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

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"Creating Leadership Solutions for Profit and Growth"

THIS MONTH'S THEME: SUMMERTIME GROWTH

June, July, August. . . the lazy, hazy days are coming. Kids are out of school. Graduations come and go. You make vacation plans, your staff members make vacation plans, and business events unfold more slowly, as every week it seems some key person has their email set to autoreply. So as the days roll lazily by, or you're sipping a glass of lemonade and tanning on the beach, or frantically running the kids from swimming lessons to soccer practice. . . take a break from that summer trash novel you're reading to review some of your habits and priorities. In this issue, you'll get some thoughtful questions to help you grow personally and become a more effective leader in the process. . .

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. ARE YOU YOUR OWN BEST MENTOR?
2. ARE YOU A MANAGER . . . OR A LEADER?
3. RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND FILMS
4. CHUCKLES
5. CLIENT SUCCESSES
6. ABOUT DR. SCHULER
7. HOW TO SUBSCRIBE OR UNSUBSCRIBE
8. NEWSLETTER STATEMENT OF ETHICS

THIS MONTH'S QUOTE:

"Where the world ceases to be the scene of our personal hopes and wishes, where we face it as free beings admiring, asking and observing, there we enter the realm of Art and Science." - Albert Einstein

1. ARE YOU YOUR OWN BEST MENTOR?

DO YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE?

Make a quick list of the six people you spend the most time with - at work or away from work. Think of each person and of how likely they are to criticize others, or talk negatively of people you both know. How likely are they,

on the other hand, to pay complements to people, or express gratitude or appreciation? To be your own best mentor, you have to fight the critic we all have inside who doubts that we can succeed, or who tell us we're "not ready yet" to pursue some goal we believe in. And in order to do that, you need to surround yourself with people who have the habit of encouraging others.

DO YOUR FRIENDS KNOW WHAT YOU DREAM TO ACHIEVE?

One of the biggest hurdles to overcome when you want to achieve something is simply to say what you're thinking out loud to someone else. Stating a goal or a dream that is important to us can feel like a risky thing - what if we fail, and people see that we failed? If they never know we had the dream, we can avoid the risk of losing face if things go awry. But of course, keeping silent can be a self-fulfilling failure prophecy. . . and when no one knows your goal, no one can help you either, or encourage you when things get rough. By keeping a goal a secret, and never going "on the record," we just remain uncommitted, always flirting with the idea of getting what we want, but never committing to work for it - and have others help us along the way.

DO YOU WAIT FOR YOUR ROLE MODELS TO COME TO YOU?

Part of being your own best mentor means taking the initiative to ask questions of the people who are further down the road than you are in achieving the kinds of results you want to experience. You can never insult someone by saying, "You know, I notice you're very good at what you do, and the kind of thing you do interests me very much. I'd love to have the chance to learn how you did it sometime." You have a very good chance of getting a positive response, and if you ask good questions and use that person's time well, you may get, in the course of just a few conversations, the kind of guidance that will save you years of floundering through your own mistakes.

IS IT A "FAILURE," OR IS IT JUST "TUITION?"

There are few if any true "overnight successes" in the world - most so-called overnight successes have prepared and worked a long time to enjoy their breakthroughs. When you have a setback, do you define it for yourself as a "failure?" Why can't it just be called "tuition," that is, "the price we pay for learning." The only true failure is a refusal to draw the right lessons from our mistakes. The real successes come from showing our failures to people who can give us perspective, 20/20 hindsight and still encourage us to use our talents more effectively to get better results - whatever the endeavor.

DO YOU VALUE STATUS MORE THAN CRAFTSMANSHIP?

If you define success for yourself in terms of status - a promotion, more money, more popularity or whatever - you will never really achieve and sustain any of those things. Success that lasts is based on doing the right things exceedingly well and with stunning consistency. . . and knowing what those "right things" are means understanding your true talents and putting them at the service of

others. If you do those things well, you won't have to worry about the rest. They may come anyway, but by keeping your focus on authenticity (using your own true talents), excellence, consistency and service to others, you will be more than amply rewarded. . . and will be much healthier and happier for it.

2. ARE YOU A MANAGER . . . OR A LEADER?

DO YOU GIVE WORK ASSIGNMENTS. . . OR GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES?

"Managers" assign tasks, give work assignments, and measure results (sometimes they only seem to pay attention to failure!). They think in terms of the "job function" or the work process. Leaders, on the other hand, understand not only the nature of the work but the nature and abilities of their people. They know what their people aspire to become, what their best talents are, and find ways to get work to them that helps them grow and learn according to their wishes and abilities. Managers "get work done through people." Leaders do that, but they also "get people done through work."

DO YOU CORRECT OUTPUTS. . . OR REFINE TALENTS?

"Managers" make sure that outcomes are up to what is expected, but since they may be less attuned to the motivations and aspirations of their people, they have more quality and consistency problems than the best leaders do. People don't tend to give "managers" their best - they just give what's required. As a result, "managers" have to make more corrections than leaders do. Leaders, on the other hand, make corrections of output as a way to help people become their best, to help them learn, and not just to affect the bottom line. Leaders therefore act as coaches, refiners of talent and developers of people, so the people they teach learn more effectively need fewer corrections in the future.

