

Neil Mullarkey - Improv-Ability

A workshop for Leaders, Coaches and Consultants

25th March 2011

"Join us for a day of improvisation, fun, humour and serious learning with the gifted Neil Mullarkey. Neil co-founded the Comedy Store Players, Europe's top Improv group and in recent years has been bringing his work and the power of improvisation to the business world. He stretches your mind, re-shapes your thinking and makes you laugh."

Paul King & Marie Faire

Organisations are a bundle of conversations. The question is how to make these conversations more constructive? Each interaction will be unique if it truly is a conversation rather than one party "sounding off". Good conversations require elements of both planning and the nimbleness to work with whatever emerges. This is where the skills of "improv" can make a difference.

Improvisation is an important talent in uncertain times. It can enhance team-work, creativity and innovation, as well as general relationship and presentation skills.

Improv is the shorthand for a form of theatre which has been around since the 1920's. It has a "Yes, And ..." ethos which is all about co-creation. You have to keep your eyes and ears open, fully aware of what the other performer is giving you as an "offer", consciously or unconsciously. You have to feel comfortable with ambiguity, and uncertainty. Neither of you are in control, yet you still share responsibility for the outcome. (Necessary qualities and familiar scenarios in today's world.)

Improv is a discipline which celebrates the idea that more options are open to us through collaboration than through "trying harder" on our own. Making your fellow player look good creates a dynamic, positive energy.



"Work at the top of your intelligence; we are all supporting players; avoid judging what occurs, focus on what you can contribute,"
Del Close (one of the founding fathers of Improv.)

Saying "yes" is scary and means you have to trust your fellow player. Fear tells you that you may be dismissed as mad, bad or wrong. But once you give up such doubts you will be seen as none of those.

This workshop is all about participating. Neil will demonstrate the skills and there will be a host of exercises in pairs and groups where you can grab the chance to find your inner improviser. It may even surprise you to find the power of "Yes But ..."

This workshop will help you:

- Trust your unconscious
- Enjoy ambiguity
- Use your body with the confidence of a performer
- Use the power of humour
- Re-energise your passion for conversation
- Understand what "re-incorporation" means

John Cleese's favourite book on creativity is "Hare Brain, Tortoise Mind" by Guy Claxton. The "hare brain" works fast, is logical, and can show its working. The "tortoise mind" is slow, doesn't even know what questions to ask nor how to justify why it thought of something. But it is the one that remembers a name an hour later, or suddenly thinks of something in the shower or while driving. Improv creates a hare approach while leveraging tortoise creativity. It can quickly access the unconscious mind, using "left brain" techniques to encourage the "right brain".

There can't be many people who have worked with both Mike Myers (Austin Powers, Wayne of Wayne's World and the voice of Shrek) and Frank Farrelly creator of Provocative Therapy.

Neil's unique blend of improv, Forum Theatre and Provocative Therapy may well leave you in stitches yet it will give you a whole new set of tools and a sense of boldness whatever role you find yourself in.



Neil Mullarkey co-founded the *Comedy Store Players*, Europe's top improv troupe in 1985. His credits include *Whose Line Is it Anyway*, *I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue*, *QI*, *Have I Got News For You*, and *Austin Powers* movies.

For the last decade he has been working with organisations such as Microsoft, KPMG, Saatchi & Saatchi, Astra Zeneca, Umbro, Unilever, UK Sport, and Deloitte's using improvisational theatre to enhance leadership, communication and creativity skills. His experience in management training led him to create his award-winning alter ego, L. Vaughan Spencer, whose book *Don't Be Needy - Be Succeedy: The A to Zee of Motivability* is published by Profile Books.

He is a trustee of The Comedy School Charitable Trust and a patron of One World Action.

"Neil took a class of 108 Cambridge MBA's - hard-nosed, rational and highly sceptical about their individual ability to create - and transformed them. His use of improvisation (both theory and practice) made for one of the most inspiring and provocative sessions on creativity that I have ever experienced."

Richard Hytner, Deputy Chairman, Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide

"Neil Mullarkey delivered (yet another) simply stunning seminar, using his immense experience and knowledge of Improv and its applications in commerce to delight all present. His charm, wit and graceful delivery were infectious; every delegate was captivated, enraptured, enthused and keen to participate, and throughout the rest of our conference the techniques (and games) that Neil introduced were enthusiastically practised in every corner. It's rare to find a combination of commercial value and fantastic entertainment, but Neil delivers both of these to an extraordinary degree. Brilliant!"

Mark Austen, Managing Director, Office Club

Workshop Date

25th March 2011

Workshop Fee

£275+VAT

Early Bird Fee for bookings and payment by 24th February 2011 - £240+VAT

Cancellation Terms

There will be a 50% charge for cancellations received within 21 days of the seminar and 100% charge for cancellations received within 10 days of the seminar.

Venue

St Bride Foundation
Bride Lane
Fleet Street
London
EC4Y 8EQ

Booking

Please send a cheque made payable to The Beyond Partnership Ltd and send it to 2 Holbrook, Bromham, Wilts, SN15 2DH or contact us for an invoice

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See also www.thebeyondpartnership.co.uk