



QUITE POSSIBLY, THERE'S NOTHING WRONG

OUR "MEGA-PRINCIPLES"

Over the years we have developed our "mega-principles," the set of principles or assumptions from which we in **effective environments** always work. The five mega-principles are as follows:

- There is ALWAYS a way through.
- There is nothing wrong with YOU (or anyone else) — it's your environment that is the key to success.
- Language shapes your reality. The words you say have the power to shape how you view your life, your work, your effectiveness.
- Work from a commitment to be complete. "Loose ends" waste energy, distract from the important things and damage relationships.
- The past is useful for lessons learned; it does NOT determine the future.

These principles are the foundation for the choices we make and the things we say or write. This article addresses the second principles — There is nothing wrong.

"THERE'S NOTHING WRONG"

In the domain of being effective, we offer the mega-principle, "There's nothing wrong," as

a corollary to: There is always a way through. It is important to note that this is not suggested as *the truth*, nor as a reason for complacency and inaction. Even if we view the world through this lens, there is plenty of work to do. Our vision and our commitments will always pull us to invent our own lives, and to create a future in which we have what we need to be healthy and productive.

We use this principle as a consciously-selected context for life. As with our first principle, this one provides a useful place to stand in inventing what is next. If we imagine for a moment that there is nothing wrong, we are empowered to accept the facts, just the way they are. We need not *like* the way it is. However, we can view where we are now as part of the process of getting to wherever we are ultimately headed.

By choosing to consider that "there is nothing wrong," we save time and energy we might otherwise spend berating the universe for being the way it is, or blaming ourselves or others for circumstances that cannot be changed. We encourage ourselves to face facts squarely, assess their relevance to our journey and select new steps to take that are consistent with our commitments. We are empowered to move forward, rather than stand still.

APPLICATION OF THIS PRINCIPLE

Suppose, to take a simple example, I have not turned in my report by the date I promised I would, and my boss is upset with me. In choosing how to view this situation, I *could* decide that this situation reveals something about *me* and how fundamentally flawed I am. I could also have it mean something about my boss — that she is cruel or ineffective, having given me such an unreasonable deadline. Additionally, I could blame my family for taking time and attention I needed to finish this report. I could spend time regretting that the weather became an obstacle to my bringing my report to work. I could even spend time fretting about whether my job is in jeopardy now. None of this is useful. None of it will change the facts. Indeed, it is counterproductive: While I spend time massaging these thoughts, the situation is at a standstill.

If I assume that there is nothing wrong, I am freed up to consider what is needed now, and what my next actions will be. These actions may include making an apology, if appropriate, declaring when the report will be submitted (and then taking the actions to ensure that this happens) or identifying the systems and practices that will allow me to complete my work in a timely manner in the future.

Incidentally, all of THESE actions are easier to adopt if they are a matter of choice — made by an able, effective, fundamentally *good* person — than they will be if they **HAVE TO BE DONE**, because there is something wrong, with me, with how I live my life, or with my circumstances.

This approach is equally effective in dozens of situations — from flat tires to flu, and from delays to “failures.” A time-honored phrase, “attitude determines altitude,” reminds us

that, although we have little choice about our circumstances, we always have a choice about how we will engage with those circumstances.

AND NOW?

As with all our mega-principles, we offer this one merely as a suggestion. We invite you to try it on, work from it for a time — just as an experiment — and notice whether it contributes to your quality of life or to your success. Indeed, we invite you to engage in an ongoing inquiry into what operating principles make a real difference for *you* in designing and living life the way you would have it be.

Copyright 2000
effective environments
3910 N. Blackhawk Road
Silver City, NM 88061
Phone: (505) 534-2121
E-Mail: effenv@effenv.com
www.effenv.com