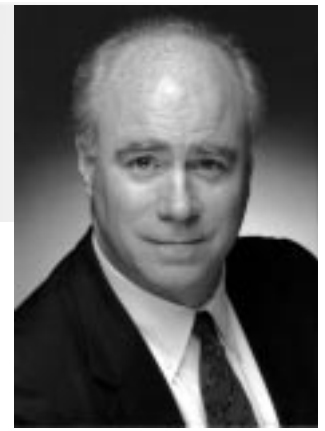


The Coaching Corner

with

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Building Trust Through Involvement

In the last Coaching Corner, we talked about the Road to Hell being laid by a lack of trust. For our purposes let's define trust as a "firm reliance on the integrity, ability, or character of a person or thing." (*The American Heritage Dictionary*). How does a leader develop trust? Simply stated...get people involved.

People want to know what is expected of them so they can have a sense of meaning and importance. Mopping floors may not seem like a terribly motivating job, yet when its purpose is closely tied to something important, it will motivate people. Consider the janitor at NASA who, when asked what NASA is all about (in 1969, just prior to the first moon landing) responded instantly "Sir, we're going to put a man on the moon and bring him home alive." He didn't say that because President Kennedy said it earlier in the decade. He said it because he and his fellow employees and their boss talked about it all the time. This boss constantly stressed the meaning of their work.

Most of us we like to finish what we start. There is a feeling of accomplishment that comes with a job well done. Sometimes it is hard for employees to see what it is they

outshone the rest of the division!

Now this group didn't reach their goal, you say. No, they didn't but their goal was a huge challenge that no one else even came close to meeting, and they just missed by a hair. Challenge is another component that motivates us and engenders trust. Now you cannot simply challenge and then walk away. They need your guidance and leadership. They need the right resources and equipment to get the job done. And they will probably need your help in removing obstacles to their success. They want the opportunity to do the best work they can, and it's your job to help them do so. Keep people challenged and you help keep them motivated. Allow them to do the same thing over and over again, and you allow them to fall into a job with no challenge.

So you have set the vision of what is to be accomplished, you challenge them, you measure their progress and talk with them about how they are doing, you get them the tools and resources they need to get the job done. Now show them the respect they deserve and let them do their job. We all deserve respect. What they must earn, and you must provide, is recognition for a job well done. I know a CEO who passes out Tootsie Roll Pops for a job well done. For big accomplishments there may be bonuses, recognition dinners, parties, etc. Whatever it is, it is up to the boss to do it. It is out of this recognition, when combined with establishing

meaning, providing resources, giving constructive, helpful feedback on progress, and challenging your people, that employees develop a deep sense of affiliation. We all want to work on a good team, with good people, and for a worthy cause. When people readily affiliate with one another they are there not only for the recognition and celebrations, but for the defeats and setbacks as well.

Have we missed some components of building trust in our employees? Probably, but I hope this short piece will get you thinking about all the various duties and responsibilities you have and how they fit together into your leadership style and your ability to generate trust among your staff.

"How does a leader develop trust?"

are working so hard to accomplish, so it is vital that we (the leadership) measure results and talk about them (good or bad) to everyone. A client of mine recently had a major deadline along with several other managers, who were all handling different aspects of a major project. My client was the only leader to set up a scorecard on the company's intranet where his managers updated their progress daily towards goal completion and where anyone could visit and see the progress being made. When the deadline arrived they had achieved 98% of the steps necessary to complete their goal. The nearest other group had reached about 55%. He involved his people and kept them fully posted on their own progress, and they

"There's no limit to what the average person can accomplish if thoroughly involved."

—Tom Peters