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“the essence of leadership is relationship; influencing people to achieve things together that can’t be achieved alone.” — Leonard Sweet

Leadership Nuggets

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Quotes

"THE ESSENCE OF LEADERSHIP IS RELATIONSHIP: INFLUENCING PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE THINGS TOGETHER THAT CAN’T BE ACHIEVED ALONE.” — LEONARD SWEET

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IT PAYS TO BE A COLLABORATIVE LEADER

HOW A RELATIONSHIP-FIRST APPROACH DRIVES PROFITABILITY

By RACHEL HAPPE
editor@leaderonomics.com

T
RADITIONAL leadership focuses primarily on the transaction (sale, price, hire, stack price), which is a narrow focus. Collaborative leadership focuses on the relationships.

People with traditional leadership mindsets are trained to focus on the transaction—because they want the pitch, not the relationship. This is where brands stumble. It is the most important time because it sets expectations.

Some might think this is horrible branding. It can be frustrating when I am dismissed but it tells me so much about how comfortable, confident, and collaborative the other person is. I am always assessing collaboration—how adaptable are you? While I don’t fit with traditional leadership expectations and it feels very different. Frankly, I don’t have the time for a transaction-first approach. My time is precious. I do not want to spend it justifying myself, writing extensive contracts to itemise every potential scenario, arguing with colleagues about who is responsible for what, mollifying angry clients and scrambling to provide more value because clients don’t want to pay me.

And because I take a relationship-first approach, I never do all that. I can count on one hand the number of tense relationships I’ve had in seven years of running a business. I have very little stress and my time is spent on value-added activities. At an organisational level, if you have a transaction-first leadership approach and culture, you will pay more to manage any transaction. The other party will always make sure they are getting as much as they can from the transaction. They will ensure they get things delivered the way they want it—even if that wasn’t clarified at the start. They refer to the contract to ensure compliance. It’s hardball. It’s expensive and exhausting because everyone is trying to maximise the value of the transaction.

When you take a relationship-first leadership approach, it takes time. It is less predictable. You need to learn more about each other. You need to be committed to deepening the relationship, not just the outcome. You are constantly getting and giving feedback and adjusting as you go. No one else will like you and no one needs something from you—or doesn’t need something right now—so it can feel like wasted time.

However, when you have developed a trusted relationship, the cost of managing any transaction within it is minimal, as is the cost of supporting that relationship, because both parties have a vested interest in maintaining the relationship versus maximising any one transaction. Organisations are struggling mightily with this in an age where customers and employees are harder to keep because they have more options readily available. Organisations are working to improve the customer and employee experience, retooling processes and infrastructure to create relationships and trust. Even when those efforts are successful, they struggle to prove value.

As computer power increases and takes over much of the transactional work of our organisations, people will be left to connect with others and build relationships—things that humans are uniquely qualified to do and that have a direct impact on profitability. Our leadership, culture, processes, and metrics all need an overhaul. Retailing organisations for relationships will be the work of the next decade.

By ROSHAN THIRAN
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RECENTLY, I’ve been reflecting on relationships: how can we best build and nurture connections in our professional network as well as our personal lives?

As someone fortunate enough to have been able to learn from some of the best leaders in the business throughout my career, I found a lot of great advice and ideas coming to mind— but none of them really satisfied me: the question still nagged away at me.

THE THREE QUESTIONS

After some time, I rediscovered an old story written by Leo Tolstoy that I hadn’t read in years, and was glad to see that the tales of old still carry profound nuggets of wisdom that remain relevant today.

Tolstoy’s Three Questions tells the story of a king who wanted to know the answers to three specific questions. If he could answer them sufficiently, he was sure he would never fail at anything ever again. The three questions were:

1. When is the right time to start anything?
2. Who is the most important person to listen to?
3. What is the most important thing to do?

The King offered a great reward to anyone in his kingdom who could sufficiently answer the questions. But after several attempts from people, no one could satisfy the king. In the end, he decided to visit a hermit, renowned for his wisdom, in the hopes of finding the answers to his three questions.

