



Excel Leader Advisory Letter

ISSUED BY THE EXCEL LEADERSHIP GROUP

January 2010

Excel's Mission Statement

To help business leaders achieve higher profits by creating a high performance culture and unleashing the talents of all associates.

Thought for January

"The deepest hunger of the human heart is to be understood, for understanding implicitly affirms, validates, recognizes, and appreciates the intrinsic worth of another. When you really listen to another person, you acknowledge and respond to that most insistent need."

-Stephen R. Covey



As an effective leader, you can create your own high performance work environment based on greater levels of employee engagement and discretionary effort. Your culture will in turn contribute directly to producing sustainable world-class results and higher profits. Therefore, despite the recent economic downturn and all its related challenges to your bottom line, you should continue investing in the development of your own leadership skills and those of your team.

With this opportunity in mind, we have been discussing those competencies that distinguish truly outstanding leaders from others. Thus far, we have reviewed fifteen: high integrity, visioning, communication, change agent or catalyst, resilience, personal power, initiative or bias for action, achievement drive, empathy, intentionality, powerful influence, organizational awareness, developing others, building trust and emotional self awareness.

This month, I'd like to talk about the sixteenth and final leadership competency: emotional self control and its connection to effective leadership. Although we refer to this competency as emotional self control, what we are really talking about is controlling or effectively managing the behavior that our emotions trigger. People with strong emotional self control are able to stay very composed and poised even under stressful situations. For business managers, this is an especially important competency to develop since the team will reflect the demeanor of the leader. If the leader often loses his or her temper, this will create an atmosphere of fear that hampers productivity. If, on the other hand, the leader is unflappable under duress, the atmosphere will be much more positive and supportive of creativity needed to solve today's complex business problems. Let's discuss a few coaching tips that you and your leadership team can employ to enhance your emotional or behavioral self control:

1. Awareness is the first step. Being aware of our feelings, in the moment, is the first step to more effective self management of our behavior. For some tips, please review the [December 2009 advisory letter](#).

2. Keep a journal. Make a list of the situations or events that "trigger" negative emotions such as anger or frustration. Then write out a strategy to deal with these situations in a more positive and effective manner. Make it a practice to review these strategies often.

3. Pay attention to "self talk". Tell yourself what it looks and feels like to be under control, focused and composed. Repeat this consciously each day until it becomes "automatic".

4. Remember-you have a choice. You have the ability to choose your response to any

situation. You can choose to “fly off the handle” in stressful situations, or you can also choose to remain calm.

I encourage you to try these steps to help strengthen your behavioral self control or self management. Let me know how they work for you. Also, if you have encountered any other “best practices” that have worked for you, please do share them.

These sixteen competencies that distinguish truly great leaders from their peers are all connected to a topic that is receiving increasing attention in business literature: emotional intelligence. As author Warren Bennis has stated: “Emotional intelligence is much more powerful than IQ in determining who emerges as a leader. IQ is a threshold competence. You need it, but it doesn’t make you a star. Emotional intelligence can.”

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 needs, please contact me. Best wishes for a healthy and prosperous 2010. We’ll talk to you again in February. Be well and best regards.

Join our Web-based “community” devoted to open and honest discussions on topics related to leadership challenges and solutions. To join, simply visit TheExcelLeadershipGroup.net and click on “Community.”



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on your company's leadership team.*