

SPARKING IDEAS AND ACTION IN YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS
HARMONY COACHING & CONSULTING

Is the Golden Rule Tarnishing Your Leadership?

It's the annual employee appreciation dinner, and you've chosen your top three performers to be recognized. On your own trip up the corporate ladder, you remember fondly your recognition events; being invited up to a podium to receive a handshake and certificate, being asked to share a few words at the microphone. It was always quite a peak experience for you.

When you call up your third employee, you notice that he's walking quite slowly, that his face has gone pale and that his smile seems forced. When you shake his hand you notice that he's trembling. He doesn't look like he's having a peak experience at all!

This is a drastic example; one in which your employee is suffering from stage fright and what was meant to be recognition is more like a form of torture for him.

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Different Talents Create Powerful Teamwork

- *You have teams at work – but do you have teams that WORK?*
- *Often the full potential of teamwork is blocked due to misunderstandings of different behavioral styles and motivators.*
- *Enable the success of teams in your organization by recognizing and leveraging the full spectrum of their different talents.*

Our workplace has become a perpetually changing environment fueled by flexible teamwork. People are called upon to participate in teams to repeatedly rethink, restructure, reinvent, and redeploy business resources. The changing times in which we live require talented individuals skilled at working in teams.

Teams are enriched with individuals who offer a wide spectrum of talents in areas such as behaviors and motivators – that is a given. Or is it? After closer observation of teamwork in your organization, you may find a number of team members who are merely tolerating their counterparts due to what is commonly described as “personality differences.”

Gregory E. Huszco, author of *Tools for Team Excellence* (1996), and *Tools for Team Leadership* (2004), advises that successful teams must develop an awareness of the individual strengths each member contributes.

“Capitalizing on the natural strengths of your personality and enjoying interaction with people who are different from you are crucial for (team) success.”

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Tolerating differences in the personalities of people you work with is not enough – you need to celebrate those differences. They provide the natural strengths you may need to benefit the team.”

Personality conflicts are common, and they inevitably lead to “talent withdrawal” by team members who are experiencing them. As a result, these individuals most likely have opted out of actively contributing to attaining team goals. The team cannot perform up to its maximum potential until solutions are found.



How do you recognize talent withdrawal in your teams? It can be demonstrated in several ways. Here are two of the most common:

1) LIMITED PARTICIPATION in TEAM MEETINGS

If team members withhold contributions during team meetings, this signals talent withdrawal. Their energies are being directed elsewhere. Looking through their eyes, some reasons may be:

- One or two members consistently dominate meetings by talking all the time
- A member habitually uses the team meetings to promote personal successes and self-interest
- Too much theory and details are regularly discussed at length, with no practical applications
- A couple of members regularly engage in heated debate, perceived by others as undesirable conflict and aggressiveness



2) MISUNDERSTANDINGS between TEAM MEMBERS

No two people are exactly alike, and differences can contribute either great value or unwanted tension to any team.

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Misunderstandings between team members can often be a matter of the following:

- A team member with an indirect communication style feels continually “shut down” and resentful about another’s naturally direct communication style
- Another is not aware that his lengthy, analytical communication style regularly blocks his messages from being welcomed by others
- Someone consistently displays a lack of value for people-related topics, offending those whose motivators are more people-oriented
- One team member is personally motivated to take the lead all the time, while others feel their contributions are consistently overshadowed



How can you take steps to prevent talent withdrawal in your teams? Many team leaders use behavior and motivator diagnostics to reveal how team members can leverage their different talents to work together most effectively. Individualized reports on behavioral styles and personal motivators reveal both strengths and potential weaknesses. With this knowledge, teams gain effective tools for addressing teamwork issues and maximizing performance.

Teams will continue to fuel progress in the workplace, and valuing and leveraging different talents will remain essential tools for achieving powerful teamwork.

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PUBLIC PROGRAM

Bill Burtch, SPHR, ACC will be the keynote speaker at the Memphis American Society for Training & Development luncheon meeting on July 11, 2006 at 11:30 am. His topic will be Emotional Intelligence.

