
----- WHAT'S UP, DOC? -----

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"Creating Leadership Solutions for Profit and Growth"

THIS MONTH'S THEME: HOW TO USE AUTHORITY

Thanks to all of you who took my subscriber survey, which you can still complete by [clicking here](#) (the server shows it takes people just five minutes to complete). My participation rate among all of you was almost 15%, which is quite high, and those who responded seem highly enthusiastic about the newsletter. I'll send you summary results of your feedback at another time, but one of your primary areas of interest was coaching. That led me to reflect further on something I've been noticing lately in my coaching practice, and so I'm sharing that with you this month: we'll look a little bit at how to use authority well, and why some people fumble when they try to take on roles of authority.

SUBSCRIPTIONS INCREASE SINCE JAN 1, 2005: 27%

NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS GOAL FOR 2005: 300%

Thank you for your recommendations! 66% of survey respondents have recommended this newsletter: a phenomenal number. Keep it up! I won't make my subscription goal this year, but if you believe, as I do, that this kind of original content is very valuable, and that leaders today have too little time to spend to improve their leadership practice, then please, let's expand this community further. After all, it costs you nothing!

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THIS MONTH'S QUOTES:

"The pupil, who is never required to do what he cannot do, never does what he can do." -- John Stuart Mill

"A mind, like a home, is furnished by its owner, so if one's life is cold and bare he can blame none but himself." -- Louis L'Amour

"Paradise is where I am." -- Voltaire

1. HOW TO USE AUTHORITY

1. MODELS OF AUTHORITY THAT COME FROM CHILDHOOD

Childhood doesn't determine everything, but it is true that the brain develops at an accelerated rate in both the formative, early years before age 6 and then again in a burst of growth during adolescence (I know you parents of adolescents will find that hard to believe!). And so, the layers upon which later experiences are coded in the brain come in large measure from those early years. Primary caregivers – usually parents – will have their own styles of using authority, either permissive or strict or abusive or balanced or whatever. And we internalize those models. Some people consciously seem to reject the models their parents gave them and so swing the pendulum in the other direction. But the person shaped by the overly permissive parent may be as disadvantaged in exercising authority as the one shaped by the tyrant. In either case, the now adult child may still have the old model intact, without having the chance to break it down to find a balanced approach. This is more a matter of emotional learning and new experiences than it is a matter of intellectual insight: those early encoding experiences occupy a powerful, sub-rational part of the mind. After all, we only use about 20% of our brains in conscious, waking life.

2. WE ALL HAVE OUR OWN PERSONALITIES, TOO

But parents do not shape us completely. In fact, we shape them too, even as children, and we all have our own temperaments right from the womb. Different children from the same parents may have very different approaches to the use of authority. Innate personality matters. Some of us are more inclined to be permissive, empathetic, stern, unjust, cruel, neglectful or inconsistent. I have often found, however, that new managers or new parents surprise themselves when they hear the things they say and the things they do when exercising authority: they are not all aware of the implicit models of authority they possess, and not everything that they find is pleasant. Fortunately, people can and do learn.

3. WHY SOME POTENTIAL LEADERS NEVER SEEK TO LEAD

Some people with intelligence, understanding of people and an ability to make decisions never do lead because their basic models of authority are negative, and they do not want to become the negative thing they perceive they would become. They avoid leadership because they cannot see how to exercise authority without becoming less human or whatever the case may be. This is unfortunate. Very often, the reasons behind this avoidance of authority remain more or less opaque to those in this situation. They generally just feel a vague sense that they do not want the responsibility, or that they like being one of the “regular folks.”

4. WHY SOME WITH THE POTENTIAL TO LEAD FAIL

On the other hand, some people have coercive models of authority and seek to establish personal authority so as not to be vulnerable. This is the cycle of abusive authority perpetuating itself. Some of these people really do have more than a kernel of leadership talent, but they cannot effectively express it because they need to exercise power based on their more basic fears, and not based on some acceptance of responsibility to a higher purpose or a caring for those who are led. When such people take on positions of authority, they often fail in the long run, because they lose their ability to move others to commitment, rather than just short term compliance.

Want to improve your effectiveness as one who uses authority?

“99 Negotiation Nuggets for Winners,” my new book, offers quick shots of wisdom designed to help you get what you want and need in your life, work and career. This is not a book of theory. It’s a book of best practices distilled from many years of experience and from many experts in the field. The information is conveyed in quick bits, the way you might find in any edition of USA Today.

To purchase your copy of “99 Negotiation Nuggets for Winners” at a 10% Discount for “What’s Up, Doc?” subscribers, just click [here](#).

5. THE AUTHORITY “SWEET SPOT”

Anyone can be gripped by pride, fear or a lust for power. All of these are motivational forces emanating from a position of personal weakness. Good leaders seek authority not primarily for what it can do for them but for what they can do for others while using it. The desire for power, when too strong, makes the effective deployment of authority impossible, or it drives the user of authority to pursue corrupt

ends. The authority “sweet spot” is the place – internal to a person – where an individual can accept and use authority but not be consumed by it or by the personal need to maintain it. One of the best things that ever happened to me in my development came when I was given responsibility for the productivity and organization of a business unit without a title. Huh? That’s right: I was in some unofficial way, a “boss,” without any of the people around me seeing me as a “boss.” Some of those people were senior to me in experience by far. Now, at first I felt set up for failure: how could I be effective? But then I realized over time that I would have to build influence through trust and intelligence, and not through positional authority. That’s when I really learned about leadership. People will “follow” a “leader” with a title to lead, but the title can become an excuse not to lead. The boss may give orders and think that he is leading, but he’s not. True leadership does not need, but knows how to use, a title or a position of acknowledged authority. Real leaders know how to exert influence without a title. For me in my youth, I wanted that title, but I wanted it for the wrong reasons: I was insecure about my ability to lead, and so I wanted the legitimacy a title would give me. But had I gained such a title, I would not have been any more effective as a leader, and probably would have been a good deal less effective.

