WHAT IT ACTUALLY TAKES TO KEEP YOUR A+ TALENT

NINE IDIOTIC RULES THAT DRIVE YOU INSANE

PURPLE RAIN: IN MEMORY OF PRINCE

Happy Labour Day from LEADERONOMICS
SAYING ‘THANKS’ IS NOT ENOUGH

BY LOUISA DEVADASON
editor@leaderonomics.com

“Do we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.” — John F. Kennedy

It is inevitable. The hustle and bustle of modern career life pulls us in so many directions that we often find ourselves on autopilot – only able to offer expected pleasantries to the people who work for us and with us. We automatically say thank you to someone who’s done well in the moment and then carry on.

Yes. We thank them for what they did, but do we appreciate the human being? Do we recognise the values and strengths that make them great? Do we see their good work as a much larger picture of their potential?

The act of recognising and appreciating employees is crucial. Making it a principle is pivotal to enhancing and building the strengths and characteristics that are already present in the individuals.

IN PRACTICE

Appreciation and recognition must go hand-in-hand to be effective so it’s important to understand them individually before synthesising the concepts.

RECOGNITION

1. Communication is key between management and employees which rewards them for reaching specific goals or producing high quality results in the workplace. Recognising or honouring employees for this level of service is meant to encourage repeat actions, through reinforcing the behaviour you would like to see repeated.

2. APPRECIATION

Appreciation is, collectively, the full awareness and enjoyment of the good qualities of someone. Showing gratitude towards someone and by doing so increasing their value in your eyes and in the eyes of the company.

One could view recognition as the extrinsic part: rewarding someone for his or her performance through bonuses, promotions, and acknowledgement. Appreciation, however, is more intrinsic – it is how much you value people and who they are as well as what they have to offer. You need to sincerely feel appreciative in order to be appreciative.

A recent survey found that employees were more loyal and productive when their superiors took time to say, face-to-face, what they appreciated about them and pass on these praises to senior management. In fact, when bosses specifically thank employees for a contribution or a quality, it made them more receptive to feedback. All it took was a minute to leave them a handwritten note, drop them an e-mail or just say, “you did ____ great!”

IN SHORT

When you recognise and appreciate people, you highlight their strengths, you reinforce good behaviour and you make them feel significant. Most importantly, you grow their potential and they become a greater asset to the company.

Employee appreciation and recognition is never out of place. In fact, in many organisations, it is often a scarce commodity. So, make your workplace the exception.

Louisa thanks you for reading this. To get in touch or to share your thoughts with her, e-mail louisa.allycyn@leaderonomics.com. For more articles like this, go to www.leaderonomics.com.

People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed, and redeemed, never throw out anyone.

— Audrey Hepburn
WHAT IT ACTUALLY TAKES TO KEEP YOUR A+ TALENT?

By BRIAN FIELKOW
editor@leaderonomics.com

F you talk to chief executive officers and business leaders on a regular basis, as we’re fortunate enough to do, you’ll find that everyone comes back to the exact same pain point: how can you keep your best people in the hyper-competitive market we find ourselves in?

A vibrant company culture is the single most important way to retain excellent employees. Some will push back to say that culture is fuzzy or elusive—difficult to measure.

The reality is that building a culture is a strategic decision and highly measurable, and also the best way to keep your A+ talent.

Deloitte’s 2015 Global Human Capital Trends Report found that 78% of today’s managers rate employee engagement and retention as some of their top concerns.

This concern comes as no surprise. The economy is on the rise and the unemployment rate is down to nearly 5%, a great time for employees to look around for greener pastures, and a challenging time to keep them on board.

Not too long ago, TINYpulse released its Employee Retention Report, unearthing five major trends impacting employee retention:

- Supervisors make or break retention. Employees with respectful managers are 32% less likely to think about looking for a new job.
- Colleagues play a major role in workplace satisfaction. Employees with low levels of peer respect are 10% less likely to stay with their employer.
- Workplace culture really matters. Employees that give workplace culture and environment low scores are 15% more likely to think about a new job.
- Taking a vacation is important. Employees who are encouraged to use their vacation days are 13% more likely to stay with their company.
- Employees care about professional growth. Employees are 10% more likely to stay with their employer when given the chance to grow professionally.

What’s remarkable to us about these trends is that they don’t zero in on compensation or benefits. Yes, compensation matters. But these data points show the significant role interpersonal and cultural matters have on overall workplace satisfaction and attrition numbers.

If leaders really want to move the retention needle, there are several no-cost solutions that will drive positive change.

HIRE FOR CULTURAL ALIGNMENT

As hiring managers, we know how quickly we want to fill an open position. But hiring someone just because they have the skills to do the job isn’t enough. We must hire for values, too. Just because an individual is technically proficient does not mean that he or she knows how to function in your unique culture. Peers and colleagues play a powerful role in motivating and encouraging each other.