Of course, Tolstoy unravels the story far better than I could. So I’ll leave it to you to read his eloquent narrative.

In the end, the king gets the following answers from the wise hermit:

1. When is the right time to start anything?
   “Remember that there is only one time that is important now! It is the most important time because it is the only time when we have any power.”

2. Who is the most important person to listen to?
   “The most necessary man is he with whom you are, for no man knows whether he will ever have dealings with anyone else.”

3. What is the most important thing to do?
   “The most important affair is to do him good because for that purpose alone was man sent into this life!”

ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

Tolstoy’s Three Questions offers some profound insights into how we can best build and nurture our relationships.

How often do we find ourselves going through the motions in our interactions? When others talk to us, do we hear to listen and understand? Are we fully present to others for its own sake? Or do we give just enough to show the bare level of engagement, while ruminating about what’s next on the day’s schedule, or whether it’s time for lunch?

After reading Tolstoy’s story, it occurred to me that the best communicators I’ve come across are those who make you feel as though you’re the only person in the room. They give people their full attention and make sure they are completely present to the interaction, for however long it lasts. Communicating with others is a two-way process and they are always sincere and authentic when connecting with people.

So, how can we best build and nurture our relationships?

Recognise that now is the only time you have to do anything, and therefore it is always the best time. Whichever you’re with, give them your complete and undivided attention.

Be aware that the best thing we can do for anyone is to give of yourself within your means, whatever the other person may need. It could be something as simple as a few minutes of your time or a hand with something.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Three Questions, for me, offers a key central message to be fully engaged in what we’re doing. It sounds so simple and obvious—but how many of us can truly say we manage to be completely present in all of our interactions? This is the key to maintaining strong relationships, and a trait that can no doubt bring an abundance of benefits and opportunities for ourselves and others if we are able to cultivate genuine connections.

Roshan Thian is the chief executive officer of Leaderonomics—a social enterprise working to transform lives through leadership development and nurturing potential. Connect with Roshan on Twitter and Facebook for more insights into business, personal development, and leadership. This article first appeared on LinkedIn.
DEALING WITH OTHER PEOPLE’S EMOTIONAL BAGGAGE

HOW TO RESPOND TO CONTROL FREAKS, SCREAMERS AND ARROGANCE

By KEVIN KRUSE
editor@leaderonomics.com

HAVE you ever walked away from a conversation with a co-worker or family member, shaking your head and wondering, “Where did that come from?”

In their book, HeadTrash 2: Dealing With and Overcoming Other People’s Junk, published last April, authors Tish Squillaro and Timothy Thomas offer practical tips for identifying and dealing with the emotional baggage in other people’s heads (i.e., “head trash”) in ways that can foster healthy relationships and protect your career.

The book gets into the root causes of head trash, which is often linked to underlying emotions such as anger, arrogance, control, fear, insecurity, guilt or paranoia. Based on their decades as business consultants and coaches working with chief executive officers to help them navigate through negative behaviours in those around them, the book provides valuable checklists and quizzes to help the reader identify and deal with emotional baggage in others.

HOW TO RESPOND WHEN THE BOSS STARTS YELLING

When you see that a normal conversation has the potential to escalate into a screaming match, it’s critical to identify the emotional triggers that tend to evoke the negative behaviour. In other words, to the extent possible, don’t poke the bear. However, once the yelling begins, the best response is to maintain a calm demeanour, and avoid responding in kind and the risk of escalating the situation. Slick to your guns and calmly stay on point. Once things settle down, open a dialogue that asks sincere questions that can lead to better communication and greater understanding about where the disagreement came from and how to avoid it in the future.

WHAT TO DO WHEN DEALING WITH A CONTROL FREAK

Most relationships are based on the art of compromise, but when normal collaboration turns into a one-sided “my way or the highway” relationship, you’re likely dealing with the head trash of control. Controlling people often operate under the rules of information hoarding because, after all, information equates power and control. When working with a controlling person, it’s important to be clear, firm, detailed and calm about your point of view. If you remain persistent and hold your ground by pointing out the value in your perspective, you can begin to build a stronger relationship and over time earn their trust, which may help them to relinquish some of their control.

