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BOOK REVIEW for Enneagram Monthly (July 2004 Issue)

***Bringing Out the Best in Yourself at Work:
How to Use the Enneagram System for Success***

By Ginger Lapid-Bogda, Ph.D. (McGraw-Hill 2004)

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If you had an opportunity to catch any of Ginger Lapid-Bogda's workshops at the IEA Conferences over the past few years, you know what a lively and engaging presenter she is. Her workshops are largely experiential, with a clear brief setup for each activity, followed by some feedback. Despite this pedagogical approach, I've been amazed at how much I came away with each time!

So I was delighted when I had an invitation to review Ginger's upcoming book *Bringing Out the Best in Yourself at Work: How to Use the Enneagram System for Success*. I found it written in the same lively, engaging style. Her setups are still clear, though more elaborate, supplemented with real world examples, leading to exercises and experiments to help you experience the material in your own life – a learning approach that moves from experience to understanding to evaluation (a progression that would make Bernard Lonergan's eyes twinkle.)

Ginger's agenda is to show how the Enneagram styles show up at work and, ultimately, how to bring your better self to work (not necessarily implying that you save your worse self for home). Drawing on 30 years of experience as an organizational development consultant, Ginger counsels how each style can communicate more effectively; how to provide better feedback to others; how to prevent conflict or, once it has occurred, resolve differences successfully; how to create and participate in highly productive teams; how to understand that your greatest leadership strength can become your greatest weakness and what to do about this; and how to develop a customized method for transforming yourself. To paraphrase Daniel Burnham, the architect of Chicago's lovely lakefront: "Make no small projects."

Ginger begins with a brief introduction to the Enneagram followed by a chapter dedicated to discovering your Enneagram style. Inviting readers to reflect on their own experience, she provides exercises to identify strengths and weaknesses and to recognize emotional patterns, which she links to the three centers (head-heart-gut) and then to the nine Enneagram styles. This initial identification is confirmed by further reflection on the personality characteristics, focus of attention, and worldview of each style. Finally, Ginger asks the reader to delve a little deeper into the Enneagram by exploring their neighboring styles and the internal and external movements of each style under stressed and relaxed conditions. It's a good, brief introduction to the Enneagram styles, offering helpful suggestions for self-awareness and understanding.

With some sense of your style, and with the realization that yours is not the only way of being in the world (though it may seem closest to the ideal), how do you go about communicating with other styles?

In this chapter Ginger provides mini-portraits of each type's speaking style, body language, blind spots, and distorting filters. For example, Ones communicate in a precise and exact manner, intensifying their phrases with *shoulds* and *oughts*, carrying their message in a taut body with focused eyes, sometimes unaware of their anger and impatience, and filtering others' comments for criticisms and incorrectness. She then presents a program for becoming aware of your communication characteristics and offers suggestions for changing your behavior.

Since good communication involves giving constructive feedback, Ginger next describes the general process for giving feedback and then tailors this by advising how to manage your own Enneagram style behaviors while giving specific feedback to the other styles. For example, Fives might not want to give feedback that is so concise that others don't know what they're talking about nor give feedback that is so convoluted that others don't care what they're talking about. And while they're giving feedback to Threes, they might want to frame it in ways that can be translated into concrete successful programs and goals.

Because there are at least nine different (not to be confused with wrong) ways of perceiving and doing things, conflict would seem to be a constant companion. Ginger has a helpful chapter on how to deal with *pinches* (minor annoyances) that may lead to *crunches* (big gripes). She describes how each style reacts when pinched and crunched and how to approach them under these conditions. So Sixes may withdraw, worry, and scrutinize if they have been questioned and are best approached in a non-pressuring, warm, validating manner.

Avoiding ruffling feathers is a good start toward team building but now how do you work together to build the nest? Using a case study of a team retreat, Ginger shows concretely how to introduce teams to the Enneagram (and to each other); how the natural group stages of forming, storming, norming, and performing evolve; and how each Enneagram style experiences these stages. One of the longer chapters in the book, it's well worth the read for understanding group development and dynamics.

Next Ginger devotes a chapter to leadership and shows how each style's strengths can forward a process and how the overdoing of these strengths can become weaknesses that derail a project. So Twos are naturally supportive, generous, likeable, and empathic but may derail an operation by being unwilling to say no, by being unaware of their own needs, and by being too accommodating.

The final chapter is on transforming yourself. Concrete recommendations are offered for each style for transforming maladaptive or less-resourceful mental and emotional patterns into higher, more resourceful beliefs and dispositions. Through daily activities and practices, Ginger demonstrates how you can move from repetitive, automatic cognitive and affective reactions to the freedom and grace of the higher intellectual and emotional centers. For example, Sevens can shift from laying out multiple paths and taking every fork in the road they come upon to staying the course, doing what they are doing, and paying attention to the work at hand.

In the May, 2004 issue of the *Enneagram Monthly*, Ginger wrote that she wished there was a book available that integrated the wisdom of the Enneagram with the action-oriented theory and practice from the field of organizational development. Now there is such a book. Well done, Ginger. May this introduction of the Enneagram to the workplace bring about a fruitful, productive union.

Ginger Lapid-Bogda, Ph.D. (Santa Monica, CA) has been an organization development consultant for over 30 years and works with companies such as Disney, GE, Proctor & Gamble, McDonald's, Sun Microsystems, Time Warner, and Hewlett Packard, as well as service organizations and law firms. Ginger is the current president of the IEA. She can be contacted at (310) 829-3309 or ginger@bogda.com. www.TheEnneagramInBusiness.com