If you don’t probe on value and culture fit during the interview process, you could find yourself with a technical wiz that alienates his or her colleagues and makes them want to look for a job elsewhere.

ORIENTATION VS INTEGRATION

As managers, we must understand the difference. Orientation happens during the first few days of a new employee joining your team. This is about the basics, such as general office procedures or the location of the restrooms.

Integration happens over the course of several months and is the process of the new employee understanding and supporting your company’s culture. In order to keep employees, integration is essential.

Consider assigning a trained mentor (i.e. culture ambassador) to be a resource during the new employee’s first year.

PROMOTE FOR FIT

Just as important as bringing in the right people is promoting the right people. Promote employees who embody your company’s values.

You’ll have the right leaders in place to mentor (and retain) your newest batch of young talent. Your team is more likely to match their behaviours to those that are recognised and rewarded by your organisation.

ENABLE CAREER GROWTH

In today’s increasingly millennials-driven workplaces, opportunities for professional growth aren’t a nice-to-have; they are a need-to-have. Whether they are internal opportunities like rotational programmes and lunch-and-learns or external opportunities like conferences and coursework, your employees are looking to build their skill set and grow within the company.

When you encourage this, you not only get a more talented workforce but also a more dedicated, retained workforce.

EMBRACE THE 3TS

Treatment, transparency and trust are the fundamental pillars of a healthy manager-employee relationship.

Data has shown that transparency is the No.1 driver of employee happiness. Why? Because it fosters healthy relationships and trust between leaders and their teams. Holding periodic one-to-one meetings between managers and their direct reports, as well as monthly company meetings can go a long way to cultivating positive workplace cultures where employees thrive.

Once you accept the idea that the three Ts are at the core of employee satisfaction, production, and reputation, you must develop your plan.

From ensuring your managers make time to learn about their team members as individuals, share key data points regularly and ensure your words and actions line-up. Upholding the three Ts will help ensure a healthy manager-employee relationship.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

All of these activities take deliberate action, and in some cases changes in how you might currently run your business. But they are worth it.

Recent studies show that the combined costs of recruitment, training, and lost productivity from replacing a lost team member is 20% of their annual salary. This doesn’t even cover the burden your team deals with by taking on more work in the short term.

Save yourself the headache and try these tactics out. Not only will you enjoy higher retention rates, you’ll find that you and your team will enjoy a more positive workplace.

Make no mistake about it—your positive workplace and unique culture is your secret ingredient. This is also what keeps your customers happy and coming back for more.
GROW, BUILD, TRANSFORM.

AT LEADERONOMICS, we believe leaders can profoundly affect the social, economic and spiritual health of communities they belong to. And we believe that all human beings have the potential for leadership. No matter who you are, what you do and whatever challenges are hampering your progress, Leaderonomics can help you and your organisation achieve maximum potential.

For tools, tips, tutorials, inspiring stories and knowledge to help you grow in your leadership, log on to www.leaderonomics.com
ON congratulations! After years of working hard and mastering your job, you finally got promoted. You’re now the boss. Armed with a bigger desk and a bigger pay cheque, the company now expects you to deliver more by leading a team of workers who also aspire to become like you in the future. Or do they?

By now, you should know that a bigger role also means bigger responsibilities—and that includes managing and developing the people who report to you. At the end of the day, their success is your victory too, and their mistakes are also your failures.

So are you a good boss, or will you eventually turn into a bad boss that everyone wishes to leave?

Before you grow some sharp fangs, thanks to all the stress from work, here’s a helpful list of what to look out for the moment you start managing a group of people:

1. Pass on too much work
   Sure, you’ve got tonnes of work to do because your company wants to achieve so much for the year. But that doesn’t give you the licence to simply pass them on to your team.
   Overworking your people, especially the good ones, puts your team performance at risk: it diminishes productivity and makes star performers feel they’re getting punished for being good at what they do.

2. The ‘know it all’
   It is frustrating and uninspiring to work for a boss whom you feel doesn’t deserve the position, especially when he arrogantly thinks he knows everything when everyone else thinks otherwise.

3. Don’t care about personal lives
   At work, we’re all expected to draw a clear line between office and personal life. But that doesn’t mean that our ability to genuinely care for someone becomes impossible too.
   Bad bosses simply don’t care. They think it’s too personal to ask how your weekend went. They suspect your recent filing of sick leave last Monday was because you were too lazy to go to work.
   Good bosses act otherwise. They try to understand your personal situations so they can get a bigger picture of where we’re coming from—why we come to work late, why we fear public speaking, or why we don’t get along with a colleague.

