

Unit 5.1 Defining Your Past

OVERVIEW

Some people think of the past as something that's fixed and absolute. But just like our current "reality," our past is subject to definition and interpretation. Indeed, how we define our past can have a very significant effect on the shape of our future.

To see how, try this exercise. Make a list of ten things that you have done well in your life. It doesn't matter if those things occurred yesterday or in the sixth grade. List those things that made you feel strong inside yourself. Then, two times a day, look at each item on the list and remember how you felt when it occurred.

When you do this, you're strengthening yourself by reiterating your success. You're also coloring your future with a constructive emotion. For the most part, we generally pass over our successes too quickly and too lightly to assimilate them. So you need to spend more time reflecting on things that you accomplished because you need that inner strength in order to create a better future.

After you've made a list of good things from your past, next write a list of ten things that didn't go so well. But instead of dwelling on the events themselves, focus on how you recovered from them. Then use that emotion to help you to overcome a challenge that you may be facing today.

UNIT QUESTIONS / EXERCISES

1. Think of a time when you were very successful in accomplishing a particular task. How did you feel inside? What did you think about yourself? Share your answers with your coach and/or the group.

2. Now, think of a time when things didn't go so well. How did you recover from your failure? How did you feel after you had gotten back on track? Discuss your answers with your coach and/or the group.

3. Think about how this applies to your work relationship at John L. Scott. Think of a recent incident in which your organization or team performed less well than it should have. How did your group recover from that incident? How did you respond the next time a similar situation arose? Discuss your answers with the group.
