INTEGRITY MATTERS

IT’S NEVER WRONG TO DO WHAT’S RIGHT
PAGES 3, 5 & 8

With great power, comes great responsibility
Speaking up when it matters
Pg 5

SAFE HAVEN FOR ALL
Providing great coverage for people
Pg 6-7

REAL LIFE LESSONS
How to achieve entrepreneurial success
Pg 10

FIXING A FRACTURED TEAM
When relationships turn sour
Pg 11
WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN NO ONE’S LOOKING?

INTEGRITY. That would mean choosing to do the ethical thing even when no one is looking over your shoulder. It is a choice that we make daily, and in the long run, could have major repercussions if minor compromises were made along the way — take for example a particular German carmaker, and their recent dieselgate scandal. On the flip side, businesses that have made integrity as a cornerstone — in the way that deals are brokered and operations are run, have seen sustained pre-eminence over decades, if not centuries.

We often expect our own leaders to exemplify integrity and character. However, we ourselves tend to cut some slack, especially if our boss or manager is not displaying perceived ethical standards of the highest order. Daniel Russell in Be A Leader reminds us that as followers, we too have a crucial role to ensure that integrity is a reality and not just an ideal upheld by many but lived out by a few. Transparency International developed a citizen’s handbook that outlines five areas that followers can do to combat corruption: say no, speak up, ask questions, know your rights, and practise good values.

Sandie Clarke in Consulting Career highlighted the well-known phrase coined by English historian Sir John Dalberg Acton: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” To add on, Sandie has a quote that is both immense and captures the essence of the eternal battle between corruption and integrity: “It’s far easier for us to fall. Acton: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” To add on, Sandie has a quote that is both immense and captures the essence of the eternal battle between corruption and integrity: “It’s far easier for us to fall. Acton: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” To add on, Sandie has a quote that is both immense and captures the essence of the eternal battle between corruption and integrity: “It’s far easier for us to fall.

In Learning From Books, Tamara Jayne shares from Marcus Buckingham’s Go Put Your Strengths To Work and outlines six very practical steps on how to be a reality. One particular step that stood out for me personally was the first one:

"Bust the myths. Another famous myth that most of us have bought into for the longest time is that we will grow the most in our areas of weakness. However, the truth shall set you free, and it is quite the opposite — we will grow the most in our area of greatest strength. To quote Buckingham who sums it up perfectly, "Your strengths are your multiplier. Your strengths magnify you ... you will be most inquisitive, most resilient, most creative and most open to learning in your areas of strength."

May the read ahead be as engaging and purposeful for you, as it has been for me. Till then, have a wonderful, blessed weekend ahead.

Carpe diem,
IAN LEE
Editor
Leaderonomics.com
W HAT CAN YOU AS A FOLLOWER DO TO PREVENT THIS ‘DISEASE’?

By DANIEL RUSSELL
training@leaderonomics.com

M OST attention on the topic of business ethics is focused on leaders. There are many articles for leaders about how to com- municate and enforce ethical decision-making within organisations. The media and government also seek to hold leaders at the highest levels of accountability by uncovering evidence of corruption. However, very little is written about the role of “rank and file” employees – followers – in corruption cases. These individuals pay a high price as a result of government and corporate corruption. When corruption is uncovered, bankruptcy and loss of employment are common. Furthermore, researchers at Stanford reported that working for a company involved in corruption can tarnish the reputation of employees at all levels – even those not involved in unethical behaviour.

Their research found a “moral spillover” in which the unethical activities of a few can lead the public to develop a general negative ethical impression of everyone in the organisation. As an example, researchers often highlight the ongoing negative public impression of Enron employees even now – more than 10 years after that firm failed in 2001.

What responsibility do followers hold when they learn about unethical business practices? What should they do when asked (or ordered) to participate in corrupt practices?

What can “rank and file” employees do to increase the overall level of integrity within their workplaces?

Global anti-corruption non-governmental organisation, Transparency International, provides five things followers can do to fight corruption.

1 SPEAK UP!
Whistleblowing is less common in Asia due to strong cultural influences discouraging the practice. As a high power distance culture, Malaysian employees generally tend to expect to be told what to do and not to openly chal- lenge leadership. Malaysians tend to be highly collectivist and, thus, place high value on loyalty to the group (e.g. employer) as well as peaceful relationships.