WHEN THEY’RE FULL OF THEMSELVES

Sometimes a co-worker or boss suffers from the head trash of arrogance. This type of individual may be “often wrong but never in doubt.”

One of the important keys to dealing with arrogant people is to avoid engaging in a heated argument that brings out your own worst self. When arrogant people are saddled up on their high horses, you’ll never throw them off.

A better approach is to wait for a quiet moment and schedule a follow-up conversation to address your concerns over their behaviour in a non-confrontational tone.

The book offers four essential tips for dealing with all types of head trash:

1. Seek first to understand. Approach others in a spirit of non-judgment so you can better understand the underlying issues behind the behaviour.
2. Don’t text, email, digitally chat, or phone it in. Human beings are complex creatures, and it is essential to have an in-person conversation to be fully able to read all the verbal and non-verbal cues being communicated.
3. Avoid broadcasting your concerns. Spelling out your concerns with another person via social media or other forms of modern communications that can easily be shared with a network of others, is a recipe for disaster and will reflect poorly on you. Keep your thoughts about the person to yourself or restrict them to one trusted party who has no direct connection with the individual involved.
4. Design a success road map. When confronting a person with head trash, come to the conversation armed with some ideas for positive change. What does success look like? Get the person you’re working with to join you in describing how things could improve, and then work together to lay out a plan.

The truth is that all of us have our own form of head trash. That’s why it’s necessary to learn different ways of keeping these natural human tendencies from derailing our day-to-day relationships and our ability to be our best selves.

TEAMS THAT LEARN TOGETHER, GROW TOGETHER

Workplaces are becoming more digitised, and the area of professional development is no exception. Time and again, research has shown that we learn better when we share and apply our new knowledge or skills in technologically enabled and enhanced social contexts. One example of a professional learning system that leverages this insight is Leaderonomics Digital Learning (LDL).

With a learning content management system that enables gamification and social learning, LDL supports teams that wish to keep pace (and also keep score!) with one another. Workplace relationship-building courses offered on this platform include Interpersonal Skills, Influencing in the Workplace, Build a Good Relationship with Your Co-workers, Making your Workplace more Enjoyable and Teamwork.

Online-based systems like this one also offer learners the flexibility to learn from anywhere there’s Internet connectivity, while remaining virtually on the same page with their co-workers in other locations.

To find out more about learning online with your team at work, email a request for an LDL Infopack to learning@leaderonomics.com

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When you think of networking within your industry, what comes to mind? Are you excited? Or do you, like many people, dread the idea of yet another round of, “So... what do you do?”

The traditional view of what it means to network paints a horrifying picture. The marines of the networking world attend events, armed with their business cards and stories to tell; extroverts thrive in their element, bumbling from conversation to conversation; and shy introverts silently ponder where Dante might have placed such torture in his journey through Hell.

Let’s be honest, networking events are tough for many people. Some might enjoy attending them, but there’s surely good reason for the countless, “How to survive a networking event” articles out there.

One of the main reasons that so many find networking to be stressful is because it feels like we’re supposed to “sell ourselves” in an effort to gain something of worth from others, all the while being stuck in a contrived environment that’s ostensibly relaxed and super friendly.

I first came across the name Adam Rifkin while reading Wharton professor Adam Grant’s excellent book, Give and Take. You might not have heard of Rifkin either, and yet he’s a master networker. Reading his story has the bizarre effect of putting networking in the most positive light for those who shudder at the thought of it. (I should know – I’m one of those people.)

CONNECT BY PAYING FORWARD

Rifkin is a co-founder and chief executive officer of PandaWhale, an “online community of interesting things and people.” In Grant’s book, Rifkin is painted as a staunch giver—he has helped numerous people, made connections, shared knowledge, offered advice and much, much more...with absolutely zero expectations of being helped, in turn. He gives because it helps others and it feels good to give.

The “five-minute favour” is a concept created by Rifkin after he benefited personally from givers in Silicon Valley. This mindset, driven by the desire to pay it forward, is about helping others whenever you can, wherever possible. But a key reason for Rifkin’s success and happiness — and one of the reasons he’s so highly sought after — is down to his sincerity in making connections.

