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The Principles and Qualities of Genuine Leadership™

In last month's edition, we mentioned how you can help create an environment that fosters high performance by following six 'Basic Principles'* Here is what each one means:

1. Focus on the situation, issue, or behavior, not on the person.

Focusing on the situation, issue, or behavior helps you remain objective when faced with challenges. You can solve problems more effectively, make better decisions, and maintain constructive relationships when you concentrate on the big picture and consider others' points of view with an open mind.

2. Maintain the self-confidence and self-esteem of others.

Contributing fully is easier in an atmosphere of acceptance and approval. When people feel free to express their ideas without fear of ridicule or personal criticism, they are more willing to take risks and stretch their capabilities. By showing respect and helping others develop their abilities and reach their goals, you multiply your own efforts in the workplace.

3. Maintain constructive relationships.

The best work comes about when co-workers support one another's efforts. This doesn't mean that you need to be close friends with everyone you work with. Your work interactions will go more smoothly, however, if you approach everyone with a positive attitude and communicate support for others. By sharing information, acknowledging problems, and sorting out conflicts, you create strong relationships based on mutual trust and respect. This leads to strong partnerships that will help the organization face any challenge that arises.

4. Take initiative to make things better.

No matter what your role in the organization, you can find ways to make things better. By surveying your own area and finding opportunities for improvement, you increase the organization's chances for success. You also increase your personal satisfaction by taking control of your work and creating visible improvement. Knowing when to ask for help and when to offer help to others is also key to making things better. Initiative follows naturally when you stay informed and alert to changes and work to find solutions to problems.

5. Lead by example.

As organizations face new challenges, everyone is expected to be a leader. Being a good leader means setting a good example - even in the face of setbacks or reversals. Modeling the kind of behavior you want to see in others is the surest way to influence them. By actively honoring your commitments, admitting your mistakes, and staying receptive to new ideas, you will motivate others to do the same.

6. Think beyond the moment.

For each action or decision, there are consequences. Being a good leader means considering how your actions and decisions will impact others and the organization, and avoiding actions that bring personal benefit at the expense of others. When you set compelling goals, make thoughtful plans, and behave ethically, you increase your trustworthiness and dependability. Anticipating the future also helps you prevent minor, manageable problems from turning into organizational crises.

**from "The Principles & Qualities of Genuine Leadership™;" Overview of the Basic Principles Achieve Global*