Despite these cultural influences, whistleblowing does exist in Asia. One positive example of whistleblowing in Asia is the case of Jianguo Weisuo who exposed a tainted milk product in China. He blew the whistle on milk powder contaminated with melamine that resulted in the death of at least six babies and hundreds of thousands of illnesses. Jianguo was a pioneer in fighting for food safety in China and helped improve conditions across the industry.

2 SAY NO!
It is important for individuals to personally say “no” to unethical business practices, especially bribery. We each must consider our individual roles in encouraging or fighting corruption. While policies such as China’s ban on golf by party members may seem like logical steps to combat corruption, loopholes quickly emerge.

Decisions must be based on principles of fairness, integrity and transparency – not on the likelihood of getting caught or technical legality. Each of us must make a stand against corruption regardless of what is going on around us.

Ethics author Harvey Horznestein warns that working for corrupt or abusive bosses may lead to a sense of entitlement to behave badly oneself.

Horznestein asserts that in a bad situation it is not an excuse for personal unethical behaviour and that we are each accountable for our actions despite pressure from others in the organisation.

3 ASK QUESTIONS!
When speaking up against corruption, it’s better to start by asking questions rather than making accusa- tions. Most companies communicate values statements and policies espousing integrity and outlining corporate acceptable practices.

Values statements and policies can serve as an opening to ask questions about how decisions and behaviours align with these standards.

Use phrases like “Can you help me understand...” or “Can you help me see how this fits with our policy on...?”

Sometimes, colleagues are not aware of the potential ethical implications of their actions. Discussions such as these help keep ethics at the top of the mind and create a culture of integrity.

4 KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!
An in-depth review of Malaysia’s anti-corruption and whistleblower protection laws is beyond the scope of this article. However, it is important to read and understand the specific processes outlined in these Acts.

The Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission website (www.spm.gov.my) is a good reference point for these laws and an avenue to submit a report of cor- ruption.

5 PRACTISE GOOD VALUES!
We each play an important role in creating high integrity cultures within our workplaces. All of us will face ethical dilemmas from time to time in our work. Ethics experts David De Cremer and Bjarne Lemmich recently explained how easy it is for us to rationalise questionable decisions in ethical “gray areas”. Of course, the consequences to others of relatively “small” ethical violations may be greater than anyone anticipates.

Perhaps even more problematic is the tendency for people to quickly become increasingly comfortable with more egregious violations.

Research and practice demonstrate the dangers of a gradual decline in ethical decision-making. Transparency International recommends that individu- als take responsibility to actively nurture lifestyle of integrity, justice, and fairness. Furthermore, building a network of colleagues for encouragement and mutual accountability is an important way to drive a culture of integrity at the grassroots level. Reaching out to others for support helps in the struggle to stand firm in the small and large challenges that come with daily ethics.

Practising integrity continually in all areas of our lives helps to repel those who would seek to influence us into cor- ruption and helps us to quickly recognize when a decision is wrong.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
The scandal whereby Volkswagen (VW) cheated on air quality emissions test results is a clear case where both leaders and followers were at fault. While it isn’t clear what the most sen- ior leaders knew (or didn’t know), there is evidence suggesting that teams of engi- neers were involved.

Could this scandal and resulting fall-out have been avoided if one (or two) engineers had said “no”, asked questions about the discrepancies, or reported the wrongdoing through VW’s compliance process?

Certainly, this would not have hap- pened if each of these engineers individu- ally abided by the ethical guidelines of VW and the Software Engineering Code of Ethics.

Now, the company is embroiled in scandal and facing massive fines. It is already planning substantial layoffs to cut costs as it prepares for the financial impact.

Furthermore, scientists have estimated that the environmental impact of the deception is between 40 and 106 deaths in the United States alone.

This case shows how unethical deci- sions about something as remote and hidden as lines of software code can have serious repercussions for the environment and human life.
The Importance of Ethics Within Positions of Power

By SANDY CLARKE
editor@leaderonomics.com

I t was the English historian, Sir John Dalberg Acton, who coined the famous phrase “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

In his letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton in 1887, Sir Acton added that, “Great men are almost always bad men”, which, when we consider the likes of Napoleon Bonaparte, or the Roman emperor Nero, is a statement that holds a lot more weight than when it first seems.

Ethics and integrity are tricky areas for most of us mere mortals, what more for the great men and women who hold positions of power throughout the world within various businesses, institutions, governments and organisations.

