



Excel Leader Advisory Letter

ISSUED BY THE EXCEL LEADERSHIP GROUP

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Excel's Mission Statement

Help business leaders exceed their goals by creating a culture that unleashes the talents and creativity of all associates.

Thought for May

"Effective leadership is the only competitive advantage that will endure. That's because leadership has two sides-what a person is (character) and what a person does (competence)."

-Stephen R. Covey



You've heard the old adage: "Success breeds success". Successful people tend to have at least one thing in common. They **expect** to succeed rather than fail. They perceive opportunities rather than threats. In addition, they see others in a positive light and expect the future to bring positive change. This trait is referred to as learned optimism. Yes, we all can **learn** to be optimistic.

Since learned optimism is an important component of success and can be learned, here are a few coaching tips to help your development in this area:

- 1. Keep a journal.** I always advise my clients to maintain a journal. It is a valuable tool for recording wins and challenges, as well as thoughts and feelings on any particular topic. The next three tips will help you utilize your journal to sharpen your learned optimism.
- 2. Pay attention to "self-talk".** Tune in to how you talk to yourself about whatever adversity you are facing. Be sure to record this self-talk in your journal.
- 3. Take note of feelings.** How do you feel about a particular adversity you are facing? Are you feeling anxious, sad or joyful? Once you have captured your feelings, note them in your journal. Remember that feelings of pessimism will often result in passivity and dejection, whereas feelings of optimism generate energy and help you move forward.
- 4. Examine beliefs about an adversity.** How do you interpret it? Is it something that you can overcome? How? Do you view an obstacle or challenge as temporary and surmountable? Be sure to note your thoughts in your journal.
- 5. Challenge negative beliefs.** Look for evidence or alternative explanations to dispute negative beliefs. Here's an example: "There is no evidence here that I failed. I just experienced an outcome that did not meet my expectations. What can I do differently with the next attempt to get closer to my goal?" Make some notes in your journal and use your experiences as valuable and positive learning tools.

A very good resource for further reading on this topic is: [Learned Optimism](#), by Martin Seligman, Ph.D.

As always, I encourage you to contact me anytime at mike@excelleadership.net with your comments and questions. Also, if I can be of assistance with your leadership coaching needs, please contact me. We'll talk to you again in June. Be well, have a great month and best regards.



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*Experience what **coaching** can do for you and others
on your company's leadership team.*