



Amp up Your Leadership Skills for 2017 **By Ann Golden Eglé, MCC** **January, 2017**

It's a brand new year! As you look at switching things such as exercise and professional goals up, consider your leadership skills and overall style. How and where can you be more effective this coming year?

Your 2017 professional goals will include 'what' you will do. Your 2017 leadership style revolves around 'who' you will be to attain these goals.

For example, who do you need to be in order to establish the most productive, creative, positive work environment to accomplish your goals? What do you need to enhance or strengthen to be more effective this coming year?

In 18 years of coaching high achieving leaders, I've yet to come across one who has nothing to enhance or strengthen.

Take a moment, preferably longer, to reflect on 'whom' you were as a leader this past year. In which areas did you excel?

What could have been improved? Perhaps a hasty hiring mistake; not doing more for a struggling employee; taking your eye off of a project that needed more of your guidance or even letting a poor performer go sooner?

If this is a tough question for you, below is a list of specific leadership criticisms that often appear from employee input in 360 surveys I conduct.

- He's never quite present, always distracted.
- She is condescending and unapproachable.
- He doesn't delegate and as such is always irritated at being overworked. I want to help and grow my skill sets if only he would let me.
- She doesn't listen to my ideas, never asks my opinion in areas where she could benefit from my vast knowledge and experience.
- He shouts orders rather than explaining the task at hand and why it's important.
- She never shares information from board or executive meetings. I rarely know the direction our company is headed or why.
- He never sees me, just what's wrong with my work. I'd like to feel important in his eyes as a person, not just performance machine.
- She's too lenient with low performers, Internet surfing and office gossip. Not motivating to the rest of us.

While wise leaders suspect they have areas in which they can improve, most are surprised at how articulate their team is in what they want from their leader. Some leaders are open to change while others are defensive which serves no one.

To this I say, leaders—pay attention to what your people want. No better time than as the year begins to take a close look at who you are as a leader and ask some tough questions.

I challenge you to take a hard look at the above list of specific typical leadership concerns. Which, if any, apply to you?

Next, enhance your 2017 professional goals to contain specific areas of leadership improvement. As always, I am here for you to help if needed.

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