A good boss makes time to know your life story so he can help you become a better person regardless if you’re staying long in the company or not.

4. Good bosses own the responsibility of serving as a ‘traffic enforcer’, i.e. delegating which tasks must be done by who and assigning these tasks strategically based on their people’s strengths.

5. Bad bosses easily pass consulting projects that don’t contribute significantly to the bottom line—even if it means saying “no” to their own bosses at times.

5 Reasons Why Employees Quit Their Boss
Which one will you be? A good boss or a bad one?

Consulting Corner

By JONATHAN YABUT
editor@leaderonomics.com

www.leaderonomics.com | Saturday 30 April 2016
THE SILENT CRY OF DISENGAGED AND NEGLECTED EMPLOYEES

BY JOSEPH TAN
special@leaderonomics.com

In other words, how can we expect our employees to deliver their best if we fail to meet customer expectations if that can only be sustainable if it is matched with equal efforts of increasing the level of employee engagement as well.

WHAT CAN MANAGERS DO TO ADDRESS THIS?

If we show our employees to deliver an exceptional customer experience, responsibility as managers to design engaging employee experiences in the workplace. The intensity of internal engagement translates into extraordinary external customer engagement.

FROM AN ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE, ANY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME OUGHT TO BE COMPLEMENTED WITH A RESPECTFUL MANAGERS’ DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME. THIS IS BECAUSE THE TEAM—BE IT MANAGERS OR ANY OTHER CUSTOMERS ARE NOT OPTIMALLY EMOTIONALISED TO DO THEIR WORK.

If you would like to enhance the engagement level of your organisation by leveraging Joseph’s expertise, e-mail special@leaderonomics.com for more details. For more of his articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com

1 IDENTIFY THE EXPECTATIONS OF EVERY MEMBER OF THE TEAM

Knowing the talent of each individual is not the same as knowing each individual person. Identifying employees’ standard across different individuals but talent is to determine what each person can and can’t do. For example, are we expecting them to do the same role?

2 SET CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

According to Gallup, 50% of employees in the UK turn up for work not knowing what their priorities are, i.e. they are unsure of what their managers really want and why they are doing what they have to do. Yet, all of them would claim that they are busy. This means that we have employees who are busy but not productive. In other words, they are not performing to their best.

3 MOTIVATE AND ENAGE

Motivation is the easy part. Next, the need for emotional engagement. Your ability to present a compelling story of the purpose of what you and the team do.

4 DEVELOP

Developing the employee to ensure that he or she is emotionally ready for the tasks at hand is when it comes to emotional engagement. This is demonstrated when the manager makes time to be personally involved in designing a personal growth programme for every employee. Nothing energises an employee as much as the act of being cared for in terms of personal and professional development.

We are well in the know for emotional engagement evaluation and having a personal development tracker is certainly an enriching experience.

4 WAYS A MANAGER CAN HELP FILL IN THE EMOTIONAL BANK OF EMPLOYEES

4 PRACTICAL STEPS FOR MANAGERS TO CONNECT EMPLOYEES’ EMOTIONS WITH THE ACCELERATION PROCESS

- Consider the materials, equipment and resources required by employees to do a good job.
- Celebrate current accomplishments first before communicating the next one.
- Conduct small group conversations to address any doubts or lingering issues which may affect the achievement of the set goals.
- If you would like to enhance the engagement level of your organisation by leveraging Joseph’s expertise, e-mail special@leaderonomics.com for more details. For more of his articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com

DO YOU THINK THE LACK OF APPRECIATION IS ONE OF THE UNDERLYING FACTORS OF PEOPLES’ GUTTIN QUITTING THEIR JOBS? PLEASE SHARE YOUR OPINION.

APRIL 2016

Manager: HR consultant and trainer from a local organisation.

Lack of appreciation, in my opinion, is not necessarily the prime factor for people quitting their jobs. It also depends on the generation. Millennials (or Generation Y) would expect a fair bit of appreciation from their bosses and the organisation. If this is not forthcoming, they would probably explore other job opportunities, especially if they are looking to fast-track their career, which is quite common nowadays. In general, and I believe statistics support this as well, that employees leave bosses and not the company. So in that sense, quitting a job’s on you to be part of a lack of appreciation, especially when you have a “boss from hell.”


Offering appreciation at the workplace can be conducted in different ways. Simply expressing a sense of gratitude through verbal recognition such as “good work” or “thank you” can ensure that employees know you appreciate them, especially where the gesture is shown in front of other colleagues. For a more formal recognition, meaning in certifying something or confirming a subordinate, peer or boss for employee awards.

