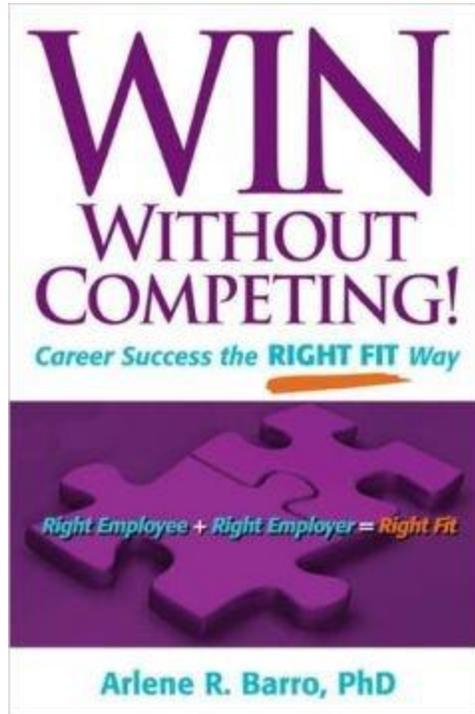


Conquering Stress! With Dr. Arlene — Expectations Cause Stress



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By Dr. Arlene Barro

Expectations and erroneous assumptions are cousins. Frequently, expectations are erroneous assumptions. Are your expectations erroneous assumptions? Let us find out.

The Deadly Duo

Expecting and assuming can be a lethal combination which ignites stress. Standards play an important role. We want others to match our standards. This could be a challenge. For example, if you are highly organized and expect others to act accordingly, you could encounter the deadly duo. Expecting others to arrive on time is a common erroneous assumption. Either select people who are like you or use this strategy.

Depending on how late the person arrives, state an earlier time. If the person usually arrives 30 minutes late, schedule the appointment for 30 minutes earlier. Arrive at the same time that you scheduled the other person. Hopefully, you will both arrive on time. I have used this strategy with my clients and have been delighted with their results.

Let me know how my strategy works.

Another example. When the doctors told my father that he had seven months to live, he did not accept the verdict. The medical evaluation turned out to be an erroneous assumption based on a faulty expectation. They failed to take into account my father's attitude. Fortunately, my dad who taught me as a child to "know your body" knew that his time was not up. Instead of waiting to die, he continued working in a profession he loved, as a cantor in a synagogue. He lived and performed for seven years not seven months. He had positive expectations and made no assumptions. Be prepared for the unexpected. The right attitude can have an amazing result.

Wait for What

I mentor my clients on how to use my Right Fit Method to "WIN Without Competing." I have observed them use the deadly trio: expectations, erroneous assumptions and speculations. They do all three things concurrently, as they are trying to figure out what to do next, They share with me what they have been saying to themselves, which are speculations rather than actions. I ask, "What are you waiting for?" Find out what they are thinking, stop speculating, and take action to eliminate undue stress.

For example, a man and a woman were living together for five years. The woman is my client. She wanted to have children, but required marriage to do that. She was reluctant to discuss her feelings with her partner. Finally, she was ready to talk with him. What did he say? He said that he found someone else and was leaving her. Early on in a relationship find out with whom you are dealing. Delaying speaking up often is not the right strategy. My client was stuck with stress, anger and frustration. She blamed herself for spending five years with a man whom she expected and assumed would marry her. Unfortunately, she started working with me shortly before her relationship collapsed. Avoid the deadly trio.

The Stress Syndrome

Stress is a sly fox. All of a sudden, so it seems, an array of stress symptoms appear. One leads to another and suddenly we have a stress syndrome. Recently, I gave each of my clients a checklist of common stress symptoms. They were surprised to learn how much stress they had. I was not. I knew that some clients deny stress, hoping it will magically disappear. Chronic stress will jeopardize your health. You must manage it. Are you in touch with your stress or denying it?

Assess your stress and read my invitation to my upcoming seminar, "Conquering Stress With Dr. Arlene Ignites Success" on Wednesday, May 10 or Thursday, May 18. See more on the Conquering Stress page on www.winwithoutcompeting.com. At the end of the event, you will have a toolbox stuffed with strategies and a Conquering Stress Plan to implement.

Questions? Email drbarro@barroglobal.com. Responses could appear in her next column.

Dr. Arlene Barro, the creator of the Right Fit Method, is a UCLA-trained behavioral educational psychologist and professional speaker. She is the author of WIN Without Competing!, a business, career and personal strategist and founder/CEO of barro global search, inc. on 10940 Wilshire Boulevard, Westwood. Episodes of her radio show are available at www.winwithoutcompeting.com.