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN PEOPLE MISTAKE THEIR OWN TALENTS?

Sometimes people really do wish to be able to do things for which they are not well suited, for all kinds of reasons. "Managers" tend to avoid dealing with these situations altogether, knowing that they really can't give the individual what they seek, and think mostly in terms of immediate processes and outputs. On the other hand, leaders make it their business to seek out and know what their people's aspirations are, so rather than avoid these problems, that have a chance to help people see how successful they can be doing the things they excel at doing (a "talent" is something a person can do better than most other people can). Sometimes coaching and feedback are not enough to get people focused on their best

paths to success, but even when these people may leave the organization, leaders wish them well without burning any bridges. By being open, encouraging and forthright, leaders have the opportunity to reclaim talented "boomerangs," and even those who leave can become good outside recruiters for the organization based on their positive experiences.

3. RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND FILMS

BOOK: "Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation," Joseph J. Ellis, Knopf, New York, 2001.

Nothing new in the management literature stands out to me these days - to be honest, most of what I see usually seems like fluff to me! I'm picky about what I read, and I try to be choosy about what I recommend to clients and subscribers. This is not a management book, but a very enjoyable and readable history that is a kind of case study. It shows how the creation of our country was a messy affair, and how great egos and great things can appear to be anything but destined to succeed while they are unfolding. It's also a study in how very different personalities can combine to accomplish extraordinary things. Ellis has gotten into trouble for being, um. . . fanciful. . . about his own personal history (he claimed he was a Viet Nam vet when he was not, and lost his Harvard teaching post over it!), but he is a super storyteller, and this Pulitzer Prize winning book's accuracy as history is unimpeachable. I highly recommend it.

FILM:

The good news is, work has me very busy (thank you!). The bad news is. . . I haven't seen many new release films in a while, and I feel like I'm the only person I know who has not seen "Spiderman." :-] Last week, though, I saw a movie made and originally released in Mexico called "Y Tu Mama Tambien," ("And Your Mother, Too!). It's bawdy, unrated, universally acclaimed and was nominated for an Academy Award, but more than that. . . it's actually a very astute, funny and life affirming film, even as it recognizes that people are imperfect and that being an adult means making choices and understanding the consequences of those choices. It's not a film from which I'd try to draw any management or leadership lessons, though it was very entertaining. Be warned, however: it has some strong adult content and situations, and is shown here in Spanish with English subtitles. For a set of reviews of the movie, go to <http://www.metacritic.com/film/titles/ytumamatambien>

4. CHUCKLES

Corporate Wisdom from Will Rogers

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier 'n putting' it back in.

If you're ridin' ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it's still there.

If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try ordering somebody else's dog around.

After eating an entire bull, a mountain lion felt so good he started roaring. He kept it up until a hunter came along and shot him...The moral: When you're full of bull, keep your mouth shut.

It don't take a genius to spot a goat in a flock of sheep.

When you give a lesson in meanness to a critter or a person, don't be surprised if they learn their lesson.

When you're throwin' your weight around, be ready to have it thrown around by somebody else.

The quickest way to double your money is to fold it over and put it back in your pocket.

Never miss a good chance to shut up.

There are three kinds of men. The ones that learn by reading. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves.

5. CLIENT SUCCESSES

The National Institutes of Health has used data from a comprehensive needs assessment survey to streamline its customer service and applications process for any employees seeking child care services. The NIH employs over 20,000 people and has previously operated child care centers that functioned as

independent units with independent application processes. Based on survey data provided by Schuler Solutions in cooperation with Performance Dynamics, Inc., the NIH has instituted radical change in fewer than four months in order to more effectively meet the needs of its child care seeking population, including the provision of referral and support services for parents who may be placed on a waiting list for NIH sponsored child care. Congratulations, NIH! To view the survey report based on the comprehensive child care needs assessment performed for the NIH, go to <http://www.nih.gov/od/ors/dss/special/chintro.htm#NIHChildCareRelatedStudies> and click on "NIH Child Care Related Studies."

TO SHARE YOUR SUCCESS, send your story to AJ@SchulerSolutions.com Unless your message states otherwise, we will assume that your story is NOT FOR PUBLICATION. If you do authorize that your success can be shared in upcoming editions of "What's Up, Doc?," then please include in your message the following sentence: "I authorize Schuler Solutions to publicize my success story in the newsletter 'What's Up, Doc?'"

6. ABOUT DR. SCHULER

A. J. Schuler, Psy. D. is a speaker, consultant and leadership coach who helps people and organizations become more effective, profitable, focused on their missions and able to maximize their opportunities that lead to growth. Dr. Schuler, President of Schuler Solutions, Inc., accomplishes this through speeches, seminars, consulting and one-on-one coaching focused on developing excellence in both leadership and team performance. He 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.

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