Indeed, it’s far easier for us to uphold good character and conduct when we are without high status or positions of influence; the less power we have, the fewer opportunities temptation has to present itself and lead us astray.

If there is one quality that is integral to lasting success in any venture, it’s integrity. Integrity’s more than respect of your character. It is the hallmark of great leaders and philosophers. Their practice is essential in order to establish and maintain mutual trust, commitment and respect – pillars that ensure businesses are able to thrive and survive.

Leaders who consciously take the high road, often at their peril, standing to lose much more in the long run than any short-term gain they may receive.

Leaders who consciously take shortcuts and put their own gain ahead of others are bound to lose out, sooner or later. And while they may bounce back after a time, they are likely to find their reputation damaged beyond repair.

In Conclusion

Ethics and integrity aren’t simply matters to be discussed by moralists, and philosophers. Their practice is essential in order to establish and maintain mutual trust, commitment and respect – pillars that ensure businesses are able to thrive and survive.

Leaders who consciously take shortcuts and put their own gain ahead of others are bound to lose out, sooner or later. And while they may bounce back after a time, they are likely to find their reputation damaged beyond repair.

Sandy is convinced integrity is the hallmark of great leaders and continues to enjoy delving into the lives of leaders past and present who have helped and continued to shape the world around us. To connect with Sandy, follow him on Twitter @RealSClarke. To engage with Leaderonomics to help your organisation be a value-driven company, e-mail us at training@leaderonomics.com.
You will get things wrong more than right confidence and a good network of people, I think, is quite important to have. Different perspectives and looking at ways to improve, is absolutely crucial.

To be able to view things from weekends to ask if there might have been everything right every time, and so there's a huge kind of understanding with Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, to sponsor four of AmGeneral’s chief executive has clearly learned a lot from his global secondments from our partner, IAG, to AmGeneral’s work to engage with their new head office in Menara Shell as well as its 32 branches nationwide.

AmGeneral strives to create a stronger sales of the company’s insurance products that will best serve the needs of its new head office in Menara Shell as well as its 32 branches nationwide.

Then, we can discern between the right and the wrong. We can choose the right course of action. We can develop the right kind of people with the right approach. We can stand out as top talents to be hired by leaders (new or veteran) can say we get a better way to deal with a particular situation different. To approach a particular situation differently.

There are a lot of skilled not everything is always black and white. You will have to decide. You will have to choose. You will have to take risks. You will have to be bold. You will have to be creative. You will have to be innovative. You will have to be flexible. You will have to be adaptable. You will have to be able to think outside the box. You will have to be able to see the big picture. You will have to be able to see the forest for the trees. You will have to be able to see the whole picture. You will have to be able to see the big picture. You will have to be able to see the whole picture.

AmGeneral’s work to engage with their new head office in Menara Shell as well as its 32 branches nationwide. It’s the positive attitude, the extra effort and the willingness to step up to the plate when you needed and you provided us with a lot more momentum. That’s how you stand out from the crowd.

New CEO of local insurance company talks about leadership today

New CEO opens up about plans for the company

Short Q&A with Roberts

What are the key qualities to have for someone who takes on a leadership role for the first time?

Courage and openness. Don’t be afraid to ask for feedback – get different points of view. You will see things differently if you ask others for feedback and if you ask yourself for feedback.

What is one of the biggest challenges facing leaders today?

Attacking and retreating talent. At AmGeneral, this is a continuous and ongoing area for us to work on. We have come a long way to get to where we are today. We have included young and vibrant people into the leadership team, which includes secondments from our partner, IAG, to ensure that we can bring fresh ideas to the table. The end goal is to create a high-performance culture in which everyone thrives and is motivated by the right kind of people, with the right attitude and the right kind of leadership.

What is AmGeneral’s unique selling proposition?

To achieve the aims and objectives of the organisation.

What is one of the biggest challenges that you faced in recent years?

The shift from manual to digital processes. As AmGeneral deals predominantly in motor classes, it was necessary to streamline processes and automate the claim handling process to enhance efficiency and reduce claims handling time.

What is the most challenging aspect of your role as AmGeneral’s new CEO?

One of the biggest challenges is to ensure that customer service remains a top priority. Customers are the heart and soul of any business. AmGeneral has always prioritized customer satisfaction and has implemented various initiatives to improve customer service. The company is intent on ensuring customer satisfaction remains at the highest level.

