

TIE THAT BINDS

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ATTITUDE IS THE REAL DISABILITY

BE CUSTOMER DRIVEN

Throughout the trainings that I facilitated this past year, I stressed that we need to be customer driven. It is not your employer who pays your wages. The employer handles the money. The customer pays your wages. As Paul Simon say, “Keep the customer satisfied.” Treat everyone as a customer.

You need to recognize both internal and external customers. If your customer doesn't need you, neither will your organization. Share stories of poor customer service and explore what could have been done to make it good customer service.

Deliver what the customer wants, not what you think the customer wants.

Build partnerships by under- promising, over-delivering and following up. Some people follow the 1% rule of giving the customer a little more than what they asked for. Solicit their input on how to improve.

PERFORM WITH INTEGRITY

“If leaders are careless about basic things...telling the truth, respecting moral codes, proper professional conduct... who can believe them on other issues.”

By James L. Hayes

Everyone must play by the same rules. Rank and seniority has privileges that may apply in some circumstances, BUT, never when it comes to integrity issues.

Nobody is perfect. How you recover from mistakes is a true indication of your integrity.

Be a person of your word. Sometimes we need to write down our promises and agreements. One broken promise overshadows the 10 that you kept. Remember bad news travels faster and further than good news. Let your conscience be your guide.

Do the right thing, no matter how inconvenient, unpopular or painful.

That is Integrity.

SOLVE PROBLEMS EFFECTIVELY

We help our customers solve problems. Our individual customers have issues surrounding employment. Our business customers have issues surrounding finding quality employees. “Additional problems are the offspring of poor solutions.” **By Mark Twain**

Think about the solution plus one mindset. You need to develop 2 solutions to every problem or issue. This goes back to the earlier topics of Customer Service and Integrity. Consider the pros and cons analysis for all proposed solutions. This is off shoot of Motivational Interviewing that forces people to look at the consequences of decisions.

The cost of the solution needs to be less than the cost of the problem. Cost can be time,

money or effect on others. Search for those winning solutions. . Those solutions that will affect the most positively and the fewest people negatively.

LIFESTYLE, THE GATEKEEPER AND SCHMOOZING

Boy! I do a lot of training and much of that training is about job developing. Yup I talk about theory and useful information. People have the social skills, but don't feel comfortable leaving the office and doing it. Job development by definition involves doing it. So far over 1000 people have attended my trainings this year (more about that in August's issue), what sets the high performing job developer apart from the others?

Job developing is a lifestyle, not that 9 to 5 job. Networking, making contacts and seeing opportunities can happen anytime. Some people can talk about anything and everything to anyone. Others need to find a personal connection to the person they are talking to. You need to be at ease with people.

It is a myth that you have to be a smooth talker and outgoing. You need to believe that people with disabilities can and should work in the community. Over time you will develop the ability to read employer's reactions to your words and you can modify your approach.

Gatekeepers, their job is to screen out the interruptions from their boss. You do not want to be viewed as an interruption. You

want to find ways to continue the conversation with gatekeepers, not terminate the conversation. Some of these tricks are to name drop (an example: "Warren Buffett suggested that I meet with you."), ask when a more convenient time may be, offer to wait until the person is available or ask a technical question the gatekeeper cannot answer.

The art of Schmoozing may be something you have or don't have. We look at people who can make small talk, who are flexible, who listen and who have a sense of humor as being good schmoozers. But having an interest in the person you are talking with, remembering their name, placing a value on the relationship and telling stories related to the person, company or environment are skills to develop in the art of schmoozing. Other techniques that job developers keep fiddling with include timing, which is time of day or day of the week; developing alternate contacts; leaving clever messages and using social media connections.

Contact

Mike Sass

520 West Summit Hill Dr.

Knoxville, TN 37902

865-594-6756 (office)

Fax: 865-594-6535

Email: mikesass@utk.edu

Website: www.clee.utk.edu.

Training site: <http://tiny.cc/tnvrtrainings>

Pat Summitt's The Definite Dozen

Respect Yourself and Others

There is no such thing as self-respect without respect for others.
Individual success is a myth. No one succeeds all by themselves.
People who do not respect those around them will not make good team members and probably lack self-esteem themselves.
When you ask yourself, "Do I deserve to succeed?", make sure the answer is yes.

Take Full Responsibility

There are no shortcuts to success.
You can't assume larger responsibility without taking responsibility for the small things, too.
Being responsible sometimes means making tough, unpopular decisions.
Admit to and make yourself accountable for mistakes. How can you improve if you're never wrong?

Develop and Demonstrate Loyalty

Loyalty is not unilateral. You have to give it to receive it.
The family business model is a successful one because it fosters loyalty and trust.
Surround yourself with people who are better than you are. Seek out quality people, acknowledge their talents, and let them do their jobs. You win with people.

Learn to Be a Great Communicator

Communication eliminates mistakes.
Listening is crucial to good communication.
We communicate all the time, even when we don't realize it. Be aware of body language.
Make good eye contact.
Silence is a form of communication, too. Sometimes less is more.

Discipline Yourself So No One Else Has To

Self-discipline helps you believe in yourself.
Group discipline produces a unified effort toward a common goal.
When disciplining others, be fair, be firm, be consistent.
Discipline helps you finish a job, and finishing is what separates excellent work from average work.

Make Hard Work Your Passion

Do the things that aren't fun first, and do them well.
Plan your work, and work your plan.
See yourself as self-employed.

Don't Just Work Hard, Work Smart

Success is about having the right person, in the right place, at the right time.
Know your strengths, weaknesses, and needs.
When you understand yourself and those around you, you are better able to minimize weaknesses and maximize strengths. Personality profiles help.

Put the Team Before Yourself

Teamwork doesn't come naturally. It must be taught.
Teamwork allows common people to obtain uncommon results.
Not everyone is born to lead. Role players are critical to group success.
In group success there is individual success.

Make Winning an Attitude

Combine practice with belief.
Attitude is a choice. Maintain a positive outlook.
No one ever got anywhere by being negative.
Confidence is what happens when you've done the hard work that entitles you to succeed.

Be a Competitor

Competition isn't social. It separates achievers from the average.
You can't always be the most talented person in the room, but you can be the most competitive.
Influence your opponent: By being competitive you can affect how your adversary performs.
There is nothing wrong with having competitive instincts. They are survival instincts.

Change Is a Must

It's what you learn after you know it all that counts the most.
Change equals self-improvement. Push yourself to places you haven't been before.
Take risks. You can't steal second base with your foot on first.

Handle Success Like You Handle Failure

You can't always control what happens, but you can control how you handle it.
Sometimes you learn more from losing than winning. Losing forces you to reexamine.
It's harder to stay on top than it is to make the climb. Continue to seek new goals.

