

Marilyn Manning and The Consulting Team's Leadership Tips



NOTE FROM THE CONSULTING TEAM

In this issue of Leadership Tips, The Consulting Team continues its focus on bullies in the workplace with Part 2: Preventing and Managing Unprofessional Behavior. We explore the fundamentals and tools needed to confront and manage bullying behavior in the workplace.

These tasks fall squarely on the shoulders of leadership, in order to create a culture of civility and respect throughout the organization. There are dollar costs from bullying behavior, in terms of wasted money, low productivity, increased absenteeism and turnover.

There are also human costs through reduced effective decision-making, trust, and benefits of healthy teamwork. Through policy, follow-through, and skill building, leaders can protect the workplace against abuse and corrosive conflict. We believe that understanding behavior and dealing openly with it through the use of tried and true methods can overcome even the most troublesome situations.

Warm regards,

Marilyn

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Toward a Bully-Proof Workplace

Part 2: Confronting and Managing Unprofessional Behavior

“When a resolute young fellow steps up to the great bully... and takes him boldly by the beard, he is often surprised to find it comes off in his hand, and that it was only tied on to scare away the timid adventurers.”

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

The distinguishing characteristic of the bully at work is that, though one individual is often the bully's target, both the cause and effects of this behavior encompasses the organization. The buck, and bulwark against bullying, stops with the group's leader: the culture he or she establishes, the behavior he or she tolerates, and the actions that he or she takes when bullying behavior appears.

Not all leaders step up to the task, especially if people with bullying behaviors have successful business track records. Maybe they are on a promotional track or show dynamite sales figures or have been hired for their sterling credentials. But if the leaders scratch the surface, they find a host of hidden costs that disprove these employees' auras of success and promise. For starters, the costs of higher turnover, lower productivity, absenteeism, and workmen's compensation claims have been documented in recent studies. In a book on the subject by Robert Sutton, he tells a story of a Silicon Valley executive who documented the total cost of bullying for one well-compensated salesman. The estimated \$160K cost included time spent by the bully's direct manager, HR, and senior executives; cost of recruiting and training new support; and anger management training and counseling. The cost omitted the toll on victims, witnesses, and bystanders.



Aikido: Disarming an attacker using a "sword taking" technique

Policy: The basis for preventing and managing bullying behavior in business begins with a clear policy that promotes civility and respect for fellow employees and renounces abusive, threatening, or humiliating behavior. Once written and communicated, the leaders of the organization need to live the policy and expect the same from others, to earn trust and allegiance by employees. Fundamentally, everyone needs to be accountable.

"Any anti-bullying scheme, initiative or policy that fails to mention accountability for bullies is likely to meet with little, and often no, success." ~ Tim Field

Once in place, administer the policy on a complaint basis. Your responsibility as an employer is to intervene for the victim, beyond concern for possible legal exposure and cost to the organization. At the least, inform anyone with bullying behavior that it is not supported or tolerated in your organization and provide this person with counseling.

Follow-through: The goal of overall accountability embraces a picture of positive working relationships, which support trust, teamwork, and creative thinking. The biggest mistake employers make, according to Gary Namie of the Workplace Bullying Institute, is that they don't pay attention to bullying until it results in a crisis. Even companies that have established policies and employment practices to prevent workplace abuse may find a bully in their midst. Fast action shows that your organization won't tolerate bad behavior.

In Robert Sutton's story, the bully salesman met with management, who told him they would deduct 60% of the estimated cost of his bullying from his year-end bonus. How people manage and work with others should be considered on the par with their results and evaluated as such. Hiring, promotions, and firings need to reflect the policy and a culture of a respectful and civil environment.

Training: A work environment's climate does not materialize by fiat. Even compatible human resources systems and practices can't guarantee employees have the knowledge and competence to work in cooperation with others. This means that workers need to acquire the skills for authenticity and constructive conflict, necessary components to creativity and innovation. These skills can be taught, practiced, and coached. The end state is not that employees become compliant drones that watch every word they utter lest it causes ripples in a "zen-like" atmosphere.

These three components, developed and supported by the organization's leaders, will lead to a workplace that remains effective, even when times get tough. In a bully-free workplace you can focus on the effectiveness of every meeting and interaction you have "in the moment" despite the issues your group confronts.

