



Excel Leader Advisory Letter

ISSUED BY THE EXCEL LEADERSHIP GROUP

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Excel's Mission Statement:

We help leaders create and sustain a high performance, values-based culture that fully engages the talents of all associates to consistently deliver world-class results and achieve higher profits.

Thought for February

"The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority."

-Kenneth Blanchard



In September, we began discussing the critical connection between effective leadership, an organization's work culture and profitability. The main lesson for all executives is that effective leaders create high performance cultures which foster higher levels of employee engagement and discretionary effort that in turn produce better results and higher profits. Therefore, prudent executives place significant focus and resources on the recruitment, development and retention of their leadership talent in order to enhance profitability and secure a real, sustainable competitive advantage in today's global economy. In October, we started our review of the critical characteristics that differentiate some leaders as effective, or even extraordinary. Thus far, we have discussed four of these characteristics: high integrity, visioning, communication and change agent or catalyst.

This month let's look at a fifth characteristic that sets extraordinary leaders apart from their peers: resilience. Each one of us experiences disappointments and obstacles in our journey. Simply put, resilience reflects our ability to both cope with and recover from these experiences. Here's some coaching advice that should help you strengthen your resilience:

1. Take care of yourself. Make sure that you are getting the right amount of rest, exercise and healthy food to help you cope most effectively with stress. Take time to get "out of the fast lane" and meditate, take a walk, or even just catch your breath. Do this on a regular basis. Make it a habit.
2. Stop the "gremlin" or negative self talk. Most setbacks in life are both isolated and temporary. See and treat them as such. Don't be too hard on yourself for making mistakes. Start seeing them as valuable feedback and learning experiences rather than failures. Remember, according to the Law of Feedback: There are no failures, only feedback. Learn to profit from your mistakes and miscues!
3. Be flexible. By flexible, I mean be ready to adjust your thinking and approach to new situations. You may be facing a familiar situation but with particular nuances that may require an innovative approach or solution. Try brainstorming new options if your current approach is not working for you.
4. Don't get stuck in the past. Looking back helps if you can recall a time when you successfully overcame an obstacle in your path. However, keep in mind that resilience involves focusing not only on the current situation but also on the future ... forward thinking. Ask yourself: How have I successfully handled situations similar to this in the past? What are some alternatives I can explore to move past this current "crisis" or setback?
5. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Sometimes we get stuck in a situation and cannot see a

way out. It is at those times, that we need to look to others to help us regain an objective, positive, forward-looking perspective and work through the issue..

I encourage you to try these steps to strengthen your resilience. Let me know how they work for you. Also, if you have encountered any other “best practices” for increasing resilience to setbacks, please do share them, and I'll include in a future letter.

Thus far, we have discussed five critical characteristics of “extraordinary” leaders: high integrity, visioning, communications, change agent or catalyst and resilience. Next month, we will discuss another critical dimension or characteristic: personal power.

As always, I encourage readers to contact me anytime at mike@excelleadership.net with your comments and questions. Also, if Excel can be of assistance with any of your leadership challenges, please give us a call. We'll talk to you again in March. 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.*