What can graduates do to ensure that they stand out as top talents to be hired by leaders?

AmGeneral employees celebrating their successes at a recent sales conference

Derek Roberts pledging for road safety by signing his name on the road safety campaign poster in the form of a helmet.
PREVENTING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP FAILURES
UNDERSTANDING WHAT CAUSES ITS FAILURES

By LINDA FISHER THORNTON
editor@leaderonomics.com

ETHICAL leadership failures can be caused by different types of problems that may worsen. Some of these problems are caused by individuals and others may be embedded in the organisational culture.

In 7 Lenses, I described the kind of proactive ethical leader-ship that builds ethical cultures. The book is a road map on how to lead ethically in a complex world. While 7 Lenses is written from a positive perspective to help leaders avoid ethical problems and create ethical cultures, I often get asked, “What causes ethical failures?”

In this article, I will explore that question from two perspectives — that of what individual leaders do (or don’t do) and common organisational problems. Here is a list of some of the factors that can lead to ethical failures.

The list includes things that individual leaders do (or don’t do), and things that organisations do (or don’t do) to set a positive example and support ethical thinking and behaviour.

These factors are connected, and it is often difficult to isolate just one of them when something goes wrong. See if you recognise any of these happening in your organisation.

1 INDIVIDUAL CAUSES
- Ignoring boundaries (ignoring ethics codes and organisational values that forbid an action).
- Failing to use self-control (“I will do this even though it’s not allowed.”)
- Entitlement view (“I definitely deserve this even though it’s not allowed.”)
- Warped personal values (“I think this is really fine to do even though it’s not allowed.”)
- Crowd-following (“Everybody else is doing it, so it must be fine.”)
- Lack of a moral compass (“Nobody specifically said I can’t do it, so it must be fine if I do it.”)

2 ORGANISATIONAL CAUSES
- Lack of clarity (“What does ethical mean around here?”)
- No ethical leadership and behaviour standards (“There are no rules about this.”)
- Oversimplified rules (“Just do the right thing.”)
- Lack of positive role models (“Who is doing it the right way?”)
- No training or coaching (“How will I learn it?”)
- No accountability; no enforcement (“Even though it’s not allowed, nothing bad will happen if I do it.”)
- No performance integration (“We say we want ethics, but we reward and promote based on output.”)
- When problems happen, scapegoating of employees are quickly made instead of learning from mistakes and fixing the culture.

COMPELLING FACTORS
Keep in mind that ethical failures may or may not be due to just one of these factors, but a combination to create a ripple effect.

Here are a few examples where the problem is worsened due to a myriad of factors.

- There are no ethical leadership standards and no positive role models (No way to be sure what to do).
- The leader has an entitlement view and there is a lack of clarity about what ethical leadership means in the organisation (It is easier to justify entitlement, when ethical expectations are unclear).
- The leader lacks a moral compass and the organisation lacks ethical leadership standards (The leader may act based on personal ethics, which may be slanted toward self-gain).
- The leader has trouble with ethical boundaries and there is no accountability for ethical behaviour in the organisation (It increases the chances of ethical problems when both the leader and the organisation lack clear ethical boundaries).
- Problems within the ethical culture clearly make it harder for individual leaders to stay on an ethical path.

PREVENTING THESE PROBLEMS
Now imagine what can happen when you have three or more of these factors (and perhaps others not named here) happening at the same time. Each additional factor can develop more problems.

Our goal as leaders is to prevent the problems that lead to a failure of ethical leadership. To do that, we need to start talking about the dynamics that cause ethical problems and how to keep them from happening in our organisations.

CONCLUSION
How do we start the conversation? Talk candidly with leaders at all levels about issues named earlier that may have become a problem in your organisation.

Linda Fisher Thornton is the author of 7 Lenses and is on a global mission to help leaders and organisations unleash the positive power of ethical leadership. To connect with her, e-mail us at editor@leaderonomics.com. If you are interested in character-wise leadership training module for your organisation, write to training@leaderonomics.com.

THE IMPACT OF THE UNETHICAL SENIOR LEADER

WHEN organisational leaders are trying to create an ethical culture, sometimes one of the senior leaders is not helping or is even blocking their efforts. The distraction, fear and chaos created by an unethical senior leader can drain the company of engagement, creativity and productivity.

Is blocking a company’s efforts to create an ethical culture unethical? You bet.