Tools of the Trade: 9 Steps to Battle Bullies

1. Research the cost of bullying behavior on the organization.
2. Implement organization policies that promote civility and respect.
3. Link policy to daily activities.
4. Respond swiftly to complaints of bullying behavior.
5. Treat bullying behaviors as indicators of unsatisfactory performance.
6. Remove those showing bullying behavior from hiring processes. They may choose others like them.
7. Reduce unnecessary status differences. Power differences can breed bullying behavior.
8. Teach and model "constructive confrontation."
9. Manage interactions, not only practices, policies, and systems.

"The Consulting Team provided my department with insightful suggestions to enhance and develop our relationships. Its use of 360' evaluations will be a foundation to reduce conflict in a challenging and rapidly changing world. I look forward to our continued collaboration." ~ Police Chief Walt Tibbet,

The Victims: They also need to be involved in implementing the policy, by reporting bullying behavior and being proactive in finding what processes of resolution are available. They can prepare for this by researching state and federal legal options. They can also research the economic impact of their situation on the organization, which makes the issue less personal. They should seek support, as there can be strength in numbers. They also should seek alternatives to their situation within their current organization.

The Consulting Team Offers these Conflict Resolution Services and Courses

Our Consulting Services:

- ✓ Conflict Mediation
- ✓ Team Building
- ✓ Executive Coaching
- ✓ Communications
- ✓ DiSC and EQi Assessments

Free Assessment:

- ✓ [Type A Personality](#)

Conflict Management Workshops:

Resolving Conflict with Difficult Personalities

Are you bogged down with interpersonal disputes and personnel issues? Do you struggle with others' priorities or agendas, with big egos instead of critical business challenges? Unresolved conflicts take time and resources and cause lost productivity. They may result in possible legal actions and negative customer reactions. This workshop shows how to avoid or at least mitigate these outcomes by resolving conflicts early, when they are easiest to solve.

Using Stress Positively

Are you often at your wit's end? Do fellow employees routinely push your buttons? Are team members unable to get along? Learn to manage stress and conflicts in proactive ways. Reduce the negative impact of stress and conflict in. Improve your own attitude, morale, and stress management skills in this workshop.

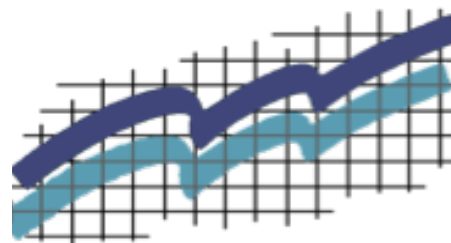
Leading Positive Change

Do you deal with change by attempting more with less - faster and cheaper? Do you react to problems, or do you focus on creating positive change? Power is the ability to make change for success, to create rewarding outcomes. Discover how to set realistic goals, and develop and implement strategies. Learn to overcome resistance to change, gain buy-in, and motivate others. Identify stressors and negative patterns. Practice managing conflict and challenging situations.

About Leadership Tips:

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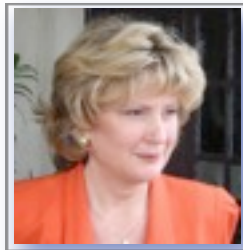
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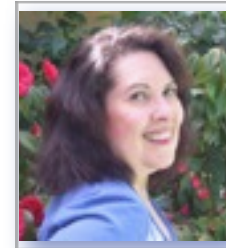
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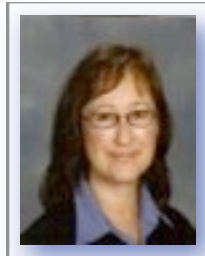
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The Consulting Team Community Service

The Consulting Team believes in community service as one of its key values and commitments. Team members live this value in their daily lives. This issue we are featuring the community efforts of one of our senior consultants, Elaine Schmitz. Elaine currently serves and has held office on two non-profit boards, at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology and California Writers Club Tri-Valley branch. In the past she has served several years on three other charitable, professional, and other non-profit boards. In addition, she has donated much of her time, talent, and financial support to such charities as the Susan G. Komen “3-Day for the Cure” and International Orthodox Christian Charities, helping to found the San Francisco chapter of this organization. She has been on an officer for both IFMA and ASQ East Bay branches. In 2008, she walked 60 full miles in three days for the San Francisco 3-Day for the Cure Walk, which raised over \$5m in contributions for breast cancer research. She has also lent her voice to church choirs for over 15 years.