7. HOW CAN YOU CHANGE YOUR INTERNAL MODELS OF AUTHORITY?

We live, grow and learn over time. I am a strong believer that our internal models of leadership, though sometimes flawed, can be reshaped through positive relationships. New parents learn to balance their parenting styles by talking to their own parents or spouses. New managers can learn to adjust their styles by having heart-to-heart talks with mentors. Even seasoned executives often need to learn new tricks, as they face new organizational situations and challenges. All human growth happens in the context of positive relationships, from birth onward. To find your authority “sweet spot,” and grow as a leader, seek out such relationships, and talk about your challenges and assumptions about people as you lead. Allow yourself to be challenged. Childhood or personal biology are not the last word: you can shape the course of your own development, but you cannot do it alone. Reading books and newsletters is not enough, either, since these do not substitute for the give and take that relationships provide. Any shrink knows that insight does not change people: but hearing the right thing at the right time from the right person can bring about change. It’s not just the idea, it’s the context and timing of its delivery from a trusted person that matters. In other words, relationships have the power to change us.

2. RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND ENTERTAINMENT

BOOK: "The Little Prince" by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, translated into English and available through Harcourt, Inc. in paperback, New York, 2000.

I'll give you a break from my jazz collection for my recommendation this month. Longtime subscribers know that I originally stuck with business book recommendations, but frankly, I don't find that many worth recommending! The best ones are highly niche marketed and specific, and not so useful for my rather diverse audience. And in the survey, I was surprised how many of you look to these newsletters for a bit of inspiration and a motivational kick. I try to be practical and positive in my approach, but I have not consciously set out to be motivational, except when discussing motivational issues. I'm quite glad to perform that function for you, however! In that spirit, I offer you this month a classic, and one I remember from my youth. "Watch out for the baobabs!" And if you don't know what I mean by that, read the book: it's very thin; it makes great summer reading. Remember, it is only with the heart that one can see rightly: what is essential is invisible to the eye.

FILM: DVD Series: The Midsomer Murders

My better half and I have taken to watching the many, many episodes in [this series](#) on DVD during the weekends. We always enjoy them. The classic setup of a more senior, smarter detective and a duller, likable sidekick makes for pleasant mysteries somewhere in modern England. Rather like an updated Agatha Christie approach, with a dose of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series for a bit of influence. We have not seen any first run movies in a while, but the Midsomer Murder series makes for fun time that entertains and does not tax the mind too much. Give them a try.

3. CHUCKLES

A police officer in a small town stopped a motorist who was speeding down Main Street.

"But, officer," the man began, "I can explain"

"Just be quiet," snapped the officer. "I'm going to let you cool your heels

in jail until the chief gets back."

"But, officer, I just wanted to say"

"And I said to keep quiet! You're going to jail!"

A few hours later the officer looked in on his prisoner and said, "Lucky for you that the chief's at his daughter's wedding. He'll be in a good mood when he gets back."

"Don't count on it," answered the fellow in the cell. "I'm the groom."

4. PROMOTE YOUR OWN GROWTH

You don't have to live near the Schuler Solutions main office in Alexandria, Virginia to benefit from my coaching services. Great work can be done for your own growth and development over the phone and through document review via email. To find out more about your coaching options and available coaching plans, just click [here](#) now.

5. ABOUT DR. SCHULER

A. J. Schuler, Psy. D., an expert on leadership, negotiation and organizational change, provides consulting services, keynote presentations and seminars for client companies. His trademark is highly personalized service that leads to measurable increases in productivity, profit and growth. He also provides personalized leadership education and coaching for highly motivated clients.

Dr. Schuler, President of Schuler Solutions, Inc., has served diverse organizations in the private and public sectors, including The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company, Sony Development, Nomura Securities and the Executive Office for Immigration Review.

A graduate of the Wharton School of Business, Dr. Schuler has successfully led the profitable growth of a dynamic, international consulting firm while serving as Operations Director, and has successfully

coached over five hundred CEO's and corporate executives.

6. HOW TO SUBSCRIBE OR UNSUBSCRIBE

If this e-Newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to receive your own FREE subscription, just click [here](#) to become a subscriber. If you believe you have received this message in error, or to remove yourself from this mailing list, just click [here](#) to take your name from the "What's Up, Doc?" distribution list.

7. NEWSLETTER STATEMENT OF ETHICS

NEWSLETTER ETHICS: This e-Newsletter will be sent to subscribers only upon REQUEST, though subscribers may forward this letter to anyone they wish. Subscriber identities or contact information will NOT BE DISCLOSED to any other persons or entities under any circumstances. (An attorney friend recently pointed out that, technically, I'd have to give up my list if compelled to do so by a court of law. He's technically right, of course, but let's face it: that won't happen!)

Have a great month. . .

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"Make each day your masterpiece." -- John Wooden

P.S. - Remember to send in your comments and successes, and to forward this newsletter to at least one friend! Thanks . . . AJS