THE SILENT CRY OF DISENGAGED AND NEGLECTED EMPLOYEES

BY JOSEPH TAN
special@leaderonomics.com

Last week, I visited the sales manager team of one of the largest paraeducational organisations in the world which serves over eight million students. What’s interesting to note is that while many of its front line sales representatives have already sold, continuing to persistently sell. This presents a paradoxical scenario: the organisation is caught up meeting with the increasing demands of the public but has been neglecting the internal needs of its employees. Here lies the danger—the silent cry for affirmation and appreciation often goes unheeded in the midst of the ever-increasing demand for high performance and productivity. The question to consider is this: Is it possible to meet increasing client demands without jeopardising the emotional well-being of employees?

THE DEMAND FOR ACCELERATION

The company continually sets out not wanting to disappoint its client. However, engaging increasing demand for high performance, each passing year is also the loud statement that we have employees who are busy but not purposeful.

Joseph Tan is CEO of Leaderonomics Good Monday. His passion is to work with performance-focused leaders to capture the hearts and minds of their employees through a strengths-based and accountability-driven approach. Much of what is shared in the article comes from his work as a Gallup-certified strengths coach.

By JOSEPH TAN
editor@leaderonomics.com

Saturday 30 April 2016

www.leaderonomics.com

If we show our employees to deliver an exceptional customer experience, responsibility as managers to design engaging employee experiences in the workplace. The intensity of internal engagement translates into extraordinary external customer engagement.

From an organisational development perspective, any customer experience programme ought to be complemented with a respectful managers’ development programme. This is because the team—be it managers or any other customers are not optimally emotionalised to do their work.

If you would like to enhance the engagement level of your organisation by leveraging Joseph’s expertise, e-mail special@leaderonomics.com for more details. For more of his articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com

DO YOU THINK THE LACK OF APPRECIATION IS ONE OF THE UNDERLYING FACTORS OF PEOPLES’ GUTTIN QUITTING THEIR JOBS? PLEASE SHARE YOUR OPINION.

APRIL 2016

Manager: HR consultant and trainer from a local organisation.

Lack of appreciation, in my opinion, is not necessarily the prime factor for people quitting their jobs. It also depends on the generation. Millennials (or Generation Y) would expect a fair bit of appreciation from their bosses and the organisation. If this is not forthcoming, they would probably explore other job opportunities, especially if they are looking to fast-track their career, which is quite common nowadays. In general, and I believe statistics support this as well, that employees leave bosses and not the company. So in that sense, quitting a job’s on you to be part of a lack of appreciation, especially when you have a “boss from hell.”


Offering appreciation at the workplace can be conducted in different ways. Simply expressing a sense of gratitude through verbal recognition such as “good work” or “thank you” can ensure that employees know you appreciate them, especially where the gesture is shown in front of other colleagues. For a more formal recognition, meaning in certifying something or confirming a subordinate, peer or boss for employee awards.

THE SILENT CRY OF DISENGAGED AND NEGLECTED EMPLOYEES

BY JOSEPH TAN
special@leaderonomics.com

Last week, I visited the sales manager team of one of the largest paraeducational organisations in the world which serves over eight million students. What’s interesting to note is that while many of its front line sales representatives have already sold, continuing to persistently sell. This presents a paradoxical scenario: the organisation is caught up meeting with the increasing demands of the public but has been neglecting the internal needs of its employees. Here lies the danger—the silent cry for affirmation and appreciation often goes unheeded in the midst of the ever-increasing demand for high performance and productivity. The question to consider is this: Is it possible to meet increasing client demands without jeopardising the emotional well-being of employees?

THE DEMAND FOR ACCELERATION

The company continually sets out not wanting to disappoint its client. However, engaging increasing demand for high performance, each passing year is also the loud statement that we have employees who are busy but not purposeful.

Joseph Tan is CEO of Leaderonomics Good Monday. His passion is to work with performance-focused leaders to capture the hearts and minds of their employees through a strengths-based and accountability-driven approach. Much of what is shared in the article comes from his work as a Gallup-certified strengths coach.

By JOSEPH TAN
editor@leaderonomics.com

Saturday 30 April 2016

www.leaderonomics.com

If we show our employees to deliver an exceptional customer experience, responsibility as managers to design engaging employee experiences in the workplace. The intensity of internal engagement translates into extraordinary external customer engagement.

From an organisational development perspective, any customer experience programme ought to be complemented with a respectful managers’ development programme. This is because the team—be it managers or any other customers are not optimally emotionalised to do their work.

If you would like to enhance the engagement level of your organisation by leveraging Joseph’s expertise, e-mail special@leaderonomics.com for more details. For more of his articles, visit www.leaderonomics.com

DO YOU THINK THE LACK OF APPRECIATION IS ONE OF THE UNDERLYING FACTORS OF PEOPLES’ GUTTIN QUITTING THEIR JOBS? PLEASE SHARE YOUR OPINION.

