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12 QUESTIONS LEADERS MUST ASK THEMSELVES EVERY DAY!

YOUR DAILY LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

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A Leader that makes it a habit to follow daily procedures is a leader that knows where he wants to go. However, the type of habit will get a leader faster or not at all. Make it a habit of asking and answering the following twelve questions every day. They are not difficult questions to answer, either you did or did not, a simple yes or no will suffice. If you are not already asking and answer one or more, if not all then, then it is time to start. Remember, to be honest with yourself.

1. DID I GREET EVERYONE TODAY?

The late LTG Hal Moore (US Army) author of “We Were Soldiers Once...And Young” once said, “I will be the first one on the battlefield, and I will be the last one to step foot off the battlefield.” A leader in the modern workplace is not about who wears the coolest J’s or who can ride the most Ubers to work, or who drinks the most wine on the clock. A leader is more than that. A leader must be the first person in the door at the morning and the last one to leave. Someone has to turn out the lights. If you can and you should find a way to do so, stand by the door and greet your guest, in this case your staff. Shake their hands. Say “Good morning”, wish them a “Great Day”, and always call them by their name.

2. DID I SPEND ONE-ON-ONE TIME WITH MY STAFF TODAY?

One-on-one time is critical to not only building deeper lasting relationships but also the understanding between the leader and followers allow stronger bonds to form. Seek out those one-on-one times with every staff member. Obviously, the bigger the organization the more difficult it is to get to do the one-on-one with every member of the company. Set aside some time every day to meet with some of your staff until you have met with everyone. Then start all over again.

3. DID I HAVE BRIEF AND EFFECTIVE MEETINGS TODAY?

Meetings are the necessary evil of the modern workplace. The “meeting” needs an overhaul. Luckily, there is a small revolution taking charge and taking over when it comes to meetings. The revolution directly attacks the effectiveness of meetings and their length. Keep them brief and most of all keep them on point. If at all, avoid them especially when all that needs to be disseminated can be done in an email.

4. DID I PROVIDE FEEDBACK TO MY STAFF?

Are you telling them how you feel about them? Are you providing the information they need to make themselves better at what they do? Do not criticize but give true and honest feedback. Good or Bad feedback is a thousand times better than no feedback. Feedback makes the change happen. Feedback is the starting point of new and innovative change. Change from feedback means you (and them) are on the right track to building something different from the starting point of where the feedback originated.

5. DID I BACKUP MY STAFF?

When there are issues that involving external stakeholders never throw your staff under the bus. Even if it is blatant that the staff member is at fault. Your job as a leader is to lead both sides and come to a rational conclusion without leaving your staff member(s) hanging out to dry. Deal with them after the situation has been defused. Your followers want to know you got their back even when they are wrong.

6. DID I TRAIN MY STAFF ON SOMETHING NEW TODAY?

Every day is an opportunity to learn something new. Train them on something new, especially if what you are training is outside of your sector/market. Who knows it might inspire them to do something new and innovating for your organization. Training also shows your staff that you care enough about them and their future with or without the organization. Daily training opportunities shows your followers that self-improvement is a continuous process and ignoring it is not an option.

7. DID I EAT LUNCH WITH MY STAFF TODAY?

Eating lunch with your staff members is a great idea. It helps tear down walls and helps create solid foundations. It is also time away from the front lines to help those staff members decompress while sharing what is causing the stress. Again, if the company is too big then schedule lunch with everyone a few at a time until you have had lunch with everyone then start over again.

8. DID I DELEGATE MORE THAN I MICROMANAGED?

I find it difficult to believe that ALL leaders, before they became leaders, wanted to be micromanaged. Seriously, if people wanted to be micromanaged they do NOT deserve even considering expanding their career to include a leadership position. Micromanaging means no one is trusted. Micromanaging means you are NOT being an effective manager and most of all, NOT a trusting leader. Stop it, if you are doing it.

9. DID I COUNSEL STAFF THAT NEEDS A LITTLE EXTRA GUIDANCE?

There will always be problems. There will be problems with your staff. No organization is immune and if it has not happened to your company please know it is not a matter of if but when. It will happen and when it does, you must be prepared to counsel those individuals that you are leading. Remember, a leader is many things including a counselor. However, there will be issues that will be out of your league, do not attempt to go at it by yourself but guide those staff members to someone trained to handle such issues. If they come to you that means they trust you. Do not let them down.

10. DID I ADDRESS IMPROPER WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR BEFORE IT GOT OUT OF HAND?

The sooner the better. Unfortunately, too many managers hope any and all problems will address themselves. Usually, they do especially when people realize they are adults and recognize that any improper behavior is not tolerated in the workplace. However, there are those that will push the envelope until the behavior cannot be reined in. A leader will address issues in the workplace immediately with direct intent and the sooner the better.

11. DID I MAKE IT FUN FOR EVERYONE?

FUN is the number one thing everyone wants. So, make the workplace fun! Just because work has to be done does not mean it cannot be fun. If you looked around, you would be hard pressed to find a policy and procedure manual that says "NO FUN IN THIS WORKPLACE". Look in your own company's rulebook

and if you find the “NO FUN IN THE WORKPLACE” clause then you are exempt from answering this question. Otherwise, you have your challenge right in front of you. How much fun can you make it?

12. DID I SAY GOODBYE TO EVERYONE?

When it comes time to say “Goodbye” at the end of the workday, it behooves you to go and say Goodbye to each employee and do so by name. Shake their hand and Thank them for being here today. When you do that, make certain you are doing so without any judgment, sarcasm, or anything like that in the tone of your voice. Be authentic by wishing them a good evening. Of course, there will be incidents, circumstances and situations where you cannot be the last one out the door but do not make it a habit. Remember, be the first one on the battlefield, and be the last one to step foot off the battlefield.

ASK AND ANSWER THESE EVERY DAY AND NOT ONLY WILL YOU SEE A CHANGE IN YOURSELF BUT YOU WILL SEE A CHANGE IN THOSE YOU LEAD.

Let me know what you think of the 12 Questions Leaders Must Ask Themselves Every Day

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Thank you

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