For example, many people on the professional networking site, LinkedIn, will spend hours hitting the “connect” button to grow their network and increase their numbers — but does that really constitute developing a network? Of course not, it’s just adding names to a list in order to boost the perceived social value.

It’s much better, advises Rifkin, to connect with one person per day on LinkedIn who is relevant to your field of interest, and to make the effort to offer your help to them in whatever way you can. This might grow the numbers at a much slower rate, but it’ll increase the number of genuine connections who might benefit from what we have to offer, and we might benefit in turn from them in future. In fact, it’s almost guaranteed that those who give sincerely get back much more in return.

When we reframe networking in this way (i.e. from trying to get something to offering our services) not only does it become more palatable, it delivers a greater sense of value — we’re giving rather than taking, forming connections, rather than forcing business cards into people’s hands.

IDENTIFY COMMON PASSIONS

Instead of a tired, “So... what do you do?” we can ask questions such as, “What are you passionate about in your line of work?” “What sort of challenges do you face?” “What would help you realise your vision sooner rather than later?”

Using these kinds of questions encourages an open-ended conversation to flow, where we can put Rifkin’s five-minute favour into practice. In asking about challenges, we might be able to share some knowledge that shines a light on the problem. If a certain skill is required to help push towards a vision, perhaps we have a friend in mind who could provide their services. Asking about someone’s passion offers them the chance to talk about what really excites them, while we actively listen to their ideas.

All of the above interactions centre on our efforts to benefit others. Many of us dislike the idea of selling ourselves because it feels uncomfortable to think we might be using others. Networking, we might think, is a pretence, it’s an act. We need people to get ahead, so I might as well grit my teeth, drink cheap wine, laugh at the jokes, and hope at least one of my business cards avoids being thrown in the bin. Taken like this, it’s no wonder networking leaves a bad taste in the mouths of some.

However, by focusing on establishing real connections, by constantly looking to be of service to others, we’ll be much better placed to form some strong relationships within our community.

By SANDY CLARKE

email@leaderonomics.com

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However, by focusing on establishing real connections, by constantly looking to be of service to others, we’ll be much better placed to form some strong relationships within our community and will feel happier for it.

Will some people take advantage of our kindness? Sure. But giving without condition means to avoid thinking in that way, and of course we can always avoid those who blatantly try to take advantage. But as Grant and Rifkin have shown, those who give more are much more likely to be successful, well-connected, and happy in their careers than those who play the numbers game.
ENGAGING HEARTS AND MINDS

WAYS TO BUILD A GREAT RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR TEAM

by Jack Chua

OMEN ONE OF THE greatest benefits of good leadership is to build great relationships. Teams are more productive and sustainable when members enjoy being in each other’s presence. As at the 2014 Global Leaders Eco Summit, employees with close friends are more likely to stay with their company and are also twice as likely as those without friends to recommend the company to others. The survey also found that employees who felt they had built strong bonds with their colleagues were more engaged and felt a greater sense of belonging to the work they do. Here are some tips on building strong bonds with colleagues:

1. Building a great relationship with those around you

According to a Gallup poll, feeling appreciated at work is one of the top reasons why people tend to get along well. Positive emotions are contagious and can create a positive environment where everyone feels supported. Discussing shared interests and hobbies can also help build stronger bonds. Organising team-building activities where employees can gel and bond together is another great way to foster a more positive work environment.

2. Creating a positive work environment

A positive work environment is crucial for productivity. Positive emotions can lead to increased motivation and engagement, resulting in higher levels of creativity and innovation. Managers can foster a positive work environment by removing negative influences and encouraging a culture of respect and collaboration.

3. Establishing a strong leader-follower relationship

Effective leadership is essential for creating a positive work environment. Leaders who lead by example and treat their followers with respect and empathy can create a culture of trust and respect. Leaders should also provide feedback and recognition to their employees to help them feel valued.

4. Encouraging open communication

Open communication is key to building strong relationships. Encouraging employees to voice their opinions and concerns can help leaders understand their employees’ needs and concerns. Leaders should also be open to feedback and willing to make changes to improve the work environment.