APRIL 2016

Manager: HR consultant and trainer from a local organisation.

Lack of appreciation, in my opinion, is not necessarily the prime factor for people quitting their jobs. It also depends on the generation. Millennials (or Generation Y) would expect a fair bit of appreciation from their bosses and the organisation. If this is not forthcoming, they would probably explore other job opportunities, especially if they are looking to fast-track their career, which is quite common nowadays. In general, and I believe statistics support this as well, that employees leave bosses and not the company. So in that sense, quitting a job’s on you to be part of a lack of appreciation, especially when you have a “boss from hell.”


Offering appreciation at the workplace can be conducted in different ways. Simply expressing a sense of gratitude through verbal recognition such as “good work” or “thank you” can ensure that employees know you appreciate them, especially where the gesture is shown in front of other colleagues. For a more formal recognition, meaning in certifying something or confirming a subordinate, peer or boss for employee awards.
In just about every instance, upon closer inspection, we realised that establishing a new rule would be a passive and morale-killing way to address the problem. The vast majority of the time, the problem needs to be handled one-on-one by the employee's manager.

When companies create ridiculous and demoralising rules to halt the un行きな planning behaviour of a few individuals, it's a management problem. There's no sense in alienating your entire workforce because you don't know how to manage performance. It makes a sad situation that much worse.

Here are nine of the worst rules that companies create when they fall into this trap:

1. Restricting Internet Use
   There are certain sites that no one should be visiting at work, and I'm not talking about Facebook. But once you block pornography and the other obvious stuff, it's a difficult and arbitrary process deciding where to draw the line.
   Most companies draw it in the wrong place.
   People should be able to kill time on the Internet during breaks. When companies unnecessarily restrict people's Internet activity, it does more than demoralise those that can't check Facebook; it limits people's ability to do their jobs. Many companies restrict Internet activity so heavily that it makes it difficult for people to do online research. The most obvious example?
   Checking the Facebook profile of someone you just interviewed.

2. Ridiculous Requirements for Attendance, Leave, and Time Off
   People are salaried for the work they do, not the specific hours they sit at their desks. When you ding salaried employees for showing up five minutes late even though they routinely stay late and put in time on the weekend, you send the message that policies take precedence over performance.
   It reeks of distrust, and you don't trust your employees to use e-mail properly, why did you hire them in the first place? In trying to rein in the bad guys, you make everyone miserable every time they send an e-mail. And guess what? The bad guys are the ones who will find ways to get around any system you put in place.

3. Draconian E-mail Policies
   This is a newer one that's already moving down a slippery slope. Some companies are getting so restrictive with e-mail use that employees must select from a list of pre-approved topics before the e-mail software will allow them to send a message.
   Again, it's about trust. If you don't trust your employees to use e-mail properly, why did you hire them in the first place? In trying to rein in the bad guys, you make everyone miserable every time they send an e-mail. And guess what? The bad guys are the ones who will find ways to get around any system you put in place.

4. Limiting Bathroom Breaks
   If you're going to limit people's trips to the bathroom, you might as well come out and tell them that you wish they were a bunch of robots. When you limit basic personal freedom by counting people's trips to the bathroom, they start counting their days at the company. The day you have to bring in a doctor's note to prove that you warrant additional trips to the bathroom is the day you need to find another job.

5. Stealing Employees' Frequent Flyer Miles
   If there's one thing that road-weary travelling employees earn, it's their frequent flyer miles. When employers don't let people keep their miles for personal use, it's a greedy move that fuels resentment with every flight. Work travel is a major sacrifice of time, energy, and sanity. Taking employees' miles sends the message that you don't appreciate their sacrifice and that you'll hold on to every last dollar at their expense.

6. Pathetic Attempts at Political Correctness
   Maintaining high standards for how people treat each other is a wonderful thing as we live in a world that's rife with animosity and discrimination. Still employers have to know where to draw the line. Going on a witch-hunt because someone says “Bless you” to another employee that sneezed (real example) creates an environment of paranoia and stifled self-expression, without improving how people treat each other.

7. Bell Curves and Forced Rankings of Performance
   Some individual talents follow a natural bell-shaped curve, but job performance does not. When you force employees to fit into a predetermined ranking system, you do three things: 1) incorrectly evaluate people's performance, 2) make everyone feel like a number, and 3) create insecurity and dissatisfaction when performing employees fear that they'll be fired due to the forced system. This is yet another example of a lazy policy that avoids the hard and necessary work of evaluating each individual objectively, based on his or her merits.

