



LIFO (Life Orientations) Training

What is it?

Life Orientations Training (LIFO) is an applied behavioral science system which fosters individual and organizational productivity. It starts by having individuals, pairs or groups identify their basic orientations to life. These are called Supporting-Giving, Controlling-Taking, Conserving-Holding and Adapting-Dealing.

With the orientations as reference points, six LIFO strategies for growth and greater productivity are suggested. These are called confirming, Capitalizing, Moderating, Bridging, Supplementing and Extending.

Underlying the Training is Life Orientations theory. It has its roots in psychoanalysis, self-actualization theory, client-centered therapy and group dynamics. The science behind the theory, developed by Dr. Stuart Atkins, has evolved over a forty –year period.

LIFO is an acronym for Life Orientations. LIFO is a tool for learning more about yourself, about communication, and about how to better relate to others. This is a tool that helps you look at your behaviors, and how your behaviors are a result of how you see the world or your orientation to the world. LIFO helps you to understand what your particular life orientation is and how it governs everything you do. It also shows you the strengths and excesses of your orientation and explains that you can choose to work more with your strengths and moderate your excesses.

LIFO is different from Myers-Briggs in that Myers-Briggs provides insight into personality. LIFO is about behavior, - learned behaviors that are based on your orientation to the world. LIFO orientations are seen as four generalized forms of functioning, and as optional ways of successfully coping with life. They are psycho-social choices to cope with the adult world. That means that you can choose to change your orientation or you can choose to broaden your orientation. With Myers-Briggs what you're given is what you are for life. It is the definition of your personality which doesn't change.

The LIFO survey, which is taken at the beginning of the training, tells us which of the four orientations is our predominant orientation, our way of looking at the world. These four orientations are the basis of our choices and actions. By knowing our game plan and the game plans of key people in our lives, we can improve our strengths and theirs as well. With the knowledge of our game plans, we can influence and communicate with others faster, more clearly and with greater impact. Also, by knowing which game plan we prefer least, we will have answers to why we are vulnerable to making major mistakes or overlooking important opportunities in our lives. Simply put, success and failure revolve around our use and misuse of our game plan.

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