JUICY WORK NEWS

Updates from The Learning Advantage   —— — — *May 2019* — ——

Mobley's Musings–No Mo' No Show

It has been said that eighty percent of success is just showing up. I don't agree entirely with that idea, but lately, I have experienced a number of people just not showing up. They RSVP in the affirmative for social events or sign up for work events and then don't appear. In some situations, the host may have spent a lot on catering, only to have much of it go to waste. And in cases where seating is limited, the no-shows prevented people who really want to attend from going.

What's happening? Didn't their parents teach them good manners? Are people lacking in empathy and only concerned about their own needs? Or is something else at play?

Regardless of the reason, there are some ways to address the problem. One organization keeps tabs on no-shows and doesn't allow them to sign up for future events. Another organization charges a nominal registration fee that helps to offset a no-show's catering cost. One leader has his admin contact no-shows and requests they send a letter of apology explaining their absence. If it's an event at my home, the offenders fall off future guest lists.

Even if that eighty percent guesstimate is wildly overstated, just showing up will always count for something, while not showing up will always count for less than nothing.

Sandy

Sandy Mobley

Ask Sandy

Network of Obviousness

I've sometimes gotten feedback from clients, colleagues, and friends that I speak at too high a level and leave out details that would help listeners understand. In my mind, I'm relaying everything I believe relevant to the conversation and leaving out what I call the "network of obviousness." In talking with clients, I find they've gotten similar feedback. We believe we are being open, clear, and transparent and are surprised when others can't follow our thinking.

What to do? Walking through the context, history, details, and process of my thinking before presenting my conclusions and action items can overwhelm some people. They can get lost in the information and wonder what they need to pay attention to. And analyzing who my audience is, how much they already know, and how they like to receive information is time-consuming and often based on assumptions and guesswork. Try as I might I don't always get it right.

I have found the best way to ensure someone understands my thinking and what I want them to do is, to begin with the goal—explain what I want to achieve—and then provide some context about why the goal is important and maybe how it came to light. I then ask the person to come back in a few days with a roadmap of how they intend to achieve the goal. Knowing where they need to go and what's behind the drive to get there allows them to figure out what they need to do without feeling micromanaged. When I review their roadmap, I can see what they missed or misunderstood and make corrections. But I can also see what wasn't obvious to them and how I need to improve my communications, especially if a pattern emerges in the misunderstandings. Often all it takes is for me to include an illustrative example that helps others "see" what I mean.

Learning for Leaders – Be patient when people can't read your mind.

Coaches Corner – Assess your clients' need for help in this area and offer tips to improve communication.

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

Trust: The Lifeblood of Healthy Organizations

"What, you don't trust me?" Becky asked her boss, Pat, when he told her he needed to get daily progress reports from her.

"Sure . . . I trust you," Pat replied after an awkward pause. "It's . . . my boss. She's a stickler for all this administrative stuff." Becky glowered and walked back to her desk.

I trust you about as far as I can throw you, Pat thought.

When people don't trust each other they spend too much time second guessing motives and engaging in unproductive activities. In a low-trust work environment, "CYA" measures become more important than the task at hand as managers require more paperwork and hold more meetings to make sure everyone is doing what they said they would do.

A healthy, efficient organization runs on trust: up, down and across the organizational structure, people operate with integrity and honesty. But even in those organizations, trust isn't an all-or-nothing proposition. I think of trust as having three levels: Blind Trust (I believe whatever you say), Conditional Trust (I trust you in these ways under these conditions) and Earned Trust (I have a history with you and know that you are trustworthy).

When deciding whether and how much you can trust someone, it's useful to examine the basis of that trust. In *The Thin Book of Trust,* Charles Feltman outlines four foundations for trust: **Sincerity, Competence, Reliability,** and **Caring**.

Looking at trust through these four lenses enables you to better understand your relationship with others, manage your expectations and structure your request for their help.

Sincerity is saying what you mean and meaning what you say.

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