8. Banning Mobile Phones
   If I ban mobile phones in the office, no one will waste time texting and talking to family and friends, right? Yeah, right. Organisations need to do the difficult work of hiring people who are trustworthy and who won't take advantage of things. They also need to train managers to deal effectively with employees who underperform and/or violate expectations (such as spending too much time on their phones). This is also hard work, but it's worth it. The easy, knee-jerk alternative (banning phones) demoralises good employees who need to check their phones periodically due to pressing family or health issues or as an appropriate break from work.

9. Shutting Down Self-Expression (Personal Items and Dress Code)
   Many organisations control what people can have at their desks. A life-size poster of a shirtless Fabio? I get it; that's a problem. But employers dictate how many photographs people can display, whether or not they can use a water bottle, and how many items they're allowed to place on their desks. Once again, it's the other end! “If I could just hire robots I wouldn't have this problem” approach.
   Same goes for dress codes. They work well in private high schools, but they're unnecessary at work. Hire professionals and they'll dress professionally. When someone crosses the line, their manager needs to have the skill to address the issue directly. Otherwise, you're making everyone wish they worked somewhere else because management is too inept to handle touchy subjects effectively.

These rules are not limited to office environments, but can be found in schools and universities as well. They are not limited to specific industries, but can be found in all types of organisations.

By TRAVIS BRADBERRY
editor@leaderonomics.com
A CORPORATE WOMAN JEWEL

PRICELESS LEADERSHIP TIPS FROM ELAINE FAN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF CONSUMER BUSINESS, CITI MALAYSIA

FAN’S 5 NUGGETS OF WISDOM
1. Don’t be afraid to ask questions for clarity.
2. Take on new challenges. There’s more to gain than to lose.
3. Fall, but get up again and move on.
4. Find a role model or a mentor.
5. Never lose sight of your goals and purpose.

At Leaderonomics, we interview great leaders on a weekly basis. To watch some of our great interviews with game-changing leaders, go to YouTube and subscribe to the “Leaderonomics Media” channel. Scan the following QR code to find out more.

PARTING ADVICE
As Fan is now at the height of her career, she shares some tips for people who want to emulate her success to be where she is at today, besides achieving work-life balance as a female corporate leader.

“Seek guidance from a mentor or a role model. Don’t be afraid to make mistakes, but always learn from these experiences because they help you become a better person. Although sacrifices may need to be made for work and life commitments, ensure that you know what you want before setting your priorities right from the beginning. Give your best in all you do and don’t stop learning,” concludes Fan.

Sign up at events@twcww.org for a full day of learning from world-class speakers, authors, trainers, and thought leaders. All proceeds from this conference will be donated to 10 charities in Malaysia.

Check out bersama@laboh.org or contact scott@scottfriedman.net for more information. Only limited seats left (Hurry) Register now.
WHAT TO DO IF YOU WORK FOR A JERK

By JOSEPH GRENNY
editor@leaderonomics.com

Mike used to love going to work each day. He was in a role in which he could use his talents to make a difference in the world by helping people. During team meetings, he would eagerly participate with his teammates and offer up ideas about how his company could work smarter, but most of those ideas were quickly rejected by his boss. Soon, he noticed that one of his ideas was adopted by the company, and his boss took all the credit. Unfortunately, this wasn’t an isolated event. Not only that, his boss would openly complain in front of other executives about the lack of talent on his team, and how he was the only person in the department who came up with great ideas.

Needless to say, it didn’t take Mike long to start slacking off. He started looking for a new job six months after he was hired.

INTRODUCING THE DISAGREEABLE BOSS

Unfortunately, for many people, work has lost its lustre. Employees who were once motivated to come in early or stay late now have a tendency to take off early, show up late, or even call in sick. Is this trend simply a sign of a career adjustment. It turns out that when it matters most, most of us do our worst at communicating our concerns. Disturbingly, almost two-thirds of survey respondents admitted they will quit before ever really speaking their mind. However, a disagreeable boss does not have to be the ticket to a dead-end career. With the proper set of skills, any employee can turn a less-than-pleasant working relationship into one that will restore a desired level of respect and civility.

WHAT IS THE REAL ISSUE HERE?

The problem could, in fact, be an employee’s unwillingness or even inability to candidly share concerns about his or her working relationship with the boss. The survey revealed that only one in five people have even attempted to fully lay out his concerns with his boss. It’s no wonder employees aren’t enjoying their careers as much as they could be. When you can’t approach your supervisor, work suddenly feels less enjoyable and productive, and more like detention. Our research team has determined that most people don’t know how to candidly and respectfully express concerns to anyone, let alone a person of higher power or authority. It turns out that when it matters most, most of us do our worst at communicating our concerns. Disturbingly, almost two-thirds of survey respondents admitted they will quit before ever really speaking their mind.

