



## THE COMMON GROUND DISPATCH

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### **Congratulations! We've Successfully Changed Organizational Culture... And It Only Took a Two-Day Training.**

*Because sometimes, if you don't laugh, you'll lose your mind.*

Well, congratulations, everybody! We've done it! We've successfully changed organizational culture... And it only took a two-day training! Who knew it could be so easy?

The attendance sheets are signed. The certificates have been handed out. The evaluations are complete. And somebody in administration has already checked that little box marked, 'Training Completed.' Hell, we might even get an award!

And let's not forget the logistics. Somebody worked their tail off arranging the whole thing. Travel approvals, room reservations, registration lists, dietary restrictions...

Some of us flew across the country. Others brought the trainer to us. And one unfortunate group got sent to Alaska. In December. Apparently, organizational culture changes faster at twenty below zero.

But the hotel was nice. The coffee wasn't terrible. And for once, the projector actually worked. I mean, really. What more could you ask for?

**Oh, right. Actual change.**

Now, don't get me wrong. I've attended some terrific trainings. I've delivered a few myself. And sometimes you walk away with an idea that genuinely changes how you see your work.

But then Monday morning rolls around. The phones are ringing. Somebody called in sick. Three reports are overdue. And that brilliant idea everybody loved on Friday? Well, it's sitting underneath a stack of paperwork, right next to the certificate.

Now, let's not kid ourselves. Some people genuinely want to learn something new. Others are hoping to find one idea that makes their work a little easier. And some just want that certificate, the box checked, and the whole thing off their plate.

And sometimes, that's exactly what the system rewards.

How many people attended? How many completed the training? How many clients did we serve? Important numbers. Absolutely. But did anything actually change?

Well, that's a little harder to fit into a spreadsheet.

And here's something we don't always talk about.

The frontline worker comes back wondering how the hell they're supposed to put all those new ideas into practice. Their supervisor is wondering how to make room for those ideas while keeping everything else running.

The director is trying to produce better outcomes without another dollar in the budget. The grant officer wants to know whether public money is actually making a difference.

And the trainer? Well, the trainer is probably hoping somebody remembers something besides what was served for lunch.

Here's the thing. They're all carrying a piece of the same burden. And sometimes they're so busy carrying their own piece that they don't see what everybody else is carrying.

And we haven't even mentioned the people receiving the services. You know... the people all this work is supposed to be about? They might have a few ideas of their own about what needs to change. Imagine that.

Maybe lasting change isn't something any one person can make happen alone. Maybe we need to understand what each of us is trying to accomplish, what's getting in the way, and what we need from one another.

**Maybe that's where we find a little common ground.**

**And of course, we can always schedule another training.**

***I hear Alaska's lovely in December.***

