



# How Real Colors Helps Me Deliver Consistent Results

By Peter DeArmond, Kern Delta Communications

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Practitioners in the field of training and performance-improvement understand that no two organizations are exactly alike. Each has a different mission, a different culture and, especially, different kinds of issues to address.

This is why, in most cases, a one-size-fits-all training program usually is not the answer. For example, before jumping right into any “solution,” a true professional consultant will always want to conduct a needs assessment first. This helps determine the root cause of a problem, or even discover and acknowledge a larger issue that should be resolved. Then, the consultant can design an intervention to address the issue (*such as customized training, executive coaching, or something else*) and develop an evaluation plan that gives measurable results to determine how effective the intervention is.

As one might guess, this scenario doesn’t happen very often. Company leaders are naturally reluctant to invite an outsider to come in and probe the guts of their organization. Performance assessments are quite invasive, and so are training programs. Company leaders who feel they already know what problem needs to be addressed will contact a trainer to deliver their solution, not to invite more questions about the cause of the problem.

With all this in mind, let’s switch gears and visit the real world. I am one of those practitioners who is both a performance consultant and a facilitator. My company, Kern Delta Communications, offers organizational analysis and custom-made solutions, including training. But it’s not unusual for me to hear a potential client say, “I heard you were a good trainer, I’d like you come in and deliver some (fill in the blank) training for us.”

That scenario used to be problematic for me. Sure, I’d think, I can deliver training, but how do I know it will really make any difference in your organization? If it doesn’t have a positive impact, it’s my professional reputation at stake.



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**Real Colors delivers the positive impact my clients seek**

Creating a positive impact is where Real Colors has been an exceptionally effective solution for me. For years I've observed that no matter how different organizations are, and no matter how different their cultures and issues may be, the foundation toward any meaningful solution always starts with building effective communication skills. Before I do any training for supervisory skills, team-building, customer service, stress management (*the list goes on*), I always begin with sessions on developing interpersonal communications.

That just happens to be the heart and soul of Real Colors. Participants in a Real Colors session gain real insight into their own temperament type, and they learn all about the temperament types of others. What do they have in common? How are they different? How do you communicate effectively with someone whose temperament type is the opposite of yours? In other words, participants learn how to "*speak in the language of the listener, and listen in the language of the speaker.*" The beauty of it is how it's delivered through experiential learning activities that are incorporated into each Real Colors session.

Through the many Real Colors sessions that I've facilitated, one of the most satisfying results I always observe is how participants begin to accept each other for who they are. It's like a light bulb goes on, and they realize that no matter how different they are from each other, with a little practice and a conscious effort, anyone can replace one-way communication with meaningful, interactive communication. It's not unusual to hear participants say that some problem they used to argue about is now something they can laugh about. There's nothing more gratifying to my ears.

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### **Real Colors provides opportunities for me to expand my business**

Because of the effectiveness of Real Colors in my workshops, when a client asks me to deliver training, I don't hesitate to say yes, so long as I can begin the training with Real Colors sessions. From my personal experience, I know it will lead to successful training in any other category, with consistent results. *(And, I might add, Real Colors does offer training modules for supervisors, team building, and many other categories.)*

As for the ideal scenario in which the performance consultant in me wants to conduct a needs assessment first; I still prefer to do that, but my name isn't Ken Blanchard, Paul Hersey or Spencer Johnson. I can't rely on a great national reputation to open up channels to an organization's top leadership.

However, I have found that Real Colors provides me with sort of a "back door" access to high levels in an organization. For example, earlier this year I facilitated Real Colors sessions at Fullerton Community College and Cypress Community College, which are part of the North Orange County Community College District in southern California. Very positive feedback from the sessions was communicated to the administration. As a result, I've been invited back to facilitate more sessions at the colleges — but also new sessions for the district administration office. Where that will lead is anyone's guess right now, but the point is, gaining positive "word-of-mouth" will grab the leadership's attention. It's only when there is a perception of trust that I can begin to have a conversation with leadership about other issues that may concern the organization. They didn't know me as an outsider, but now they trust me as someone who had a positive impact on their workforce. So Real Colors is a door-opener that I otherwise wouldn't have had.

In conclusion, when I first entered the field of consulting and training 20 years ago, I tried many different training products and methods. It wasn't until I discovered Real Colors that I found a reliable system based on experiential learning to develop effective interpersonal communications — which, for me, is the foundation for all other training I deliver. I've been using Real Colors for years now, and I recommend it to any facilitator who wants to see consistent, positive results.

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### **About the author:**

Peter DeArmond, a Real Colors certified facilitator, is a former journalist who has a Master's Degree in Training and Performance Improvement. He worked for three

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years for California's Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, and for eight years as director of corporate training and business development programs at the Weill Institute of Bakersfield College. Today he is the "*Fella in Charge*" at Kern Delta Communications.

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