For more information on the Presentation and/or to register for attendance, go to www.astdmemphis.org

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Your head and heart were in the right place. You were practicing the Golden Rule, to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Early in my own career the Golden Rule was my mantra. And it worked, because I was lucky enough to come across people who, for the most part, were a lot like me.

With workplaces becoming more and more diverse, and with individuality and creativity becoming valuable and rewarded commodities in the workplace, the truth is that the "Golden Rule" is not the most effective management and leadership philosophy.

In our opening story, it's essential to realize that just because you found it rewarding to be recognized in front of a crowd doesn't mean that your employees will.



The Golden Rule makes two errant assumptions.

1. That everyone is the same. We know, however, that each person we interact with, whether at work or in a social setting is unique. They have a unique set of interests, strengths, weaknesses, personality traits and idiosyncrasies.
2. That everyone wants to be treated the way you want to be treated. Not everyone is motivated by the same factors as you are. Some are motivated by money and others are motivated by the goodwill they create in others. Some people appreciate public recognition for their contributions and others would rather be recognized privately.

The Golden Rule helps us to create meaningful and satisfying relationships with those who are like us, but what about those who aren't?

There are still times when the Golden Rule can work well for us, and it's certainly a good place to start from when you don't know someone very well. A particularly crucial time to apply the Golden Rule is when you're giving feedback or sharing your opinion about someone's work – get into the habit of putting yourself in his or her place before you speak.

Once you've mastered the Golden Rule, there is the potential for you to increase your leadership exponentially by applying an even more effective strategy, called the Platinum Rule. I'll define and explain the Platinum Rule in our next issue.

Bill Burtch, SPHR, ACC – President Harmony Coaching & Consulting.
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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Making Decisions

William McKinley, the 25th U.S. President, once had to choose between two equally qualified men for a key job. He puzzled over the choice until he remembered a long-ago incident.

On a rainy night, McKinley had boarded a crowded streetcar. One of the men he was now considering had also been aboard, though he didn't see McKinley. Then an old woman carrying a basket of laundry struggled into the car, looking in vain for a seat. The job candidate pretended not to see her and kept his seat. McKinley gave up his seat to help her.

Remembering the episode, which he called "this little omission of kindness," McKinley decided against the man on the streetcar. Our decisions—even the small, fleeting ones—tell a lot about us.

— Adapted from *Presidential Anecdotes*, Paul F. Boller, Jr.

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Steps to a Happier Life

- # Think and Act Happy. You will create that state of mind for yourself and inspire it in others
- # Take Control. Make effective changes in your life
- # Set Goals that urge you forward, yet are still realistic
- # Engage Your Skills. Seek activities that use your abilities
- # Be Healthy. Eat well, exercise regularly and get plenty of sleep
- # Surround Yourself with happy people and nurture these relationships
- # Be Compassionate and help those in greater need
- # Stay Open to new people and experiences so you continue to grow
- # Take A Moment each day to reflect on the positive things in your life



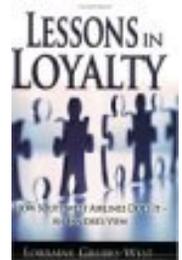
– Author Unknown

Three grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do,
something to love, and something to hope for.

– Joseph Addison

Reading Recommendations –

After 15+ years with Southwest Airlines, author Lorraine Grubbs-West, shares their techniques for engaging employees and earning the loyalty of both employees and customers. This easy read is chocked full of great ideas that you could implement in your own organization and tells you why they worked for Southwest. Grubbs-West has a knack for writing in a very informative and succinct manner that also engages the reader. I had a hard time putting the book down. And at just over 100 pages you won't have too.



To order this or other great books to go <http://www.harmonycc.net/links.htm>

Harmony Coaching & Consulting is in the business of maximizing human talent for individuals and organizations in various industries. We accomplish this through the analysis, design and implementation of [Human Resource Programs](#), [Professional Development Training](#), [Personal Executive Coaching](#) and [Assessments](#).



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