Do Your Followers Enjoy Coming to Work?

You may read the question asked here and think, "I can't control whether my team members enjoy coming here each day. That's up to them!" To some degree you are correct. You can't control other people's emotions. But consider this question: Is it within your power to make the workplace more negative, more toxic, more stressful, and overall less enjoyable? I think you'll agree, the answer is yes.

Leaders are fully capable of making things LESS pleasant.

Now if that is true, then the opposite is also true. Leaders, because they are people of influence, have the ability to impact the work environment in a positive direction—which has a ripple effect throughout an organization. The Gallop organization claims that up to 70% of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to the leader.

Employee engagement is the degree to which people are present—totally doing what they're doing while they're doing it. Typically, those folks are enjoying their work more than those who are looking at the clock or finding every excuse to become distracted in the workplace. (Think coffee breaks, Facebook, personal texting.)

Your leadership style sends ripples or waves long after you leave a room.

 Imagine a large boat plowing through a narrow canal where smaller boats are moored. Did you know that the larger boat is responsible for its wake and the damage caused by its wake? Those smaller boats don't stand a chance when a large boat's wake bashes them up against their docks and seawalls. And by the time the damage is done, the large boat has reached the open sea and is clueless about the damage it has caused. Some leaders are like that.

The remedy is not as complex as you might think.

First, have a worthy goal in mind, like: "To create an environment where people enjoy coming to work and accomplishing worthwhile tasks together." To reach this goal, it helps to understand the brain research of Dr. Rick Hansen.

In his book, "Hardwiring Happiness" Dr. Hansen states,

"The brain takes its shape from what the mind rests on."

In other words, the things we give the most attention to will have the greatest impact on the shape of our brain, and therefore the way we see the world around us.

The research indicates that if you're a leader who constantly complains, criticizes, focuses on blaming others, and pays attention to mistakes, you will create an environment with an abundance of anger, sadness, anxiety, and depression for those around you.

Conversely, if you're a leader who spends the majority of time shining a light on good efforts, tasks completed, good intentions, and people's strengths, you will create an environment filled with an optimistic outlook, a positive mood, a sense of worth, and greater resilience when adversity strikes.

The evidence is clear. Leaders make choices about what gets their attention, and what they lead others to dwell upon. It's been said that people are approximately 30% more productive when they're happy in the workplace. While you can't MAKE someone happy, you can increase the chances of people looking forward to coming to work by creating the most positive learning and working environment possible. It's a matter of what you dwell on.

Does your leadership style allow for a healthy and productive workplace culture?

Reply back at David@growingchampionsforlife.com to start a conversation about improving your team's environment.