

I'd love to share a funny and painful experience of my own. When I was studying in NYC, I was asked to organize a China-US international communication program at the West Point, NY. Before the program starting, we asked all the program-related Chinese employees to the US, in order to get along with the professors and employees of West point. We also invited some Chinese governors who taken in charge of international programs between China and foreign countries to West Point as well. Because the two sides' employees did not know each other very well, we decided to organize an orienteering, as an ice breaker training, to help employees get familiar with each other.

The orienteering idea was great: we randomly divided employees in groups, and asked them to climb a rocky mountain with a bag of rocks which weighed 80 pounds. In this case, employees would learn how to teamwork and better assist and understand each other. We also asked the chancellor of West Point to give a speech before the orienteering to let Chinese employees have a deep understanding of the West Point spirit.

However, many problems occurred during the ice breaker program. First, the orienteering was designed as a military training of West Point. There were no protection and the rocky mountain was very steep with jagged rocks, which scared most of the Chinese employees, include myself, to death. Some of the employees refused to continue the orienteering, and we took a long time to persuade them to move on. In addition, some of the employees and governors were at their middle age or elder. The orienteering to them seemed like a mission impossible, and some of

them failed to complete the orienteering and stuck in the mountainside. And we had to ask the cadets of West Point to help them down the mountain. Moreover, the speech was not successful. As in West Point, when the chancellor was having a speech, the audiences were not allowed to take pictures or eat. However, in China, taking pictures during the speech is very common, and sometimes it is a good way to show respect and agreements. Because of the cultural diffidence, the chancellor was unhappy and stopped several times during the speech due to the interruption of camera flashlight.

There were a lot of more funny stories during the communication program. Every time I recall this experience, it brings me laugh and tears. I was stressed and overworked during that month, but I also learned a lot and started to understand the importance of cultural differences. After reading the article (The New Teacher of Adults), I agree with Michael Brady's idea that good teaching is good teaching. Sometimes student's difficult behaviors are not caused by teachers' skills or the students' learning abilities. It might be the ill-designed program itself that lead to a miserable result.

From my personal experience, if I were in charge of CD within an organization, I would like a collaboration of both external consultants and internal managers to serve as career coaches. Comparing with the internal team, an external consultant can bring an objectivity perception to the organization that might be unattainable from its own staff. In addition, outside consultants are more experienced and professional in presenting a CD program. Also, they are able to get extra information that the organization needs from its employees. It is because employees within the

organization are always looking for benefits and information of their own jobs or their coworkers and departments. In other words, it could be hard to get employees to give full aspects that the organization is possessing. However, consultants, as an outsider, would find this information much easier.

On the other hand, extra consultants may not understand the organization's culture and its employees' needs. Without facilities and communications within the organization, the CD programs could cause cultural conflicts, and the CD programs might not applicable for the organization. Therefore, to design a good CD plan needs the collaboration of both extra consultants and employees within the organization.