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5 Dozen Ways to Become an "On-Purpose" Leader

by Monica Wofford

What you do as a leader is extremely important. Why?

Because you are contagious! Leaders have an attitude that other want to catch. Leaders have a charisma that others want to catch. They have skills that others want to have rub off on them and on and on and on and on. So what you do, more so than what you say, rubs off on those that follow your leadership abilities. And since the one critical thing one has to have in order to be a leader is ... well, you guessed it, FOLLOWERS, then let's keep the focus on those folks and make sure that as leaders we are doing what makes the most difference to them. After all, leadership is all about the followers!

Just think, what would you be if you had a great many leadership skills that made you tremendously effective, but no followers? Well, if I am thinking straight here, you would be incredibly skilled standing out there all by your lonesome. Not exactly how we picture a leader. A Contagious Leader is the guide on the side, not the sage on the stage and that is what any number of these steps will help you to achieve!

1. Call employees "those that work WITH you".

2. Stop calling employees "my employees," "my people."

3. Set goals with others.

4. Teach others to write his (or her) own goals down.

5. Ensure goals are measurable.

6. Create goals that are both realistic and unrealistic.

7. Hire the right people for the right jobs.

8. Encourage mentors at all levels.

9. Provide value to someone before you need value from them.

10. Be genuinely interested in the needs of others.

11. Have sincere desire, authenticity, and integrity in what you do or you will fail.

12. Know that all endeavors will not be easy and will not happen the way you wish.

13. Recognize that all followers will not agree with or "be on board" with what you want.

14. Allow for the opinions and ideas of others in all matters.

15. Find the leaders on the team you lead that have no leadership title.

16. Cultivate the natural gifts, skills, and abilities of those individuals.

17. Infuse a need to grow by teaching, rather than giving, the answers.

18. Allow for errors and missteps and mistakes at many levels.

19. Inspire persistence even after the first, second, and third rejection of an attempt.

20. Keep a cool head even in times when the world is falling apart.

21. Avoid engaging emotions until all angles have been examined.

22. Communicate assertively, but not in an overpowering fashion when issues are heated.

23. Remember that your body continues talking long after your lips stop moving.

24. Adhere to the ratio that you have two ears and a mouth and use them proportionately.

25. Seek input from those closer to a problem than you are.

26. Be interested in the growth of others even more so than the others are at times.

27. Listen to the grapevine of-

ten and regularly.

28. Build rapport with someone by finding overlapping frames and reference.

29. Fuss over others' events, achievements, families, and friends.

30. Be entertaining, humorous, or at the very least, fun to be around.

31. Engage serious behavior on serious subjects when warranted.

32. Communicate with others in a language that they understand.

33. Avoid assuming that your communication or personality style is the one everyone else has.

34. Inspire creativity.

35. Promote impromptu brainstorming sessions with the leader present.

36. Engage in active learning every day.

37. Encourage all those you lead to have and or get a LIFE!

38. Reinforce the idea that work and life must be balanced or both will be out of whack.

39. Share your expectations clearly and consistently and early.

40. Give yourself permission to

leave things undone.

41. Let go of needing to be perfect.

42. Let go of needing everyone else to be perfect.

43. Relinquish the need to always have others like you.

44. Recognize those who perform their job consistently day in and day out.

45. Learn the different types of recognition: public, private, tangible, and intangible.

46. Avoid giving a public person private recognition; they will see little or no value in it.

47. Share kudos and praise in public, yet discipline and reprimand in private.

48. Give tangible people stuff they can feel, hold, and hang on to.

49. Be spontaneous, as well as scheduled in your recognition efforts.

50. Spend most of your time with those who are performing the way you have asked.

51. Observe what people do for others to learn what they would like done for them.

52. Focus on the end result: Motivation for performance.

53. Remember that money does not motivate for the long term

and becomes expected.

54. Address only areas of behavior and performance when being critical.

55. Maintain clarity on the fact that attitudes are not taught or changed without the owner's consent.

56. Criticize someone's attitude at your own risk.

57. Micro-manage only those who need it and only until they prove that they do not.

58. Believe that people do what they get paid attention for.

59. Recognize that managers have to have a title and leaders do not.

60. You become what you think about. ##

About the Author

Monica Wofford brings more than 17 years of experience as a business consultant, trainer, and speaker to Monica Wofford International, Inc. A sought-after trainer, Wofford leverages scientific research and data to design curricula and presentations that positively impact both behavior and performance. She is the author of "Contagious Leadership", "Contagious Confidence," and "Contagious Customer Service". She can be reached at www.monicawofford.com or (866) 382-0121.