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Leadership Skills Training: How to Engage Employees & Lead from the Heart

By Joe Hubbard



When working with successful companies, over the years I have noticed there is a common denominator: awareness. These companies encourage their employees to notice what isn't working. They empower them to take action and correct any deficiencies.

On the other hand, I've worked with many companies where employees make flying under the radar an art. Ultimately this leads to a dysfunctional environment where an organization slows or even stops achieving its stated mission or goal.

In an effort to solve the problem, these companies spend thousands of dollars to engage a myriad of consultants who often have difficulty resolving the problem.

Why?

Because it's something no one wants to talk about.

Why employees are afraid to communicate organizational problems

For example, I recently worked with a large Neutraceutical Company whose products weren't being delivered on time. This greatly affected revenue and repeat business. The President was frustrated and couldn't seem to determine who or what was at fault.

Here's why...

1. **Nobody was willing to speak up and courageously communicate the deficiencies they observed.**
2. **Employees, at all levels, closed their eyes, their ears and ultimately, their mouths.**
3. **They disengaged.**

When I came in and began to have conversations with a number of people, I discovered there was a lot of fear that if they spoke up there would be negative repercussions. There was also a group of employees who simply became too comfortable with mediocrity and didn't want to do anything that might create more work or expose their deficiencies.

Once we were able to uncover these core issues and make them tangible for the company's president, he immediately empowered his employees and actively recruited and hired proactive and courageous managers. Within a matter of months the company began to re-align with its mission and achieve all of its stated objectives. This is not a unique example.

How silence is costing your business

A study was done at Harvard University investigating the "Cost of Silence." They looked at both Enron and 9/11 and realized that, collectively, people had the information necessary that could possibly have averted what happened. But they were unwilling to communicate it.

They discovered that many people have a fear of speaking up because they think there will be consequences. Interestingly, what the Harvard researchers also found is that the consequences of avoiding communication are much greater than those for speaking out. The cost to your bottom line is much greater.

This conflict avoidance principle that is prevalent in Government and Corporate America right now is drastically impacting our effectiveness and our relevance. It has disabled so many of our corporations that people walk away from taking the courageous stance.

Now that I have empowered you with this information, I have a question for you...

Are you willing to put your heart on the line and take strategic, intuitive and educated actions that are in alignment with your company and for the greatest good for all concerned?

I ask this because the heart is the barometer by which one determines what their next best move is. When I use the term "heart" in this way it is not meant as a romantic idea. It is courage personified.

About the author:

Vice President of Business and Leadership Development for Business Insight, Joe Hubbard helps large corporations find direction, stay the course, realize goals and discover fulfillment. You can find out more about Joe and his work at <http://www.insightinbusiness.org> and learn how to lead from the heart in the game of business and life.

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