

## Keep Your Moods to Yourself

By Ann Golden Eglé, MCC

Fifteen years of coaching mid-to-high level leaders has provided remarkably intriguing insights into what can make a mediocre or good leader outstanding. There is hope if one is willing to listen and change.

One insight is the power of a 360 Feedback Survey, wherein the subject leader is evaluated by those of higher, equal, and lower levels on the organizational chart. All feedback is confidential to encourage the contributor's honesty.

Leaders are too often surprised by the influence of their 'moods' on those around them. For some reason, many feel that the higher up they become in the organization, the more latitude they have with how they act and treat others.

- An *explosive* leader, for example, creates fear and cannot be trusted. One never knows which version of this leader they will encounter. Thus, this leader is neither a motivator nor influencer.
- A *passive aggressive* leader is confusing to his team, thus wastes valuable time and resources. He may praise an idea one minute, and criticize it the next. No one ever knows where they stand.
- An *impatient* leader keeps people on edge. Afraid of losing his attention, his team will rush through their presentations, missing important aspects which can be costly in the long run.

I once had a leader whose team feared his first day back from any vacation as he was angry, slamming things on his desk and highly critical. Many even called in sick on these days to avoid his volatile behavior. He had no idea his team felt this way until we conducted this 360 Survey. He wisely changed immediately.

I do not know a person among us, leader or not, who has nothing to change in order to improve their performance. Improved performance creates more confidence, creativity, and fulfillment.

If you agree that you can improve your performance as an effective leader, below are my **Top 7 Tips** for you:

1. **Perform a 360 Feedback Survey.** Many tools exist on the Internet or you can simply jot down questions you'd like feedback on and hand it to your team with return envelopes.
2. **Ask for feedback.** If a formal survey is not in the cards for you, find a few trusted advisors with whom you can circle back. Make a deal to provide mutually honest feedback.
3. **Listen to feedback.** Feedback comes in many forms, including body language, team performance, and verbal. Listen closely and make changes accordingly.
4. **Ask for specific examples.** Oftentimes, feedback is vague as the person providing feedback is not used to doing so or is uncomfortable doing this for their superior. Give

them permission to provide specific examples of what you've done and how you can improve next time.

5. **Qualify feedback.** Perhaps one person sees you one way and another quite differently. Talk to as many individuals as possible to see the larger picture. All feedback is valuable, just not equal in importance.
6. **Carefully select change.** You cannot modify everything that associates would like you to change. Start small with something visible. For some, it is coming into work early to set a better example, or to take time to check in with your team as individuals and not simply machines.
7. **Circle back to assess progress.** It takes a year for others to fully trust a change you have made. Don't wait that long. Invite those who have provided feedback to let you know what they see after three months. They'll feel honored that you care enough to ask.

Leadership is no easy task, yet change is exhilarating. Your company isn't the same as it was one year ago. Why should you be the same?

Motivate others to improve their performance and effectiveness by your own example. A positive change is contagious.

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