

LEARN. KNOW. GROW

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The Subtle Art of Giving Advice

Advice. We all love to give it but taking it from someone is not really a moment of triumph for many of us. It does not occur to us that most times, the right advice from the right people can be fruitful for us. Now, we can only wait and pray for people to come to their senses and realise the value of advice, but till then, a few of these subtle ways of giving advice can be very useful.

Use the sandwich method: This is the classic way of giving advice to someone. You start with a compliment or areas that they are good at, then, in the middle, you mention the advice that you have for them and lastly, you top it off with another appreciation. This way, they don't get offended and you get to give out your advice too. For example, giving feedback to your colleague about their work could go like, "I really liked the way you designed the colour theme of the presentation, though I think the use of more pictures would take it to the next level, but the way you presented it filled in the lacking, good job."

Provide solutions: If you are giving advice to someone, the first reaction they have is that, "Well there is no better way to do it." So, to refute this statement, you should always have a proper solution ready to back up your advice.

Avoid personal attack: Getting advice on something that someone is insecure about can trigger them in a wrong way. So try not to get personal while giving advice. Just address the situation and how it can be bettered without pointing flaws in the person's abilities.

Read the situation: This one I can't stress enough. There is a place and time to give advice. Don't go to your colleague to give advice after s/he was just scolded by their boss. Read the situation. See when the person is not vulnerable and then politely share your thoughts with them.

Don't compare: Comparisons will almost always backfire. No one likes to know someone else is better at doing something that they are not really too good at. So without naming anyone, just say how they can do better.

As tricky as it can be, when advice comes from a good place, it can really help people grow in life and build a better future for themselves. I meet many people every day, and they share their struggles with me. As a trainer, my job is to advise them without making them feel even worse about themselves. In my experience, these above mentioned caveats always helped. Hope they will help you too.

TRAVELOGUE

A Cretan holiday

I knew little of Crete while making my travel plans. The tickets were cheap, I had never been to Greece before, and was advised against my initial choice of Corfu; people were quick to inform that the waters would be too cold to enjoy a dip, even in June.

So, I was off to the ancient city of Chania, hoping to soak in as much Greek culture as I possibly could in a week.

I soon discovered that while Cretan culture did for the most part align with mainland Greece; it boasted a distinct heritage of its own. My first meal, a dish known as Bougatsa, evidenced this diversity — layers of delicate, hand-rolled phyllo sheets, an item commonly used in Greek cuisine, enveloping a filling of mizithra, sheep's milk cheese of ricotta-like consistency unique to Crete. Next on my list was the Dakos salad — another Cretan speciality — consisting of a barley rusk topped with tomatoes, mizithra, and copious amounts of olive oil.

The feasting, of course, did not stop there. There was moussaka, the beloved meat and eggplant casserole; souvlaki, grilled meats on wooden skewers;



kalitsounia, cheese-stuffed, deep-fried pies; and boureki, zucchini and potato-filled phyllo pastries.

My personal favourite was the Cretan lamb stew. Slow-cooked in traditional earthen pots over a flame, not dissimilar to our own mutton curry.

Desserts were always on the house; I was delighted to find, after every meal, a slice of cake or chocolate pudding, or yoghurt with fruits brought to the table.

Greek islands are renowned for their beaches, but I was nevertheless unprepared for what I encountered in Crete. At the Elafonissi beach, waters were amazingly blue, and what was perhaps even more astounding, the sand had a soothing pale pink, caused by broken down corals and shells of sea-creatures.

The drive to Balos Bay, another fixture in every must-see-in-Greece list, was a

treacherous one. The Bay is situated about an hour away from Chania, but a large portion of the journey was on unpaved, gravel roads on steep cliff sides that looked straight into the vast seas, roads with frequent twists, and turns and with no safety railings. And once we had driven to our destination, it was another half an hour of trekking down the mountain to get to the beach.

Now, was it worth it in the end? Absolutely!

The views on the trek down were jaw-dropping; white sands meeting a shimmering turquoise sea, a massive lagoon with shallow, clear waters, and best of all, hardly any tourists to spoil the scenery — an advantage of going in early-June instead of peak summer.

I could not say how Crete compares to other Greek islands, but I will say most emphatically that it has the whole package of a rich culinary tradition, stunning coastlines, warm, gentle waters perfect for a swim, friendly locals, and most importantly, free desserts with every meal!

By Tonima Hassan

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