However, a disagreeable boss does not have to be the ticket to a dead-end career. With the proper set of skills, any employee can turn a less-than-pleasant working relationship into one that will restore a desired level of respect and civility.

In fact, survey respondents who stated that they do speak up and feel skilled at holding what we call “crucial confrontations” with their bosses, were more satisfied with their current jobs and less likely to look elsewhere. They were also less likely to bad-mouth the boss to others or to work around the boss’s weaknesses.

LEARNING HOW TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

So, if you begin dragging your feet on the way to work because your boss is disagreeable—maybe even a jerk—use the following skills to successfully confront your manager and begin the path to career revival.

1. WORK ON YOU FIRST, THE BOSS SECOND

Get your emotions in check by looking for how you may be adding to the problem. It isn’t that the boss doesn’t have faults; it’s that most people tend to exaggerate their boss’s problems and ignore how they may be contributing.

2. HOLD THE RIGHT CONVERSATION

Most people think they are giving their boss feedback, but fail to get to the real issue that concerns them. If your fundamental concern is that your boss doesn’t respect you or that you don’t trust your boss, find a way to discuss that issue without skirt ing around it.

3. START WITH SAFETY

It can be tough to tell your boss you don’t trust him or her. But it is completely possible to do so without rupturing the relationship if you can help your boss feel safe. People feel psychologically safe when they know you care about their interests and respect them.

Start with: “I have a concern I’d like to discuss. It’s important to me, but it’s also something I think will help me work more effectively. May I discuss it with you?”

4. FACTS FIRST

Don’t start with harsh judgments or vague conclusions like, “I don’t trust you,” or, “You’re a control freak.” Instead, start with the facts.

Strip out any judgemental or provocative language and be specific. For example, “After you told me you brought me up for a promotion in the human resource meeting, two people who were at that meeting e-mailed me and asked why you hadn’t recommended me for it.”

To know more about being an engaging leader, check out our leadership articles on www.leaderonomics.com or drop us an e-mail at training@leaderonomics.com.

This article is about being an engaging leader and relationships. His passion and expertise is human behaviour and its impact on business performance and relationships.

To download the PDF version, please visit www.leaderonomics.com or email training@leaderonomics.com.
IMPORTANT OF BEING A RESPONSIBLE PARENT

April is family month and here at Leaderonomics, we celebrate the importance of good leadership in families. We asked our wonderful readers who are parents to send in their stories about the leadership traits they have modelled to their families. We’ve received many entries and are proud to announce the winner of the special 50% discount to Leaderonomics’ six-day DIODE camp.

Congratulations to Yon See Ting on her winning entry!

THE WINNING STORY

I have two daughters and my husband is an ethnic Malay, while I am ethnic Chinese. I have emphasised to my girls since young, how important it is to be colour blind and to respect not only people but also care for animals and the environment. They spent their early childhood in both sides of their grandparents’ houses, thus growing up exposed to different cultures and religions.

They had pets such as rabbits and cats to care for and love. They visited parks and forests, catching tadpoles and of course releasing them later. I have taught them the value of hard work as well as independent thought and speech but this is to be underscored with respect and compassion. They know and believe that women are just as capable as men.

I am very proud of Liyana, now 18 and Sofia May, aged 15. They mix well with their friends of different ethnicities, religions and economic strata. They work hard and participate in their curricular activities.

Liyana is studying hard for her A-levels. She sings well and everyone enjoys her performances. Sofia May enjoys participating in her Model United Nation activities and is also a very talented make-up artist.

It is my wish that they will become future leaders of the world in the sense of being individuals who will love and respect others while working hard to achieve their own dreams.

Of course, my husband is an excellent supporter and leader in our journey to raise our girls!

TIME-LIMITED OFFER

Leaderonomics just launched a specially customised digital learning platform and content for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)! We now have a library of courses that will help you (and your colleagues) build leadership skills with a customised Learning Management System that comes together with these courses.

The courses and platform are now available at a ridiculously crazy price just for you. For a limited time only, you can now sign up your entire company for as low as RM600 per month, all inclusive (including content + platform). And best of all, this is 100% claimable from Human Resources Development Fund.

Great organisations are learning organisations. Is your organisation a learning organisation? If it is not, here is your opportunity to transform your organisation into a learning organisation.
BECOMING THE PRINCE OF INNOVATION

IN MEMORY OF THE FUNKY LEADER

By PETER COOK
editor@leaderonomics.com

FROM class pop classics such as Purple Rain, Diamonds and Pearls and U Got The Look to high-class jazz, soul and funk such as Sign O’ The Times. Avalanche and We Live 2 Get Funky, to working with artists such as Miles Davis, Chaka Khan, Stevie Wonder and so on, the name Prince is synonymous with innovation in music.

