

# Preparing a work-ready youth

By Michael Kline

As I conduct training programs for local employees, I find a few common threads. I discuss many of them in this column and often I take aim at employers, because that is most of my audience, and I urge them/you to take full responsibility for creating an environment and culture for success. That said, I see in the classroom, as well as in the local business where I shop, that we have a shortage of well-qualified, well-trained ready to work employees.

In spite of state, local and school district efforts, the challenge of finding work-ready employees seems to be top-of-mind to employers I meet. I am told that coming out of high school, many teens seem to lack any work ethic. I disagree; I think they lack a sense of responsibility, goals and training. The results are the same, so let us stop blaming and consider what we can do about it. If you own or manage a business in the Valley, your livelihood may depend on finding or cultivating your own better workforce.

Imagine a workforce where employees are clear about their goals and are self-motivated to reach them. The goals are broken down into manageable "how much, by when" segments allowing them to get it done with ease because the big picture is clear and concise.

Even if they do not want to have a lifelong career in hospitality, retail or customer service, they see the value in learning new skills, expanding their knowledge, and saving money to support the pursuit of their personal vision for the future.

Imagine customer service improved because employees are motivated to create a better experience for both themselves and the customer because they understand that the way they respond to events directly impact positive outcomes.

A workplace where interpersonal relationships between coworkers improve because they connect with each other authentically and appreciate all each of them brings to the team.

As my regular readers know, I have been involved in Jack Canfield training for a while now. My local friend Trish Jacobson introduced me to Jack's programs. While I have been incorporating many of these principles into my work with individuals and business clients, Trish has been busy working with our youth. This last winter, she applied the Jack Canfield's Success Principles to a local ski school. By approaching each day with a sense of passion, purpose and clear vision of the outcomes she wanted to create, she was able to develop a cohesive team of dedicated people that took pride in their involvement in the bigger picture. Their sense of personal responsibility, willingness to learn, and their communication skills all greatly improved throughout the season. The staff bonded through their shared mission of impeccable customer service, which showed up in resort surveys directly measuring aspects of customer service and satisfaction. I should mention that about half of her seasonal staff was under the age of 25.

When she is not on a mountain, Trish works with young people through the White Mountain Community Health Center Teen Clinic and Community Outreach programs. She and her team make a significant contribution to Carroll County having one of the lowest teen pregnancy rates in the entire US. In 2010 she began incorporating some of the same principles into her health curriculum. In 2014, she founded the Pathways to Success for Youth Project. Her vision is to develop a classroom and online curriculum, which includes solid principles of success, elements of passion and purpose, tools to build self-confidence. At the same time, the program will help clear self-limiting behaviors and beliefs and instill a foundation of personal responsibility, goal orientation, taking action and entrepreneurial skills.

Clearly, the Pathways to Success for Youth is onto something - something big. This has the potential to transform education, our workforce, and create endless positive ripple effects. Trish Jacobson, youth leadership colleague Mikayla Cerney and I will all be on Jack Canfield's assisting team in Scottsdale AZ in August for a weeklong Breakthrough to Success training program. This program retails for \$3500 per person, and the Canfield Training Group has donated eight student scholarships to Trish's program. I hope as a community, we can raise the travel and lodging costs to invest in eight of our local high school students to experience this truly transformational program first hand. How different my own life would have been if I knew as a teenager, what I learned in this program at in middle age. For more information about helping our youth prepare for a more responsible adulthood, visit [www.pathwaystosuccessforyouth.com](http://www.pathwaystosuccessforyouth.com).

Michael Kline is a Certified RIM Facilitator and trainer for personal and group transformation. You can reach him through his website [www.intus.life](http://www.intus.life), or e-mail, [mike@intus.life](mailto:mike@intus.life).