5. Promoting a culture of inclusivity

A culture of inclusivity helps employees feel valued and respected. Leaders should ensure that everyone feels included and respected, regardless of their background or role.

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A culture of inclusivity helps employees feel valued and respected. Leaders should ensure that everyone feels included and respected, regardless of their background or role.
I spent the past month interviewing leaders to help them get even better and make a greater impact. These were not your ordinary leadership interviews, I did what is called a “leadership experience interview.”

During each interview, the leaders began by walking me through their leadership career, specifically sharing how they learnt to lead. In anticipation of each new role, I asked them to share how their organisation prepared them for it. I was “asked to share” versus “shared” because none of them could actually share an example. Their companies did not provide any proactive leadership development.

Then I asked, “What did you learn about leading from each role?” The answers coalesced around what they learnt from observation or created through their own experience.

In the final part of the interview, I read 24 leadership actions, to which the leader answered “how” he learnt to do each of them. This is when it hit me that many, if not most, leaders practice what I call “copycat” leadership. Basically, they mimic what they observed good leaders doing and try to do the opposite of what their bad managers did.

They achieved senior leadership roles with very little focused development. It made me question what the risks might be of not having a structured approach to leader growth. Organisations would be much more profitable if they invested in building their leaders rather than taking chances with the risks of the copycat approach.

Let me put this approach in perspective. I’ve had a lot of haircuts in my life, after a quick calculation, I would say at least 300 in my adult life. Needless to say, I have seen my fair share of haircuts, especially since the barbershop usually has a few others taking place at the same time. Given my exposure and confidence that I can copy them, do you want me to cut your hair?

In many ways, becoming a leader is like becoming a doctor. There is a theoretical underpinning ways, methods and tactics that are important to learn. But you only learn to become a doctor in relation to the patient. So, with the accurate knowledge in place, the doctor is set free to practise — but not alone. He is under the supervision of a teaching physician and follows a structured approach until he is competent to practise alone.

Unfortunately, many leaders have missed the classroom learning part, along with the experience of being guided by a teaching physician. Can you imagine a doctor doing the same? I would not go to him, nor would I want to be led by someone who learnt through unguided observation and trial-and-error experiences.

It is important to note that most of the interviewees I spoke to have an MBA, and many had attended prestigious executive education programmes. But when queried about how this contributed to their learning to grow, they commented “not at all.” Those programmes had focused mainly on the technical aspects.

Herein lies the risk and concern, technical accomplishment is not the same as leadership competence, but it is often mistaken as the path for development as a leader. It ought to go without saying that leaders should have the technical competence to do the job. Once they move up the managerial ranks, however, this needs to be complemented and ultimately supplemented with leadership competence.

Do yourself, your team and your company a favour: invest in a structured approach to grow yourself as a leader. Make sure that your past success does not limit your future by leaving important aspects of leadership unaddressed.

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**Tips To Recharge Your Team Regularly**

By DAN ROCKWELL
editor@leaderonomics.com

LOUSY leaders drain people; successful leaders energise. Do eyes light up when you’re around? Those who make the biggest difference, energise others.

Leaders who prioritise people are energisers. Successful leaders monitor energy. Always check what’s the mood of your team before planning or acting.

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**Surprising Sources of Energy**

- Doing things that you love.
- Rest is helpful, but doing what you love energises. Help your team do things they love. Just ask, what do you love doing?
- Challenges energise when they’re just out of reach. Too far and they drain.
- Successful leaders create and celebrate finishing points. Great finishing points energise the journey.
- Developing new skills infusion energy. What are you doing to develop those around you?

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**Encouragement Energises**

Leaders who withhold encouragement, discourage.

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Ask people how they like to be encouraged. “What can I do to encourage you?” Validation encourages. Don’t explain away people’s perspective or feelings. Go with them, even when they aren’t yours. Going with isn’t agreement, it’s understanding. People feel validated when they feel understood.

Use questions rather than directions. Can we solve this?” is better than “Go fix this.” Once a person says, “Yes, we can solve this” their brain rises to the challenge. They find courage to take the next step.

