

This Gift Really Keeps On Giving
Notes from NAAEI's Advanced Instructor Training
by Leah Brewer, CAM, NALP

Feedback is a gift. A wise colleague shared this advice with me years ago and I quote it widely and value the insight. Of course, there are other synonyms for “feedback”: advice, pointer, comment, opinion, criticism, view, evaluation, assessment, appraisal. It is odd how each of these words individually spark either a positive or negative implication. Many of us work hard to avoid being evaluated in our skills, jobs or relationships. However hard it is to see yourself through another person's glasses, feedback truly is a contribution to our continual development.

In November of 2006, I was privileged to attend the Advanced Instructor Training offered by the National Apartment Association's Education Institute. I always enjoy learning and developing. My choice to become a trainer comes from my personal enjoyment of learning from people, publications and predicaments. I was eager to learn yet not sure what to expect from this “Train the Trainers” workshop.

Attendees were at various experience levels in public speaking and I quickly acknowledged an “aha!” revelation. Those attendees with less experience had less to unlearn, change and relearn! A few professional speakers like me, who took this course, struggled somewhat with ingrained habits and embracing the benefits of changing to match the prescribed material. And those of us who did acquiesce....benefited and admitted it! Through use of better information flow, clearer objective statements, and thoughtful openings and closings, this program made me a better speaker and presenter.

Evaluations and feedback from the course instructors and from industry colleague attendees truly opened my eyes to new views and ideas. I was able to field-test new presentation techniques with immediate feedback and step-by-step unravel and then restructure my presentations.

I now have been through the Advanced Instructor Training six times as attendee, Auditor, Junior Instructor and now Team Instructor. With every new class, I have the privilege to both give and receive feedback and constructive evaluations that encourage us all to commit to a higher standard of speaking and facilitating. Now I and each of the other attendees promise to give back to our local, state and national apartment associations by teaching designation courses and custom material. I encourage anyone who is actively teaching designation courses, or who wishes to someday facilitate them, to participate in upcoming NAAEI's Advanced Instructor Training offerings. Remember, feedback is a gift and with any gift, you have to receive it gladly and thankfully to get the full benefit.



Leah Brewer, the Leasing Queen, has over 24 years of hands-on experience in multi-family housing and established Full House Marketing® in 1995 in southeast Michigan. She has grown from a leasing consultant to a consultant for leasing and marketing. Leah presents fun, interactive and informational workshops nationally, designed to produce and inspire immediate results. Call 1-888-FULLHSE or visit www.LeasingQueen.com