

*Helping Leaders Be More Effective & Organizations Reach New Heights In Performance*

## Leadership Solutions Newsletter

**Congratulations! Because of our past relationship** you are receiving our monthly newsletter...*at no cost to you!* If this is your first issue, then welcome! We appreciate the opportunity to share best practices in leadership, management, personal and professional growth, recruiting, retention, and other areas critical to your success.



In this issue, we offer three articles:

- Proven Techniques To Help You Develop Leadership Skills – Guaranteed!
- Who Needs to Use Personal and Professional Assessment Tools?
- Was Jesus a Coaching Pro?

If you have ideas for future issues, share them with us! Again, thanks for your readership.

Enjoy your newsletter!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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### “PROVEN TECHNIQUES TO HELP YOU DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS – GUARANTEED!”

As leaders of businesses, it is often hard to keep up with the times and mold yourself into a great leader. Many people look to people who are great leaders like; Bill Gates and Steve Jobs for inspiration. They study these people to see what they have done to make their businesses into international superstars. There are many leaders to pull from for inspiration. Finding the right niche to help you advance is an important factor to focus on. When you have the right

motivation and niche to help you, you are ready to begin the process of becoming a great leader. It is going to be a long road full of difficulties and stress, but like so many leaders have discovered, it will be worth your time and investment. Here are a few suggestions to help you develop yourself into a great leader:

1. **Look to the past**- Whether this is through mentors such as Roosevelt, Truman, Gates, or Jobs, focusing information from great leaders of the past and the traits they carried is a way of developing great leadership traits of your own. Leaders in the past have had experiences that will help you to not repeat their mistakes and benefit from their successes. Granted, you are not running a country, but you are running something that is your livelihood. You can gain experiences when you listen to their counsel, identify the traits that are successful, and mimic their strategies.



2. **Train like the rest**- A great leader is also a great follower. By going to training with the rest of the employees, you can gain great insight to where your employees are in their development. You will be able to understand their strengths and weaknesses and help instruct each individual further in their career. This also looks good for you as the leader, owner, or supervisor. A higher authority that puts oneself into that situation is looking for ways to improve themselves too. As an employee, having an authority figure that is looking to improve themselves, their employees, and their company goes a long way to improve company morale. Not to mention, increase productivity and customer focus.

3. **Listen**- This seems simple enough, but it's not. Listening to your employees is the most important step of all if you want to develop yourself into a great leader. This leadership development strategy is practiced simply by hearing and responding to what employees have to say. Listening to complaints, suggestions, and overall compliments is very important to your employees. **A great leadership trait is listening.** When a leader wants to have a group that is efficient in their work duties, they listen to the employee's suggestion(s) as to what needs to be done to make the process less strenuous as well as the suggested resources they need.

Looking at the present great leaders of multi-billion dollar companies, you can see the many techniques they use. Having well organized methods to help you develop yourself into that great leader and a mentor or a coach to keep you focused is paramount. Keeping employees happy is how you can truly help yourself develop. This is through leading by example first.

Start today! What are the top 3 leadership traits you want to develop? Does your coach agree with you? What action steps are you going to take...and when?

Need help? Call us today.

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## “WHO NEEDS TO USE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASSESSMENT TOOLS?”

With society changing every day, it is important to look at other ways which can help us keep up with the rest of the world. Having personal and professional assessment tools in your everyday life is a great benefit. However, many people aren't familiar with what personal and professional assessment tools are. To understand what they are, you need to realize how they can help you. Acknowledging who you are, where you are going in your life, and how to get there are very important issues that personal and professional assessment tools help with. But first, here is some background information about the tools.



**Personal assessment tools:** These are simply an assessment on you. This is achieved by answering a wide variety of questions which assess qualities ranging from relationships, attitudes, work styles, and skills. One such personal assessment tool is the Personality Test. You can get a variety of types of tests if you do a simple search.