Systematisate encouragement by putting your team members’ names on a calendar. Monday is your day to encourage Bob and so on.

How can leaders energise others?

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**Tips To Recharge Your Team Regularly**

By TOMMY WEIR
editor@leaderonomics.com

Tommy is a CEO coach, author and advisor who believes in helping good leaders become great! To engage with him, e-mail us at editor@leaderonomics.com

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The law of energy is: put more in than you take out.

Any person or system that takes out more than it puts in, is dying. Reserve last for a while, but death is imminent. Successful leaders replenish energy in others. Energy looks like hope, optimism, and confidence.

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**Recharging People**

Leaders who over-emphasise deliverables and projects, suck life out of people. Leaders who energise, on the other hand, focus on projects and people. Focal leaders forget people come first because people complete projects.

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**The Wrong Approach to Developing Leaders**

GOING BEYOND COPYCAT APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

By TOMMY WEIR
editor@leaderonomics.com

spent the past month interviewing leaders to help them get even better and make a greater impact. These were not your ordinary leadership interviews, I did what is called a “leadership experience interview.”

During each interview, the leaders began by walking me through their leadership career, specifically sharing how they learnt to lead. In anticipation of each new role, I asked them to share how their organisation prepared them for it. I was “asked to share” versus “shared” because none of them could actually share an example. Their companies did not provide any proactive leadership development.

Then I asked, “What did you learn about leading from each role?” The answers coalesced around what they learnt from observation or created through their own experience.

In the final part of the interview, I read 24 leadership actions, to which the leader answered “how” he learnt to do each of them. This is when it hit me that many, if not most, leaders practice what I call “copycat” leadership. Basically, they mimic what they observed good leaders doing and try to do the opposite of what their bad managers did.

They achieved senior leadership roles with very little focused development. It made me question what the risks might be of not having a structured approach to leader growth. Organisations would be much more profitable if they invested in building their leaders rather than taking chances with the risks of the copycat approach.

Let me put this approach in perspective. I’ve had a lot of haircuts in my life, after a quick calculation, I would say at least 300 in my adult life. Needless to say, I have seen my fair share of haircuts, especially since the barbershop usually has a few others taking place at the same time. Given my exposure and confidence that I can copy them, do you want me to cut your hair?

In many ways, becoming a leader is like becoming a doctor. There is a theoretical underpinning ways, methods and tactics that are important to learn. But you only learn to become a doctor in relation to the patient. So, with the accurate knowledge in place, the doctor is set free to practise — but not alone. He is under the supervision of a teaching physician and follows a structured approach until he is competent to practise alone.

Unfortunately, many leaders have missed the classroom learning part, along with the experience of being guided by a teaching physician. Can you imagine a doctor doing the same? I would not go to him, nor would I want to be led by someone who learnt through unguided observation and trial-and-error experiences.

It is important to note that most of the interviewees I spoke to have an MBA, and many had attended prestigious executive education programmes. But when queried about how this contributed to their learning to grow, they commented “not at all.” Those programmes had focused mainly on the technical aspects.

Herein lies the risk and concern, technical accomplishment is not the same as leadership competence, but it is often mistaken as the path for development as a leader. It ought to go without saying that leaders should have the technical competence to do the job. Once they move up the managerial ranks, however, this needs to be complemented and ultimately supplemented with leadership competence.

Do yourself, your team and your company a favour: invest in a structured approach to grow yourself as a leader. Make sure that your past success does not limit your future by leaving important aspects of leadership unaddressed.

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**Tips To Recharge Your Team Regularly**

By DAN ROCKWELL
editor@leaderonomics.com

LOUSY leaders drain people; successful leaders energise. Do eyes light up when you’re around? Those who make the biggest difference, energise others.

Leaders who prioritise people are energisers. Successful leaders monitor energy. Always check what’s the mood of your team before planning or acting.

