



Mobley's Musings: It's not bragging when it's true

Many of my clients have been preparing year-end self-assessments. Some struggle with self-promotion, having learned well the adage that there is no "I" in team. As a result, senior management doesn't fully appreciate what they have accomplished and what their gifts are. Thank goodness they have a coach to help them!

In our regular discussions, I listen to what my clients accomplished during the year and tease out the bits of brilliance they take for granted. Then I help them see what the future can hold if they capitalize on their gifts. One client told me how she kept getting project teams assigned to her. Instead of being overwhelmed by so many players, she was able to align the teams' goals with her department's overarching goal, reduced redundancy, and established workable processes across the teams. While her colleagues were land grabbing and trying to build bigger teams, she was focused on achieving goals with optimized, streamlined teams. It would be easy for management to overlook her strategic organizational skills, but she made sure they knew and they responded by promoting her and giving her greater authority. She wasn't bragging about her achievements; she was letting her leadership know how best to use her skills.

Another client is great at training his staff. As a result, he is able to hire people who don't have a lot of experience but with his training, they can get up to speed fast. In a year of record growth, he was able to keep up because of the quality of his training.

All too often people take their gifts for granted, assuming everyone can do what they do. When they don't recognize their skills, they miss opportunities to leverage them for their own benefit and the benefit of their organization. This year look objectively at what you have accomplished and let your leadership know.

Sandy



Ask Sandy

Are You a Referee or Teacher?

Leaders are often approached by a staff member or a group complaining about perceived bad behavior by others. But too often, the leader hears the complaint then takes action without hearing the other side(s) of the story. The result is more complaints for the leader to resolve, this time from people angered that their point of view wasn't considered.

When the leader decides to stop running in circles, they'll seek input from others to gain a fuller picture of the situation before taking action. But they're still caught in the role of referee. Usually, one side is happy with the leader's decision and the other is not.

A better approach is to get all the parties together to look at the situation. With all the data, assumptions, and perspectives on the table, each party can see what others see and what they may have missed. This approach teaches group problem-solving, diminishes the need for a referee, and results in learning for all involved. Going forward, this approach can model the process that employees should adopt to resolve issues on their own rather than asking their leaders to address them.

Learning for Leaders: Teach staff to resolve their problems. It will take you out of the referee role and promote learning.

Coaches Corner: Support your leaders in facilitating learning.

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



3 Steps to Behavior Change: Awareness, Commitment, Practice

Change is rarely easy, and successfully changing an ingrained behavior occurs only through a series of steps taken over time. The first step is becoming aware of the need to change. Awareness may come from observing others, receiving timely feedback, and participating in leadership development programs.

Once a person is aware of a skill deficit, the next step is making a commitment to change. The motivation to change may be intrinsic ("I see how much more effective Pat is and I want to improve") or extrinsic ("If I want to be promoted to the next level I need to get better at long-term planning").

The third step in successful behavior change is developing and practicing the new skill. Research says it takes 30 days of continuous practice to build a new behavior and 300 days to embody the new behavior.

When a leader is given the results of a 360-degree assessment, awareness of the need to change may not be fully achieved. When leaders get feedback, they often don't get the full context detailing what exactly is unproductive about the behavior, what is the preferred behavior, what would a change in behavior achieve, and what would the consequences be if change did not happen.

I was working with a CEO of an architectural and design firm who was described to me as having anger management issues. He got frustrated with staff when they didn't perform at the level he expected. In his frustration he would raise his voice and harshly criticize not people. He had gotten feedback before that his inability to manage his anger wasn't good for him or the organization. But he never felt there was a strong enough reason to change.

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