

JUICY WORK NEWS

Updates from The Learning Advantage

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THE Learning Advantage

Mobley's Musings

What a difference civility makes! On my most recent flight as I sat in my seat after boarding, I was often bumped by other passengers or their bags as they shuffled down the aisle to their assigned seat. I was in an aisle seat but by no means protruding beyond the small amount of space I was allotted. Even the flight attendant seemed to go out of her way to hit me as she charged up and down the aisle. She never even acknowledged that she hit me.

Now, we've all come to expect cramped conditions on airplanes. It's just one of the many aggravations we endure when flying today's "friendly skies." But when an offender took a moment to acknowledge the hit and apologize, I was less irritated.

Are people so busy or stressed that they lose awareness of others and their feelings? Or is overcrowding so ubiquitous that people accept jostling and backpack bumping as the way things must be?

When you think how little time and effort it takes to do something kind – hold the door for someone, offer assistance, apologize for getting in someone's way – and how much better it makes everyone feel, isn't civility worth it?

Sandy



Sandy Mobley

Ask Sandy

Can't We All Just Get Along?

Recently clients have expressed frustration with a lack of cooperation from other groups in their same company. Whether it is a line of business seeking IT support to develop an app or a financial group needing data from other divisions to complete the budget process, integration and cross-department cooperation are essential for any company to be successful.

Most of the time colleagues recognize the interdependencies among departments and willingly cooperate. Assistance is typically forthcoming when the requesting group explains

why the help or information is needed and allows sufficient time for the other group to respond. Groups tend to be less cooperative when they're subjected to frequent last-minute requests, when it isn't clear why the information is needed, and when the requesting group has a history of not reciprocating.

When I ask clients what they do to get support, they first cite positive, team-building behaviors. They reach out to other groups to create good working relationships. They are responsive when another group makes requests of them. And they go out of their way to thank and acknowledge their colleagues when they help them.

When the positive behaviors don't work, they document the lack of support and may escalate the matter to their management or the other group's manager. If their department has room in their budget, they may hire contractors or consultants to do the work the internal groups have declined.

I have found that organizations that conduct 360-degree evaluations of their leaders quickly learn who works collaboratively and who does not. For collaboration to be ingrained in an organization's culture, it needs to be reinforced and rewarded. Promoting the good team players sends a message that the organization values that behavior.

Learning for Leaders – Create a supportive environment by being helpful to other groups. When you can't meet their request explain why and suggest other options for getting what they need.

Coaches Corner – Ask to see your client's 360-degree data or performance evaluations. Ask if collaboration is important in their company and in their role. Work with them to build strong collaboration skills.

If you have questions you'd like Sandy to address in future newsletters, email them to sandy@learningadvantageinc.com



Advancing Your Career in a Tough Job Market

Regardless of the type of job market, your ability to manage and direct your career is an essential skill. Organizations change, so developing your skill set is the best job security you will ever have.

Finding Your Best Work

First, figure out the intersection of three things: what you have passion for, your skills, and the best environment. Work that you do well but don't enjoy will cause burn out or dissatisfaction. Working for an organization you don't believe in or with people you don't enjoy can be unfulfilling. Work that you are passionate about and lack skill in, will surely be a disaster. When you have a strong offer that incorporates all three things, you will have job security.

Start with what you have passion about and make sure you are skillful in that arena. In general, most people are more aware of their weaknesses than their strengths. We tend to take our strengths for granted. Next, ask people you work with--bosses, subordinates and friends--what they see as your gifts. Compile a list and see if the gifts correspond to what you love to do. When we are doing our best work, we cannot not do it - it just comes naturally. Figure out where that skill is most needed. For example, having the ability to look at a business and immediately see where it is at risk is a lot more useful to a venture capital firm than to a conservative, slow moving corporation. Finally, look for environments where you will thrive.

Making Your Offer

The ability to make your offer clear and compelling is the next step. The offer needs to be verbal and in written form. You never know when you will meet someone who can help with your career, so your ability to crystallize what you want into a few sentences can make the difference in whether you get the dream job or not.

Read more.



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