

STRATEGIC ALLIANCE GROUP

“Plan a Strategic Course to Profitability”

SAG Monthly Action Focus This issue: Leadership



We have all watched the commercial that poses the question, “What’s in your wallet?” It is very well done and causes us to smile.

As a leader, let me query another question. What is in your leadership toolbox? The tools of self-awareness, self-recognition, motivation, empathy and social skills are in the toolbox of effective leaders.

Of course, the leader has position, power, which involves hiring, promoting, transferring and the influence to terminate employees.

Over the years, I have experienced good leaders that put high levels of pressure on themselves to succeed which in some cases seems almost trivial in comparison to external pressures. They feel strength in facing challenges and believe that personal improvement and fulfillment comes through the process of leading. Pressure can bring out the good and the bad in leaders. Some buckle and attack others. As a result, some tend to attack employees when the going gets rough and we all know that business and life are never a day at the beach.

A leader’s toolbox should contain knowledge, self-control, perseverance, vision, passion, faith in others, communication skills and a sharp metal saw to cut through issues and problems. In an objective way, while demonstrating emotional intelligence. And to live by the motto that nothing good happens without passion and enthusiasm!

The leaders of today and of the future need (must) prepare the organization for what lies ahead, by embracing the tool of “vision!” Indeed knowledge is a primary source of power, and a powerful tool. Five star organizations and leaders will emphasize the acquisition and positive use of knowledge.

A true leader emphasizes the strength in others and not the weaknesses. Inspiring leaders continually seek to increase the usefulness of their tools and to acquire new tools, like empathy. An enlightened leader is an active student of learning and will frankly admit to their failures and how they benefited from them and learned. Employees admire and respect the tool of candor. In this changing business landscape it is paramount for leaders to utilize managerial tools that insure the health of the organization.

“For every hundred men hacking away at the leaves of a diseased tree, only one man stoops to inspect the roots.” – Chinese Proverb (with the right tool)

A power tool is the trust! This happens to be the highest form of employee motivation. Leaders can make or break an employee's day. Some use a hammer while others paint a positive picture. Clear perception and an understanding of humans and human nature are indeed powerful leadership tools.

A sad notion is that some leaders sell employees short and thus miss employees' value and potential. The lack of employee creativity results in lost revenue and lost inspiration! If one looks through the lens of mistrust and views employees as a cost, the result is as Abram Maslow stated, “If the only leadership tool you feel you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.”

Perhaps now is an excellent time to look inside your toolbox and analyze the tools that you have. Are they in good shape? Are they organized properly? Do you utilize all the tools that you have? Are you in a rut and using the same tools over and over?

The fact remains that most employees seek to do a good job. They need involvement, acknowledgement and the proper tools to excel. Leadership is an art and the artist needs to share their creative techniques.

Start today by sharing your tools. Teach others how to use new tools.

Stop to ask questions to utilize the wonderful tool of listening.

Successful leaders are keenly aware of “power tools” such as purpose, inspiration and commitment to guide employees' to achieve company goals.

What's in your toolbox??

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