

JUICY WORK NEWS

Updates from The Learning Advantage

October 2017



THE Learning Advantage

Friend,

Mobley's Musings

Competition is valued and almost a hallmark of the United States culture. It is touted as the reason for the success of American businesses. Top business schools made competition an integral part of their curriculum by pitting students against each other and using a normal distribution to assign grades. When I went to Harvard Business School, no more than 10% of each class could get the highest grade (Excellent) and 5-10% got the lowest grade (Low Pass) regardless of how well they did, with the middle of the pack getting Satisfactory. Many years ago Harvard was criticized for turning out smart leaders who did not work well in teams or with peers. They decided to introduce more team projects to focus on collaboration.

When does competition become unhealthy and stifle creativity? When people look out for the team and each other, risk taking and creativity increase. I was impressed at how one of my leaders encourages collaboration. Instead of doing performance management and having his managers fight for their people, he does performance development. His managers identify their high potential talent, and they work collaboratively to define skill development opportunities for each person. Many of the managers coach people in the other groups, so there is a sense of shared ownership. They also identify people who are struggling and determine if there might be another job where the person would excel or if the person isn't a fit for the company. Instead of having to fight for the few Excellent's in the organizational grading system, all employees feel cared about and developed.

Think about when you were most creative – was it in a competitive or



Job Fit: Should I Stay or Should I Go?

I know work is a four-letter word, but does it really have to be this painful?

During my years of coaching, I've heard many clients express this sentiment. And that's a shame. I believe work should be joyful and fulfilling. When a client is unhappy at work I want to get to the root of the problem right away, before she or he does something rash, like telling the boss to "take this job and . . ." well, you know the rest.

In diving deeper to find out why a client is unhappy, I often find our discussions revolve around "fit." Is the job not a good fit for my client, or is my client not a good fit the job? Three recent clients—all unhappy at work—presented three different issues around job fit.

[Read more.](#)

collaborative situation?

Sandy.



Sandy Mobley

Ask Sandy

Adam wants to know how to change a negative perception. He feels he has improved, but people still remember when he was hard to work with.

It can be difficult for people to see the change because we tend to remember things that aren't working. Do you notice your air conditioner when you are comfortable or when you're too hot or cold?

For Adam the difficulty started when he was stressed over too many proposals. He is a pricing specialist for a large consulting firm and three major proposals with complex pricing hit at the same time. His team was

down a person due to maternity leave and he had no back-up support. In those meetings he was cranky – borderline rude – and made some senior people uncomfortable with his behavior. Now things are back to normal and he is a model of professionalism and warmth, but people still remember the bad behavior. It is affecting his performance evaluation and chances for promotion, even though the behavior never happened before that time or since.

Given that people don't tend to notice when things are working, my tip is to find a way to call attention to the good behavior. I suggested that Adam ask a senior person who attends his meetings for mentoring and feedback. Tell the person that you went through a stressful period and that your behavior suffered. You realized the need to change and have worked hard to correct it. Ask if the person would be willing to observe and give feedback at the end of the meeting. Of course, Adam's behavior will be positive and the senior person will notice it. Adam will have made a positive impression by acknowledging past mistakes, addressing the problem, asking for feedback and showing improvement.

This process may need to be repeated with several of those who saw the bad behavior, but in time the old perception will be forgotten.

Learning for Leaders – Don't let a negative perception linger. The longer it is held, the harder to change.

Coaches Corner – Share tips to help clients overcome negative perceptions.

If you have questions you'd like Sandy to address in future newsletters,



Upcoming Events

Workshop

October 25, 2017

9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

EDIN Network Meeting in
Washington, D.C.

Coaching Clients to More
Fulfilling Careers

For more info, email:

jgillins@ambitionllc.net

email them to sandy@learningadvantageinc.com

WWW.LEARNINGADVANTAGEINC.COM

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

7200 Michael Place
Falls Church, VA | 22046 US

This email was sent to .

To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list