It may be the cause of company failure because of the negative systemic effects that it creates. The systemic effects created include loss of trust, loss of employee engagement, loss of customers, lowered productivity, increased complaints, failure of departments to work together, sabotage, blaming, etc.

CORRECT IT QUICKLY
When a senior leader is operating against the best interests of the company and its stakeholders, the problem needs to be corrected by the other senior leaders as quickly as possible. How?

1 CLEAR STANDARDS FOR BEHAVIOUR
Be sure that you have clear standards for leadership performance that include expectations for ethical leadership. Often companies have leadership standards, but they are vague and/or do not include specific expectations for leading ethically.

If you have clear standards, ensure that the behaviour of disruptive senior leaders is specified in the standards as not acceptable. If not, it’s time to change the standards.

2 CLEAR ACCOUNTABILITY
If you have standards for ethical leadership, and they clearly state that the behaviours of dissenting senior leaders are not allowed, it’s time to hold the him/her accountable for not following the standards. The individuals who are not following the company’s standards need to be made aware of:
- the need for the senior leadership team to consistently model the leadership that is expected of others.
- the need for an ethical culture to appeal to today’s ethics-savvy consumers.
- the need for consistency and trust that starts with the senior leadership team, to be able to attract and keep good employees.

HARD TALK
Putting Strengths to Work

6 Powerful Steps to Achieve Outstanding Performance

By Tamara Jayne

tamara.jayne@leaderonomics.com

Would all love to achieve higher levels of performance and understand how to develop our strengths while maximising them in the workplace as well as in our personal lives.

Marcus Buckingham guides us through six practical steps on how to achieve this in his book Go Put Your Strengths To Work.

Step 1: Bust the Myths

Myth: As you grow, your personality changes.

Truth: As you grow, you become more of who you already are.

It is our instinct to judge a person’s character by the way he or she behaves. As explained in this book, our personality in fact does not change. However, we develop who we are as we grow.

Buckingham states, “Your values, your skills, your self-awareness, and some of your behaviours may change. But the most dominant aspects of your personality will remain the same.”

Myth: You will grow the most in your area of weakness.

Truth: You will grow the most in your area of greatest strength.

A person will always have areas they need to grow, improve and get better at – but you will grow and develop the most in the area of your greatest strengths.

“Your strengths are your multiplier. Your strengths magnify you...you will be most inquisitive, most resilient, most creative and most open to learning in your areas of strength.”

Myth: A good team member does whatever it takes to help the team.

Truth: A good team member deliberately volunteers his strengths to the team most of the time.

“I find your weaknesses and fix them the best way to improve your performance. Many times people believe that by finding ways to improve your weaknesses, you will excel. But as cited, we become more of who we are and excel the greatest when we focus on our strengths instead of trying to battle our weaknesses.”

As Buckingham says, “A great team member is not well-rounded. The great team is well-rounded, precisely because each great team member is not.”

Step 2: Get Clear
Do you know what your strengths are?

He states that a common misconception about what determines our personal strengths are the results we get from personality tests such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. However, he mentions that those may be mere signposts of a person’s area of strength but not the actual strength of a person.

He began to say that a person’s strengths are found in the “consistent, near perfect performance” activities he does. By looking beyond the personality labels and identifying the real world, specific activities you are good at, you will have a clearer idea on what your strengths are.

Step 3: Free your Strengths
How can you make the most of what strengthens you?

In the book, he mentions that when people are asked if they play to their greatest strengths at work, most of them reply with, “There’s a reason why it’s called ‘work’”, or “The world isn’t made for my happiness”, and they move on to contrast how some other job like performing arts or journalism are probably likely to do that.

It seems that people have “lost hope” and given up on the belief that work can equal to being able to express one’s strengths.

In the book, Buckingham explained that when you were a child, you knew which strengths drew you back again and again. You knew who you wanted to hang out with, which subjects interested you, and which teachers you really wanted to teach particular subjects.

Somewhere between then and now, that clarity has faded and your strengths have to a certain extent, become almost irrelevant.

Too often we are more concerned with our weaknesses. A research was done to ask the American workforce what they talk about when they meet their managers: their strengths or their weaknesses.

Thirty-five per cent of them answered with their weaknesses. Forty per cent said that their managers don’t talk to them about it. And only 25% said “strengths”.

This result proves that the world around you may not be concerned with your strengths which leaves us with a choice. Should we surrender to a life that does not view strengths as relevant or should we find a way to make them relevant?

