's terrible.

00:17:04:00 - 00:17:06:21

Winning as a result, training to win,

00:17:07:11 - 00:17:10:04

managing to win, whatever you are.

00:17:10:04 - 00:17:11:23

PARTICIPANT Anybody in it.

00:17:11:23 - 00:17:15:07

What I tell them is do the things that lead to winning.

00:17:16:04 - 00:17:17:05

In football.



00:17:17:05 - 00:17:19:09

There are situations where

00:17:20:21 - 00:17:24:00

at the end of the game we lost a game

00:17:24:07 - 00:17:27:10

and I will tell the team you played a tremendous game

00:17:28:06 - 00:17:32:21

and there are other games where we won by 38 points and I'm not happy

00:17:33:10 - 00:17:37:13

because we should have won by 50 because just level and the talent there.

00:17:38:00 - 00:17:43:06

I don't ever gauge it on anything but for my people, right?

00:17:43:06 - 00:17:46:17

So because I know if I'm a good manager or if I'm a good coach,

00:17:46:17 - 00:17:50:21

I know what the levels and abilities of my people are.

00:17:51:03 - 00:17:54:20

So sometimes the scoreboard is your worst enemy

00:17:55:02 - 00:17:57:05

when it comes to coaching or teaching

00:17:57:08 - 00:17:59:07

because you look up and you're like, Hey, we won the game.

00:17:59:07 - 00:18:03:17

It's great and it's like, But does that mean you actually did your best, right?

00:18:03:17 - 00:18:06:00

There are some situations where in football

00:18:06:00 - 00:18:08:01

you just weren't talented, right?

00:18:08:06 - 00:18:12:22



There's some cases where I've coached employees that are so easy to coach.

00:18:13:04 - 00:18:16:12

You know, I've coached those rock stars where it's literally

00:18:16:17 - 00:18:21:18

I could be a semi terrible manager and they're still gonna have success.

00:18:21:20 - 00:18:22:17

And then I've had people

00:18:22:17 - 00:18:27:00

that took every ounce of every technique and everything that I knew.

00:18:27:06 - 00:18:31:03

So for me, if you want to win, if you want to have success,

00:18:31:10 - 00:18:36:19

figure out what things you need to do every day that lead to that.

00:18:37:01 - 00:18:39:15

And then what happens, happens.

00:18:39:15 - 00:18:42:14

And yeah, do I believe in KPIs and measurements?

00:18:42:14 - 00:18:44:04

Yeah, I was in manufacturing.

00:18:44:04 - 00:18:46:19

Clearly, we have to have those,

00:18:46:19 - 00:18:50:03

but those measurements should be based off of the things you're doing

00:18:50:03 - 00:18:53:18

on a regular basis, not just that thing at the end of the year, the month.

00:18:54:01 - 00:18:57:02

So it's just, you know, coach your folks,

00:18:57:12 - 00:19:00:00

you know, lead by example,



00:19:00:02 - 00:19:03:20

do those things all day, every day lead to success.

00:19:04:01 - 00:19:06:06

And then scoreboard is what the scoreboard is.

00:19:07:06 - 00:19:09:14

Oh, well, that's great advice to anyone.

00:19:09:14 - 00:19:10:22

So thank you for that

00:19:10:22 - 00:19:14:19

and thank you for being on 30 minute Thrive today and sharing your knowledge,

00:19:14:19 - 00:19:18:23

your background, your expertise on coaching and training.

00:19:18:23 - 00:19:23:03

So if you liked our chat today, make sure to share this episode.

00:19:23:03 - 00:19:27:05

Leave a comment review or rating in Consider joining MRA.

00:19:27:05 - 00:19:29:10

If you aren't a member already.

00:19:29:10 - 00:19:30:14

We have all the resources

00:19:30:14 - 00:19:33:08

you need in the show notes below, so take a look at those.

00:19:33:18 - 00:19:38:01

And we've also included Mike's bio email and LinkedIn profile.

00:19:38:01 - 00:19:41:16

So if you want to get in touch with him, sure, he'd be happy to connect

00:19:42:17 - 00:19:44:00

all of them that.

00:19:44:00 - 00:19:46:15





EPISODE 30

Spring Training: It's Time to Win!

Thanks for tuning in and we will see you next week.

00:19:46:22 - 00:19:49:16

And that wraps up our content for this episode.

00:19:49:17 - 00:19:52:21

Be sure to reference the show notes where you can sign them to connect.

00:19:52:21 - 00:19:54:12

For more podcast updates,

00:19:54:12 - 00:19:58:07

check out other MRA episodes on your favorite podcast platform.

00:19:58:07 - 00:20:03:06

And as always, make sure to follow MRA's 30 minutes Thrive so you don't miss out.

00:20:03:07 - 00:20:06:06

Thanks for tuning in and we'll see you next Wednesday to carry

00:20:06:06 - 00:20:07:21

on the HR conversation.