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**Surprising Sources of Energy**

- Doing things that you love.
- Rest is helpful, but doing what you love energises. Help your team do things they love. Just ask, what do you love doing?
- Challenges energise when they’re just out of reach. Too far and they drain.
- Successful leaders create and celebrate finishing points. Great finishing points energise the journey.
- Developing new skills infusion energy. What are you doing to develop those around you?

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**Encouragement Energises**

Leaders who withhold encouragement, discourage.

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How can leaders energise others?
LET TRUST FUEL YOUR BUSINESS
A KEY TO COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE THAT EVERYONE CAN EFFECT

By JEFF BOSS
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ith a workday that creeps closer and closer toward the 24-hour mark (figuratively speaking, of course, but it sure feels literal at times), the demand of the day creates unwanted pressure and stress to get things done. People must work across multiple time zones without meeting their team members in person. The reliance on email, teleconferencing and phone calls are less than ideal for building trust and rapport, but necessary nonetheless.

In the “hurry up” culture of today, trust becomes the by-product of process rather than the driver of, but without trust there are no relationships, and without relationships there’s no business. Building trust is key to building competitive advantage. People do business with others that they like, know and trust. When you seek subject matter expertise you look for two things: one, the competence to get the job done and two, the positive intention (character) to do it right. Subject matter expertise is important, but it’s superficial. What I mean by superficial is, when you dig down deep and really ask yourself what you’re looking for, it comes down to “who has the competence and the character to get the job done?” Relationships drive business and business fuels relationships – at the core of that is trust. Trust is a competitive advantage for individuals, teams and businesses. And the best part is, trust is something that everyone can affect (influence) and effect (control). Here are three ways trust fuels competitive advantage:

1 TRUST FUELS YOUR BRAND
The reputation you build for yourself is determined by how you choose to show up. Happy or sad, angry or elated, grumpy or enthusiastic, how you show up for the moment – in any moment – is a choice, and the consistency with which you do so builds your brand and your reputation. Your brand is what others trust and is what compels them to pursue you – or not.

2 TRUST FUELS INQUIRY
Along similar lines of trusting one’s brand is fueling one’s curiosity to learn more about that brand. When you trust another’s competence, for instance, the implicit question is, “How are they trustworthy?” You want to know what makes that person competent enough to trust, you want to know the person’s experience, achievements and testimonies, and that requires inquiry. Trust fuels positive curiosity. Curiosity is the root of innovation and innovation fuels competitive advantage.

3 TRUST FUELS LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS
Every leader (well, the good ones) wants to build trust with his or her people. The best way to build trust is to extend it. Here are a couple of ways to do so:

- Share information. If you’re operating under the assumption that knowledge is power, you’re behind the globally-connected-collaboration-power-curve of today. While being knowledgeable is certainly powerful, sharing knowledge is the true source of power because it enables others to communicate, make decisions and act, thereby freeing you to focus on what you’re doing and only you – can affect. Knowledge informs decision making, and the faster decisions are made the sooner you see results. Of course, the results may not be ideal but, as the saying goes: if you’re going to fail, fail fast.

- Align behaviour with intention. As a leader, people watch your every move. They also watch every move you don’t make as well as every word you don’t say, because what you don’t say is equally important as what you say and how you say it. When people align your words with your actions and they see there’s consistency in this alignment, that’s when your trust report card skyrocket into the upper echelons of the A+ range. Trust is the only competitive advantage that every employee and every leader at every level can affect. Affect yours today.

BUILD STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

By PETER ECONOMY
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ALTHOUGH honesty is by far the most important quality in forming relationships, let’s face it – there are always certain things you should never tell others in a professional setting. Sharing the right aspects of who you are and what you do is key. Honest communication is necessary, people watch your every move. They also watch every move you don’t make as well as every word you don’t say, because what you don’t say is equally important as what you say and how you say it. When people align your words with your actions and they see there’s consistency in this alignment, that’s when your trust report card skyrocket into the upper echelons of the A+ range.

1 DON’T COMPLAIN
Not complaining about your job creates a better work synergy.

2 EMERGENT SYNERGY
Peter Economy has written more than 80 books on a variety of business and leadership topics. You can read more of his leadership articles here: www.inc.com/author/peter-economy.
During his final year in real estate, sales guru Tom Hopkins sold 365 homes — an astounding average of one sale closed per day.

**FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS, NOT PROFITS**

**TOM HOPKINS SHARES**

**THE ART OF SALESMAINSHP**

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**By SANDY CLARKE**

editor@leaderonomics.com

Doing sales is not everybody’s cup of tea. Something about the word “sales” makes many of us recoil. Except for those who have a natural gift for selling, it’s something most of us try to avoid thinking about, whether it’s the idea of receiving a sales pitch or — perish the thought — delivering one.

Tom Hopkins’ career, however, demonstrates that the heart of truly effective selling is not about hollow showmanship or pestering prospects into surrender, but a genuine interest in getting to know people and building relationships with them.

Today, Hopkins is one of America’s top master salesmen and trainers, but at the age of 19 he worked in construction carrying steel, was married with a kid on the way, and was struggling to support his young family.

Speaking to Roshan Thiran, chief executive officer of Leaderonomics, in his last year in real estate he sold 365 homes — an average of one per day — taking his tally to over 1,550 sales throughout a six-year period.

It’s easy to see why Hopkins has been so successful in sales. The best-selling author and global speaker is as grounded and engaging as anyone could be, with a charming personality that comes across as endearing as it is sincere. Speaking about his record-breaking success, he says, “My manager told me, ‘No-one has ever done this in the history of the United States and if you can sell 365 homes, averaging one a day, you will be famous.’ My phone started ringing every time I flew on an airplane, teaching all over the world, ever since.”

When asked whether being great at sales is an inherent trait or something anyone can learn, Hopkins is unequivocal in his response: It’s a myth, he insists, that sales is a skill only a few can master. Given proper training and guidance, anyone can do it — and reap the rewards.

“Granted, if you have a nice personality, a nice way of communicating and working with people, then you have the aptitude to be better at selling,” says Hopkins.

He adds that while “interesting extroverts” can often come across as impressive sales people, “interested introverts” can become masters at selling due to their humility and tendency to ask the right questions rather than bombarding others with information.

For Hopkins, selling isn’t about being a salesperson — it’s about loving what you do, truly believing in the service or product that you’re offering and, most importantly, being interested in the person and their needs. As one of America’s top sales experts, Hopkins believes that focusing on financial gain is a recipe for disaster. Work on establishing rapport and gaining the trust of people, and you may find yourself with clients who stick with you for a lifetime.

As someone who has taught over five million people in his seminars, Tom Hopkins is someone worth listening to — both for those in sales as well as those who have a personal brand to sell to others (which is everyone). Offering up some take-home advice, Hopkins says, “Work harder on yourself than you do on your job, to be a person who relates to more people in a positive way.”

Sound advice, indeed, from someone who has spent over 40 years travelling the world and coaching some of the brightest stars on selling. No matter how you view sales, Tom Hopkins’ interview on The Leaderonomics Show is well worth watching for the insightful pearls of wisdom he shares.
**9 HABITS OF PEOPLE WHO BUILD FANTASTIC RELATIONSHIPS**

THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS ARE BUILT BY ORDINARY ACTIONS LIKE THESE

Complimenting others on a job well done energises the workplace environment.
For an organisation to thrive and lead, it takes a holistic ecosystem to identify, nurture and accelerate the development of leadership among their talent. That is why Leaderonomics' first priority is to get to know your organisation and its people deeply, and to identify their needs. Our Organisational Diagnostic team is equipped with the heart and knowledge to hear you out and work with you to diagnose the root causes of internal challenges.

Designed with deep knowledge of workplace psychology and adult learning, our customised solutions are developed to deliver the best possible results for your organisation.

Get in touch with us for a free consultation to explore how we can work with you on people-centred solutions that deliver business results:

- **Employee Development Initiatives**
- **Learning Calendars**
- **Experiential Simulations**
- **Digital Learning**
- **High Potential Talent Acceleration**
- **Strategic Reviews**
- **Culture and Employee Engagement**

Contact Dinesh at **012 985 6835** or **info@leaderonomics.com** to schedule a free consultation.