Step 4: Stop your Weaknesses
How can you cut out what weakens you?

Many believe that when faced with our weaknesses, we need to work to improve them. Often times, we may even be com- mended for suffering through it and “not giving up”.

But by focusing the focus on your weaknesses and instead focusing on your strengths, it gives you room to excel.

Buckingham addresses strategies which he labels as ‘STOP’.

* Stopping the activity and seeing if anyone notices or cares.
* Bringing up with someone who is strengthened by the activity that weakens you.
* Offering up one of your strengths and gently steering away from your weak area.
* Perceiving your weaknesses from a different perspective.

Step 5: Speak Up
How can you create strong teams?

Learning to talk about your strengths and weaknesses without sounding like you’re bragging or feeling incompetent is another lesson learnt from this book. One of the tips he includes for strength-based managers is to listen to what the employee is saying and offering ideas for action.

You may feel that as a manager, you know the strengths and weaknesses of your employee, but this may or may not be true. Listen to what your employee has to say because he knows what strengths or weaknesses of his employee may be lazy, then perhaps you might need to remove him from his current role or off the team.

If you really can’t remove your employee from doing a particular activity, then perhaps you can explain how you need him to be in this certain role for the time being. However, you will be open to discuss ways on steering him away from those activities slowly, while still making sure the work gets done somehow.

Step 6: Build Strong Habits
How can you make this last forever?

To be able to do a job day after day, week in and week out, will require you to have strong habits that will push you towards what strengthens you.

Writing out strength and weakness statement cards and creating a strong week plan are just some of the ways that will help you build strong habits.

My Thoughts
This book addresses questions we all may have had at some point in life.

What do I do when I burn out? What if I have a manager who doesn’t understand me? What if I don’t think I’m as good as everyone says I am?

The best part about this book is that it does not just give theories or “nice to hear” statements. Instead it gives you practical ways to discover your strengths, focus on them and not just learn from mistakes.

Buckingham includes activities in the book for you to immediately apply these mistakes. The principles are clear-cut and not just “airy fairy” ideologies on how we can improve ourselves. He also breaks down false perceptions we might have resorted to in our work life.

I recommend this book for anyone, whether you are a manager, an employee, or a full-time mother, as this book will give many pertinent insights for your personal development.
A ROADMAP FOR ACHIEVING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS

1. INVEST IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT FIRST (AND CONSISTENTLY)

Before entering the matchmaking profession, I spent several years in self-development. I went back to school and obtained a graduate degree, participated in multiple coaching programmes, became an intern (as a 30-year-old adult), attended numerous conferences and more. I noticed that many of my peers stopped the “study” grind once they “made it.” But I’ve learnt that sustained success is dependent upon the research of your craft and is something that should never stop.

2. STOP CHASING MONEY AND START CHASING PROBLEMS

Successful entrepreneurs don’t create a lasting legacy or make fortunes because they can come up with clever solutions. It’s because they become infatuated with problems. In previous ventures, I was always fixated on either making money or making cool products. When I became a matchmaker, I changed my focus to a problem that has kept me up at night for the last six years.

3. NEVER BE DEPENDENT ON ONE SOURCE OF INCOME

Diversify from day one. When I started matchmaking, I quickly realised that matchmaking was cyclical (with summer months being the slow season), so I launched coaching services and flow dating events.

4. REMOVE ALL MIDDLEMEN

I love affiliate programmes, but know you’re never going to make a fortune peddling books that aren’t yours. Television shows don’t actually bring people money, but I know several people who do by developing their own videos and delivering them to their fans directly.

5. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS ‘GET RICH QUICK’

Get rid of your “I’m going to be a millionaire by ___ (fill in desired age).” Also, stop with the thoughts that your pyramid marketing participation is going to make you a billionaire. It’s simply not healthy.

6. GET SERIOUS ABOUT ANALYTICS

Someone once said, “What doesn’t get measured doesn’t get done.” Once I was able to better identify where customers came from, how long the sales process was, and what messages better resonated with the customers, I was able to dramatically increase conversion rates. For measurement of my efforts, I use Google, Facebook, and Twitter analytics.

7. FOCUS ON ONE CUSTOMER AT A TIME

My grandfather once told me, “You don’t have a real business unless you can sell a product to 10 people.” So, early in my matchmaking career, I focused on selling to those 10. In the process, I learnt the importance of listening and adjusting.