**Professional assessment tools:** Now these are a little different. They are instruments used to determine where you are best placed in your career or the type of career you should focus on. The test examines where you are in your life. They measure what your strengths and weaknesses are enabling you to set developmental goals to reach your vision. Having professional assessment tools is important if you are to advance further in your career. It is always important to stay one step ahead of your competition.

Now that you understand what personal and professional assessment tools are, you can see the benefits of using such instruments. These tools help you understand more about you as a person which leads to building confidence in yourself. With a strong appreciation of yourself you can truly understand and decide what you may need to change in your lifestyle. It is often difficult to hear what is contrary to your self-image. By using personal and professional assessment tools you will be able to get to know what is going on in your head. So many

thoughts cloud our judgments as individuals and at times we tend to lose sight on what matters most.

Understanding personal and professional assessment tools is the first step. Putting them into practice is another. As we grow, our minds and experiences grow. We become better acquainted with what we need to do. Knowing the powerful information that these tools deliver provides insight on areas where you may want to seek guidance. Learn all there is about personal and professional assessment tools.

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## “WAS JESUS A COACHING PRO?”

When you think of coaches, do you think of Jesus? I sure didn't...that is until I started studying coaching and the Bible. Wow...I was surprised—though I should not have been. Throughout my leadership doctoral studies at Regent University, we study cutting edge leadership thought and compare it to with the Bible. I have been pleased to see how consistent the Bible is with leadership concepts that work.

Coaches, like most practitioners, have tool boxes. Listening and asking questions are important tools. Tony Stolfus, author of *Leadership Coaching*, says there are two different types of questions, open and closed. Closed questions are those that are generally answered with a “yes” or “no.” Open questions “keep the client in charge” and can't be answered with a “yes” or “no.” Open questions cause the person being coached to think at a deeper level.

In the Gospel of Mark, I found that Jesus asked sixty-five questions. Two-thirds of the questions were open questions. According to the Franciscan Priest Richard Rohr (*Third Way*, Summer 2006, Vol. 29 No. 6, page 27), Jesus asked 307 questions in the four Gospels.

Here's an example of Jesus coaching his disciples. Jesus had been traveling with his disciples healing people and teaching them about God. At this point, the disciples have seen Jesus miraculously feed large multitudes using a few fish and loaves of bread on at least two occasions.

In Matthew 16:15, Jesus asks the disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” After they respond, Jesus then asks this powerful question, “But what about you? Who do you say I am?” This was a defining moment. Who did they think Jesus was? The question caused them to reflect on all that they had seen him do, all that he had shared with them, and their very relationship with him.

Peter responds, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” His response must have pleased Jesus. We get this sense when Jesus replies, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in Heaven (Mt 16:17).” Jesus’ words were both affirming and supportive.

In the book, *How to Ask Great Questions*, Karen Lee-Thorp writes, “Jesus’ questions...made people think for themselves and examine their hearts.” Clearly, when Jesus asked the disciples the question, “Who do you say I am,” this question caused the disciples to dig deep in thinking about who He was, allowing new insights that would transform their lives.

Tom Crane in *The Heart of Coaching* uses the term “transformation coaching” to acknowledge the “huge, sweeping change” that can take place in the life of the coachee as a result of coaching. We see this transformation in the disciples as they go from fishermen to apostles leading the church.

Others recognized this transformation. In Acts 4, the religious leaders of the day were interrogating Peter and Paul. Peter was the spokesperson. Verse 13 reads, “When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.” These men recognized that there was something different about these men. Jesus had coached them well!

Yes, Jesus was a coaching pro. How are your coaching skills? As a leader, do you coach your employees? If you are interested in improving your role as a coaching leader, consider reading *Becoming a Coaching Leader* by Daniel Harkavy.

If you have questions about coaching, need a coaching class, or want a personal coach, give Dr. Merle Switzer a call at (916) 788-1094.

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