

# The Enerpace PaceSetter

February 2024: "Yes, and..."



## We Grow Agile Leaders Who Grow Purpose-Driven Firms

Hello Subscriber,

This month I had the pleasure of hearing Kim Hiller, Owner/Director of [The Laughing Academy](#) speak at the Professional Women's Club of Chicago. Kim is a teacher, a professionally trained actor and a graduate of Chicago's Second City Conservatory, where Stephen Colbert was one of her teachers!

Kim now teaches improv techniques to people of all ages, and took us through several fun exercises. Improv has the power to shift the energy in the room, relieve anxiety - by helping us practice being comfortable with not knowing what's going to happen next - and is great for teamwork! In fact, Alan Alda teaches improv techniques to scientists (even at NASA!), to help increase their creativity and ability to communicate their important work.

My biggest takeaway were all the applications for business and teams. It's great for brainstorming, because the 'yes, and' technique requires us to find the gift in the idea shared, before we add to it. There's no right or wrong in this type of creativity. It requires a commitment to the idea and the team. A 'yes, and' doesn't mean you agree. It means that you're in partnership, exploring their reality and adding your own.

With clients, we frequently discuss powerful communication and the techniques that bring someone's brain towards you and your message. Saying 'yes, and...' allows the communication and exploration to continue, whereas a 'no' response shuts it down immediately.

Let's say your boss suggests something that you know has at least 3 huge problems to solve before there's any way it can work. You might say "Yes, and we'll have to come up with a work-around for a, b & c".

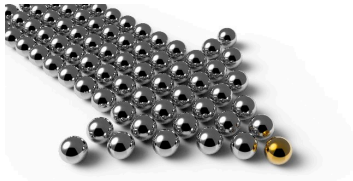
Before improv troupes go on stage, they put their hand on each person's back and literally say "I've got your back". Imagine what that mindset shift could do to create trust on a business team!

In fact, in improv, you can only look good by making each other look good. They accept, and actually expect, that mistakes will happen. They're just seen as opportunities to be used.

Finally, improv focuses on underlining INTENTIONS instead of facts. One of the ideas we explore in coaching is the concept of 'presume positive intent'. It offers another lens through which to look at an experience, AND a new way to show up with our colleagues. What other explanations are possible to explain somebody's actions if we presumed positive intent, instead of taking automatic offense?

What can you say 'yes, and' to this week? Hit reply and let me know!

Elene



**"If somebody offers you an amazing opportunity but you are not sure you can do it, say yes - then learn how to do it later!"**

Richard Branson (1950 - )

Entrepreneur, Author and Co-Founder of The Virgin Group



## Leadership Learnings

### Eight Principles of Improvisation Teach Us About Leadership and Life

*Institute for Generative Leadership*

This article nicely summarizes and ties together some of the key improv lessons for leaders!

## Career Management Corner

### Three Ways Improv Comedy Can Improve Your Listening Skills

*Kathleen Taylor-Gadsby, Forbes*

Most of us think to be great at improv, you need to be quick on your feet and able to respond instantly to whatever is thrown at you. In actuality, the key to improv is active LISTENING, something that's very hard to do if you're in your own head crafting a response.

Check out these ideas to become a better collaborator and listener – and how important it is to be able to listen to what is NOT being said!

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### **Upcoming Events & Enerpace News**

Powerful Communication is essential to individual, team and company growth!

Elene contributed to the Medium article, *"Giving Difficult Feedback: Strategies and Techniques"* at the end of 2023.

[Read More](#)

Great conversation and discussion on Thursday, 2/22 when Elene was a panelist discussing *"Succession Planning for Continuing Businesses – Straight Talk for Owners & Successors from a Panel of Experts"* at the Union League Club of Chicago (ULCC).

It all boils down to the strength of your leadership team! Enerpace turns your leaders and teams into exceptional leaders and teams. Hit reply to learn how we can do that for you!

[Succession Planning for Continuing Business](#)

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## Enerpace Expert

'M\*A\*S\*H' star Alan Alda is helping scientists to make science more accessible using improv

Vani Khokar, *Upworthy*

Alan Alda knows how to be a better communicator and deliver a message clear enough so everyone understands.

[Hear Alan share the power of simple improv exercise](#), which helped a doctor move past the jargon to make a true connection with a critically ill patient.

[Read More](#)



## Great Books

*5 Conversations: How to transform trust, engagement and performance at work*

by Nick Cowley and Nigel Purse

This book helps improve professional communication by providing guidance and templates for the 5 most important conversations everyone needs to master at work. From addressing unhelpful behavior to aligning expectations, we refer to this book weekly with our clients.

Enerpace's own Diana Atkins has trained on all 5 conversations in companies of all sizes. Hit reply if you'd like to bring these workshops to the people-managers in your company!

[Read More](#)

## Need a People Plan to Make Your Business Plan a Reality?

**We have Solutions for Individuals, Teams & Entire Companies**

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