All great entrepreneurs will make slight modifications to their products and services along the way. Listening and adjusting are imperative (that’s how I’m not only got to the 10 in the early days, but how I surpassed 600 clients over six years).

Each new customer should realise the value of your knowledge from your experience with all the previous customers.

8. CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR GREATER

Even after you achieve your goals in both business and life, there’s always growth when new challenges are identified and tackled. One never “arrives,” so it’s important to continue to set your goals—whatever they may be—higher and higher.

CONCLUSION

There’s really a variety of important factors that contribute to the achievement of this goal: stepping out on faith, proper positioning and planning, and training. While money isn’t everything and is certainly not the key indicator of success, having tangible resources to work with while on the path to making your dreams come true is important and very encouraging.
By CHRISTOPHER MOORE
training@leaderonomics.com

WHAT TO DO WHEN WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS TURN SOUR

REPAIRING DAMAGED RELATIONSHIPS

IN the wonderful world of work, sometimes relationships fracture. It happens for all kinds of reasons; an argument during a meeting or a comment you make offhand that really rubbed someone the wrong way. Maybe it is – at least partly – your fault, because you’ve lost your temper and caused someone else to “lose face”. Work relationships, like trust, take a long time to build and can be broken far too easily. It’s best of course to avoid these types of situations completely.

There’s a whole myriad of things you can do to keep things positive in the first place, but once you’re in a hostile territory, all you can do is to find a way out. Here are some tips that’ll help you get that angry colleague back on your team.

1 UNDERSTAND THE CAUSE OF THE PROBLEM

Harvey Deutschendorf, author and emotional intelligence expert, advises that empathy is the key to working better with others. Putting yourself in someone else’s shoes will yield surprisingly valuable insights into why a situation is the way it is.

Generally, when your working relationship has broken down with another person, there are only going to be two causes. Either:

a. You did something to them, or
b. You did not do anything and something else is happening in their world to make them act this way.

Try grabbing a pen and paper and write a paragraph describing yourself from the other person’s perspective. Do they see you as a good listener? Might you ever have a real shot at turning things around and, for the time being, at least, getting back onto neutral ground.

2 WORK OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE

Remember, this colleague doesn’t like you for a reason! Once you’ve worked out what that is, you have to work out what you want the relationship to look like in the future.

Do you want to be best friends with this person? Is that realistic? Or do you just want cordial interactions so you can get the job done?

You need to have a crystal clear goal and purpose in mind when you start patching up a relationship, because if you approach it willy-nilly, it’s akin to walking into a minefield without a metal detector. One wrong step and everything could get a whole lot worse, so you need to be prepared.

When planning this out, Amy Gallo, author of Harvard Business Review’s HBR Guide to Managing Conflict at Work gives this advice:

“If your goal is to stick it to the other person or to show them that they’re wrong, think of a better goal. Because most likely… the goal is really something else. It’s to get the project done on time. It’s to meet a tight deadline. It’s to come in under budget.”

If you have a handle on this, as well as a plan on what you want to say, you have a real shot at turning things around and, for the time being, at least, getting back onto neutral ground.

3 DO SOME READING ON HOW TO TALK TO PEOPLE

The exact way we use words has a dramatic effect on the people around us. For example, if you observe that a friend or colleague is in a bad mood, you could say, “Wow, someone’s grouchy today”, or instead you could say “Hey, how is everything going today? Do you need any support?”

Both of these questions take you in the same direction, but the way you say it, is the difference between an axe to the neck or a nice massage.

If you’re going to try to patch things up with a colleague, remember:

• Use questions rather than statements.
• Don’t imply blame or responsibility.
• Keep the outcome you want in mind.

4 ACCEPT THAT YOU JUST CAN’T GET ALONG WITH EVERYONE – AND FOCUS ON THE JOB

My first boss, who is a mentor to this day, gave me this advice when I was frustrated by the way I was treated by various colleagues in my first job.

“What they’re doing says a lot more about them than it says about you.

Some people, after all, just aren’t so easy to get along with and that’s not necessarily your responsibility. In fact, it’s something you have to accept.

If you plan to stand for something in your work and life, there are going to be people who disagree with you and what you represent.

At times like this, you may just have to accept that this relationship is never going to be kowtow-dovey and instead start focusing on your work outcomes. Can you get around this person? Can you make arrangements such that they will agree to provide what you need? Could your manager or another party help you mediate?

