

RESPONDING ACCORDING TO VALUES

Characteristics of a proactive person

Proactive people have three characteristics:

- Responding according to values.
- Accepting responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Focusing on the circle of influence, rather than the circle of concern.

The gap between stimulus and response

We all respond to a stimulus. For example, if you notice an employee doing something inappropriate, that is a stimulus for us to respond. The greater the length of time we take to respond the more effective our response will be. Flying off the handle without a reasoned response is only going to make a bad situation worse.

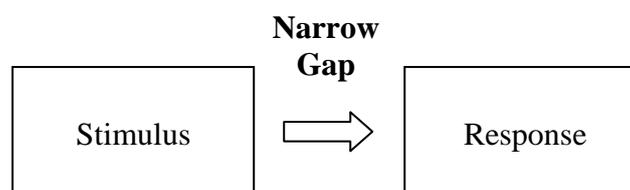
When confronted with a problem an immediate response will be less effective than a well thought out and reasoned response. Problems never seem as big the next morning.

So the bigger the gap between the stimulus and the response the more controlled your response will be and the greater the freedom.

As a point of clarification, procrastinating or avoiding the issue is not responding according to values and is therefore not seen as being proactive.

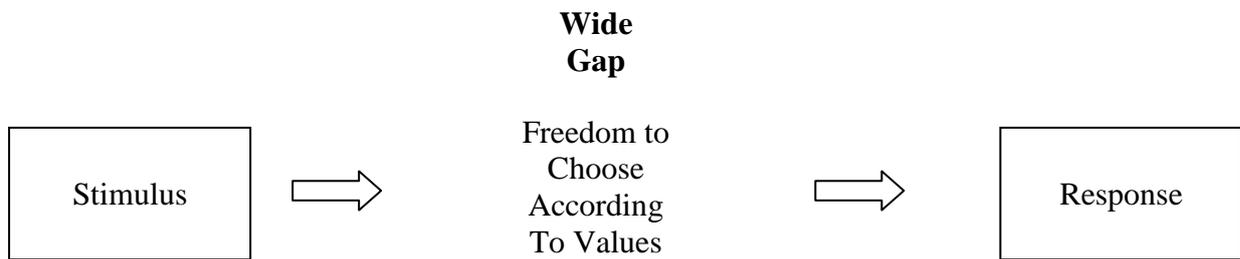
Reactive behaviour

Reactive people allow outside influences such as moods, feelings or circumstances to control their responses. They have a very small gap between the stimulus and the response.



Proactive behaviour

Proactive people use the margin of freedom to make choices that best apply their values. Their freedom to choose expands as they wisely use the space between stimulus and response



Sourced from Stephen Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People"

Habit number 1: Be Proactive.