In my book Leading Innovation, Creativity and Enterprise I use the examples of Prince, Sheila E and George Clinton to address transferable lessons for leaders and entrepreneurs trying to do new things alongside the more usual Masters in Business Administration case studies.

Unlike many performers in rock’s monoculture, a live performance by Prince is often different every night. This is because Prince operates from a menu of 300 songs, which the band may be called to play at any time. Many other artists prefer to perfect and then repeat their set night after night, because it is seen as a huge risk to make mistakes in front of a stadium-sized audience. According to Prince: “Doing a residency in any particular city requires a large repertoire to ensure repeat business.”

What are the parallel lessons for businesses that are interested in being fast, nimble and continuously innovative? Here are some:

LESSON #1
If you want to be nimble and adaptive, practise, practise, practise.

To reach mastery in improvisation paradoxically requires intensive detailed preparation. What looks like a seamless performance is the result of many hours of preparation and Prince is meticulous in this respect.

I had the chance to study this at close range at one of his concerts at London’s Roundhouse. Watching Prince perform is better than attending a masterclass on the everyday habits of a polymath in action.

For a wink of his “third eye”, Prince simultaneously:

• Sends signals to the sound crew that his guitar sound needs adjustment.
• Requests the lighting crew to make changes to the lighting.
• Gestures to the band to extend, shorten and vary the songs using a series of hand signals whilst simultaneously dancing.
• Works the audience through various facial expressions, winking at a member of the audience while in the middle of pulling a contorted guitarist’s ecstasy pose and playing solo, etc. Prince plays with the irony of the whole rock performance genre in ways that make you forget he is 57 years old.
• Operates his array of floor pedals with his feet, fixes microphones and so on.

It’s all going on with Prince. Every muscle, limb and corpuscle are centred on his performance and, more importantly, the performances of those around him and the expectations of his diverse audience. It’s no surprise that he is adored by people who are better than yourself. It’s also no surprise that some lesser mortals loose his unique combination of musicianship and showmanship as it’s just “too good” in comparison to their own skills.

I discuss the concept of personal mastery in my book under the heading of the “10,000 hours effect,” popularised by Tom Peters and, more recently, Malcolm Gladwell. The idea of prepared spontaneity contradicts what some so-called creativity and innovation gurus say on the subject. I see parallels across many industries. Sloppy creativity produces sloppy results in many businesses as well as in the rock business.

LESSON #2
Be a boundary crosser if you want to create a sustainable advantage in your marketplace.

Prince is also a master of fusing musical genres and influences outside his core style. This enables him to still exert a major influence on artists of the 21st century, such as Lady Gaga and Beyoncé. In business, the ability to cross mental boundaries is the parallel skill set, exemplified by companies such as J&J and Google.

In a recent interview, Google’s chief executive officer Larry Page said: “One of the primary goals I have is to get Google to be a big company that has the nimbleness and soul and passion and speed of a start-up.”

This means that, unlike most large companies, Google must tolerate and embrace failure if it is to continue to innovate. Practice makes perfect but it also allows for mistakes. Google’s approach may mean that we will see driverless cars in the future, powered by Google’s developments in geolocation.

LESSON #3
Innovation = Perspiration + Inspiration. Be prepared to sweat it out as well as glow with your ideas.

Prince’s level of risk-taking on stage is perhaps greater than other artists such as Celine Dion, who aims for a perfect, polished performance, which can be reproduced night after night. Through conversations with a session musician who works with Dion, this becomes apparent. Dion also showcases the individual band members in what appears to be a loose jam, but the order and sequence of each individual solo is preset in advance.

In contrast, Prince will call out individual band members for a solo on the fly. This requires every band member to be watching and waiting for the instructions that Prince gives to the band members.

Both approaches rest on meticulous preparation and practice if you want to reach out for excellence. An object lesson for all. If you want to be a star, know that perspiration is much more important than inspiration.

PS: Since writing this article, I was hit with the very sad news of Prince’s untimely death at 57 years old—the same age as me. I have spent most of the evening lost for words, but then some comfort came to me from his own song Comeback written about his only son who died shortly after birth. Inside this tragedy, Prince even finds hope and that is what makes him the leader he is. I have lost someone I felt a huge connection and friendship to. Sometimes it snows in April…

■ Peter Cook is passionate in the areas of science, business and music, and is the author of eight books, acclaimed by Tom Peters and Professor Charles Handy. He is also an accomplished rock, pop and jazz musician. Share with us how you feel about this article. Like us on Facebook, tweet about this article @Leaderonomics or check us out on Instagram.