IN SUMMARY

The most important thing to do if you want to fix a problem like this is to take responsibility for it, whether or not it’s your fault.

In this case, the other person has already demonstrated that they would be perfectly happy never to speak to you again, so you have to swallow your pride, be prepared to lose a little face of your own, and make the effort to improve things.

Also, keep in mind there is a difference between a broken work-relationship which could result in hostility (or being outright ignored) and a colleague who is bullying or harassing you. That’s a completely different situation and one that requires a very different approach.

You are at work to work, and having productive relationships with all colleagues is tantamount to success in your career, so do everything you can to keep your relationships in good repair.

Christopher Moore is an Australian finance professional with experience working on assignment in six countries. In all that time he’s bound to have made a few enemies! If you feel that his work-life examples resonate with your own, you can let Christopher know by e-mailing him at editor@leaderonomics.com.
The Best-Laid Plans...

By LOUISA DEVADASON
louisa.allycyn@leaderonomics.com

... our finest moments are most likely to occur when we are feeling deeply uncomfortable, unhappy, or unfulfilled. For it is only in such moments, propelled by our discomfort, that we are likely to step out of our rut and start searching for different ways or true answers.” – M. Scott Peck

I don’t know about you but my life hasn’t entirely gone according to “my plan.” In fact, this moment in my life looks like nothing I envisioned it to be 10 years ago. Is that a bad thing? Have I failed at accomplishing my goals? I often wondered.

The last decade has been both harrowing and somehow liberating. I began my foundation programme at 18, like many others my age, with a million ideas and dreams.

However, after a series of illnesses and degenerative disc disease, I began to feel like everything was derailing. I returned to class in-between stints in the hospital, feeling lost and weary.

I struggled, trudging behind in my course content and not being able to form deeper connections with my peers due to my absence.

I no longer felt confident that the subjects I had chosen were right for me. One day, I said to myself, “Maybe I should take a hiatus and work as a barista till I have my opportunity back.”

I began training and it was an educational exchange.

At one such event, I met someone who gave me an opportunity to train as a barista and I was anxious. It was a new style of learning and challenged my ideals and values.

As I expanded my mind and became more enthralled by what I was learning, I began to share my new findings and was made aware of how little people knew about the field and the impression that mental illness and Freudian psychoanalysis, what astounded me further was the apprehension people still had towards mental illness and the impression that was still held against those experiencing mental illness.

I have no guarantee what the next few years will look like or exactly where I will find myself but I’m anxious and earnest. I will go where curiosity and opportunity take me. I love to write and bake, and I love to learn. My three years studying psychology have been a revelation but not unintended.

I have no guarantee what the next few years will look like or exactly where I will find myself but I’m anxious and earnest. I will go where curiosity and opportunity take me. I love to write and bake, and I love to learn. My three years studying psychology have been a revelation but not unintended.

I was doing, would be the safer, more acceptable career choice.

Values and visions started to take form or be reinforced. I understood that diversity. Change is hard but harder for some who value concrete ideas and find it crazy living in a grey world.

I began my study, fixated on becoming a psychologist because that’s what I believed the end goal of completing this degree should be.

Over time, I have new ideas about career and the life I want. Maybe I still want to be a psychologist but is that all I can do? Is a career the only way I can find fulfilment and contribute to society? All I know is I do not want to stagnate. I want to grab exciting new opportunities and live a life filled with diverse experiences, connected to others and affecting lives.

I am drawn to a more lattice model of career management, a multi-directional, flexible and expansive model that shifts one’s mindset from the chaos of Industrial Age ideology to the knowledge economy. I am in the process of creating a person that I want to be and developing skills that I want to have, and living and reinforcing values I feel strongly about.

The Road From Here

I have no guarantee what the next few years will look like or exactly where I’ll find myself but I’m anxious and earnest. I will go where curiosity and opportunity take me. I love to write and bake, and I love to learn. Finding joy in learning gives you so much to love and wonder. What I do know for sure, is my vision, to innovate, learn and empower communities.

“Visions don’t change; they are only refined. Plans rarely stay the same, and are scrapped or adjusted as needed. Be stubborn about the vision, but flexible with your plan.” – John C. Maxwell

Also next week

Two different principles: How to find the balance?

Business gone bananas: Monkey see, monkey do

Life lessons from a kung-fu master

Get ready to put your game face on!