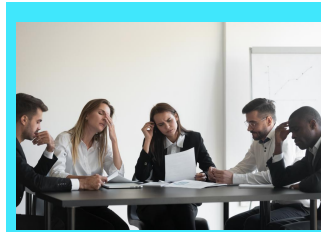


# JUICY WORK NEWS

Updates from The Learning Advantage

November 2023



## Mobley's Musings: Legacy

The news of Matthew Perry's death saddened me, but I was heartened by something he told an interviewer. He said he wanted to be remembered for helping people with addiction. He didn't care about how many movies he appeared in or the popularity of "Friends." He wanted what I think we all want: to make a difference in others' lives.

Whether we create a company that helps people, support worthy charities, or guide our children in becoming good humans, we want to know that our lives mean something. When a client finds more meaning in their work and their life with the help of my coaching, it is immensely satisfying and brings me joy.

The notion of legacy often comes up during coaching. I ask clients what kind of mark they want to leave on this world, in what way would they like the world to be better because of their existence. By encouraging people to consider the deeper meaning of their lives, they embrace a purpose that anchors their lives and leads them to make better choices. Take some time to reflect on what matters to you and consider how that deeper meaning helps guide you.



## Ask Sandy Why Should I Tame YOUR

## Don't Resist Resistance

If there is a corollary to the adage that change is never easy, it's that with change comes resistance. When asked to make a change, people may not see a need for it, they may resent that it's being forced on them, and they may worry it will have negative consequences for them. Sensing a loss of control and security, their guard naturally goes up and resistance takes root.

People who are resistant to a change can take on various behaviors and attitudes. Some become critical and aggressively question the change, insisting you prove — often to absurd extremes — that your idea will work. Others become helpless or act confused; they want more handholding and support from leadership than usual. Some go into denial, hoping to wait out the change or simply ignore it. And some go silent, become

# MONSTER?

When you start a new job, you expect to spend some time learning the lay of the land, identifying sacred cows, and perhaps locating where the bodies are buried. What you may not expect, however, is discovering you have a resident monster on your staff. The monster is a poor performer who predates your hiring and has become legendary, somehow surviving over the years without improving their behavior or getting fired.

Now the monster is yours, and your boss expects you to wave your magic new-manager wand (as if!) and all of a sudden, the monster will turn into a good performer or choose to resign. You are left to wonder why the prior manager didn't deal with it. And what does it say about your boss and the organization you just joined that they allowed the monster to settle in?

The optimist in me wants to believe that a new manager certainly could have a positive impact on a staff member who had been written off as a poor performer. I have seen mediocre performers improve with the right leadership.

But the pessimist in me recognizes that the problem must be very difficult for no one to have addressed it before. A poor performer who can't or won't do the job and has not been held accountable for years clearly has gotten very comfortable getting paid to not work. As a new manager it's important to have a conversation with your boss right away about the challenges of resolving a performance problem that has gone uncorrected for a long time. Does the poor performer have a written job description that can be the basis for developing a binding performance improvement plan? Does the organization have policies that will support a personnel action to remove the poor performer or transfer them to a more appropriate role or department?

As the new manager in town, you need to establish and enforce what constitutes acceptable performance. Be clear with your boss that you will do your best to address the situation and will need their support. But in case the situation can't be remedied, ask for reassurances that you won't be penalized for not being able to tame a monster you did not create.

If you have any questions you'd like Sandy to address in future newsletters, email them to: [sandy@learningadvantageinc.com](mailto:sandy@learningadvantageinc.com)

depressed, or take many sick days. Those who are passive-aggressive might publicly agree to the change but never get around to adopting it.

Tamping down resistance or ignoring it doesn't make it go away; resistance is self-reinforcing and not addressing it gives it more power. But instead of girding your loins to do battle against the resistance, consider calling on your curiosity. Think of resistance as an opportunity to gain information on an approach that may not be optimal or a perspective that hadn't occurred to you. By being open to other possibilities, we can change our approach and possibly achieve a better outcome.

In his book *Overcoming the Wall of Resistance*, Rick Mauer posits that there are three levels of resistance; effectively overcoming resistance first requires identifying which level you are facing. He defines Level 1 Resistance as a disagreement in data or approach where each side sees the situation differently. Most Level 1 Resistance can be overcome by effective communication and involving others.

When you find yourself in a disagreement about the data or the approach, it helps to listen to the others' perspectives before sharing your own.



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