

30 Business No No's (16)

It's a "No No" to ignore the foundation of sound leadership!

Love and truth form a good leader; sound leadership is founded on loving integrity. Solomon¹

Arlington, Virginia is the place for a special unit of soldiers who are stationed near a tomb known as the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They are charged with the task of guarding the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Each step of their routine has a symbolic meaning. When the guard is changed there is complete silence and the reverence and the awe of the memory of the man "unknown" who lies there is honored. The tomb represents every soldier who never returned but held up the throne of liberty and the ideals of America as they gave their full measure of devotion. Two soldiers are always on duty in 45 minute shifts. Their whole responsibility is to hold up the memory of the man who lies in tomb there in Arlington. So wounded and killed in battle that we cannot identify who he is and yet he is honored and remembered as no king has been honored. He has two soldiers who hold up his memory and his status so that no one should ever forget!

For leaders love and truth are our two guards. They protect us and our role as leaders so that no one will forget! The word "form" does not mean that love and truth shape us, but rather it comes from the word meaning "guard"! Love and truth are soldiers on duty for the leader making a person's leadership sound and giving the leader integrity. A leader who loves and loves truth has secure place because he has integrity.

The importance of creating a culture of love @ work based on humility and mercy!

Leaders cannot effectively create a culture of love with knowing God. One of Jesus' top ten most memorable statements was to summarize all the law into two simple statements, even one word. Love! John one of Jesus' disciples said, "God is love". To know God as love is to understand the story of scriptures fully. God has engaged from the beginning of time to bring us back to him through his Son Jesus. For God so loved that he gave.

As leaders we must give what is precious to us if we are to be leaders with integrity. If we are to gain influence and to establish ourselves as leaders we must give love at work. We must leave our positions and come down to those under us. This is what God did and it is what we should do.

The first way that you create a culture of love at work is by being a servant leader. You must have humility. You must come down. You too, must live as Jesus lived in your place of calling. Jesus came to serve and not to be served. He loved by washing feet, healing diseased people, touching lepers, and raising stinking dead people. There are many other ways that Jesus served, but I want you to see that Jesus engaged in doing dirty work as well as his disciples.

Remember, Paul taught that every master had a master they would answer to. Their slaves were to be treated differently because they were Christ followers. There can be no love unless the leader gives it. John said, "We love because Christ first loved us."

The second way is by having mercy towards those that are under your leadership. I love to work for people who give grace and practice mercy. There will always be failures and broken rules. A leader who is patient and loyal is essential. Mercy can be clearly seen in the words you use when you are angry and in the manner in which you deal emotionally with loss and victory.

This is the first sentry that guards your leadership and makes you sound and secure as the leader. A leader who serves others and demonstrates mercy will be sure of his integrity!

The importance of creating a work culture based on truth and honesty

*Truth: the most deadly weapon ever discovered by humanity. Capable of destroying entire perceptual sets, cultures, and realities. Outlawed by all governments everywhere. Possession is normally punishable by death.-- John Gilmore²
Peace if possible, truth at all costs.-- Martin Luther³*

The first step in creating a culture of truth is expecting the truth at all times. One must be willing to receive the truth as well as speak it before one's culture in the work place will change. A leader who wishes only to give the truth but never hear the truth will always suffer from CEO disease. You will find that people will tell you

¹MSG; Proverbs 20:28

²<http://www.tentmaker.org/Quotes/truthquotes.htm/> July 17, 2009; 9:32 AM

³Ibid. 2.

what they believe you wish to hear rather than give you the real truth. As a leader you must create a ways and means of getting the truth. Martin Luther said it well, "truth at all costs." The reality that most leaders don't want the truth should be alarming. A leader who love the truth and expects will create a work place that is truthful.

The second step is to learn to speak the truth to each other. The Apostle Paul said, "Speak the truth in love." It is not enough to know the truth. It must be spoken. It must be given. However, one should shout loudly only when one is swimming with sharks. My wife is great at telling me the truth. I hate to hear it. You heard me. I love her and so she sets me up with a few kisses and then says, "Honey, can I tell you something." I always after a few kisses fall prey to that trap. Then she tells me some truth that daggers my heart about my parenting my son or my leadership that I need to hear. I hate it. She loves me though and so I can always trust what she says. Solomon said, "The wounds of a friend can be trusted." I am paraphrasing, but it is so true. I have a "band" of brothers who love me in Miami. When one of them tells me something that hurts but is true I know two things immediately. They love me, and secondly, it is the truth I needed to hear. You may have to do some training for this principle to work in your office, but it starts with the leader being willing to hear the truth. A culture where the truth can be spoken is the most effective culture for business.

I was watching this year's Apprentice with Donald Trump and a bunch of super stars from our culture all trying to get hired. The boardroom is a great place. It represents the culture of truth that one needs to be successful in life and in any business adventure. In the boardroom Trump just speaks the truth. The truth comes out from his aids, from those in the competition, and from Trump himself. You know exactly where you stand in that environment. It is difficult to hear, but it is so powerful and productive. Trumps winners have become highly effective leaders having gone through that process of truth telling. "Truth at all costs."

This is your second sentry, truth.

Building a reputation that surrounds you with integrity!

The army of integrity surrounds your leadership giving you the right to lead! What army are we talking about? We are talking about the sentries of love and truth. A leader who serves and has mercy loves those that follow him. A leader who is willing to hear the truth and to speak the truth in ways that are productive will be established.

History tells us of many besieged cities in battle. A city will be completely surrounded by an opposing army and be overthrown as the one army outlasts another by starving the enemy to death. On the ocean it is called a blockade.

When Solomon said that sound leadership is "founded" on integrity this is idea he was using. A leader is besieged by his integrity which comes from the two sentries of love and truth. Such a leader's reputation will precede them not only secure them!

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Round Table:

Who is your truth teller?

How much serving do you do as a leader?

What is your reputation with others? How do you know?

How easy it is to tell you something difficult that is true about you as a leader?

How kind are your words when you are angry?



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