

JUICY WORK NEWS

Updates from The Learning Advantage

December - 2023



Mobley's Musings: Staying in Touch

A casualty of getting older and progressing in our careers is that many people we've gotten to know over the years have moved on — to a new job or a new state, even a new country. It becomes hard to stay in touch with people we no longer see often, requiring much more intentional acts to maintain these connections.

I have to admit, I'm sometimes lax in keeping up with friends and find myself making excuses like it's too late to call or they probably won't be home. When weeks go by without connecting, it nags at me and occupies mental space. Then I'm reluctant to reach out because so much time has passed. But with true connections, I find the time lapse doesn't matter; we always pick up right where we left off.

I try to keep up with all the people who have been important and meaningful in my life. When we chat, I feel like I am recapturing a little of that time when we were closer. Friends can provide a reminder of how I was at that time and help me see how I have changed (hopefully for the better). I am also able to let them know how important they have been in my life and how much I enjoy our continued connection.

When someone from the past pops into your mind, reach out to them. More often than not, it will be satisfying and meaningful for both of you.



What Kind of Power Do You Have?

Power — the ability to wield authority to influence events and people — can be essential to getting things done. And whether we realize it or not, all of us are in some way “power-full.” We all have abilities, traits, and resources we can draw on to influence others.

The source of each person's power differs, however, and the usefulness of that power can depend on the situation. For example, you may enjoy great authority in your company, but that won't matter much when it comes to coaching a kids' soccer team. And while your business achievements may have gotten you a seat on the board of a non-profit organization, it's typically the board members who have connections in high places who wield the power.



Ask Sandy

How to Handle Layoffs with Grace?

For some organizations and especially in some industries, layoffs are a simple fact of work life. Whether it's due to a downturn in the economy, corporate restructuring, or reduced demand for its products and services, an organization turns to layoffs to reduce costs and remain viable. No one enjoys having to lay off employees, and of course it's never pleasant to be laid off. Even employees who "survive" a layoff can become demoralized by having to take on more work and may jump ship when conditions improve.

Managers play an important part in making layoffs less painful. When possible, they should meet with employees in person and be prepared to explain what benefits they will receive. It's also important to bolster employees' self-esteem so they feel good about the organization and themselves. Layoffs typically are not due to poor performance, but if there were performance issues, this is not the time to bring them up regardless of whether the employee had been made aware of them before.

Employees who are being laid off should do what they can to leave on a positive note. Complaining about the process, questioning why less experienced employees weren't let go, or blaming the boss for mismanagement is not a good strategy. It will not change the situation and only results in negative reactions. If there is time, it's best to help facilitate a smooth transition by documenting work products and tasks so someone else can step in without undue difficulty.

Layoffs are hard on everyone. Do what you can to ease an already difficult situation by taking the high road when dealing with others. After all, you never know who you might meet again during your career.

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

Understanding your sources of power can help you make better use of it. And if your power is concentrated in one source, investigating the other sources may help you augment your power. In work settings, power typically derives from five sources: information, expertise, position, relationships, and referred power.

Information

We have all heard that knowledge is power. If you have a keen understanding of what is going on — whether in your organization or the world — people may seek you out and want to be in your network. Knowing the value of information at work, some people hoard it, refusing to share what they know. This misuse of power can damage a career, especially since so many organizations consider collaboration essential. Being willing to share what you know to help others increases your power as you develop a reputation for being in the know.

The information that's the source of power doesn't have to be closely held secrets. Keeping up with news and trends relevant to your job and organization — for example by reading newspapers and industry reports and attending conferences — can give you a perspective that other people don't have.



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