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SERVANT LEADERSHIP FOCUS

A monthly newsletter to promote and stimulate servant leadership ideas & tools into the Viox culture.

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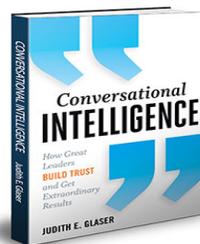


Transformational Stories

By: Judith E. Glaser – Conversational Intelligence

On November 20, 2013, best-selling business author, leadership coach, CEO of Benchmark Communications, Inc., and the Chairman of The Creating WE Institute Judith E. Glaser will be presenting **Partnering for Success Through Conversational Intelligence** for the Viox and Fifth Third Servant Leadership Teams and select others. Judith is the world's leading authority on *WE-centric Leadership*, *Neuro-Innovation* and *Conversational Intelligence*. Her new book **Conversational Intelligence: How Great Leaders Build Trust and Get Extraordinary Results** will be released on October 1, 2013.

The key to success in life and business is to become a master at



Conversational Intelligence. It's not about how smart you are, but how open you are to learn new and effective powerful conversational rituals that prime the brain for trust, partnership, and mutual success. In this high-energy session, Judith will introduce the leadership teams to the newest research around Conversational Intelligence™ and the Neuroscience of "WE," and apply this to elevating the power

and success of partnership.

She presents a framework for knowing what kind of conversations trigger the lower, more primitive brain; and what activates higher-level intelligences such as trust, integrity, empathy, and good judgment.

Conversational Intelligence makes complex scientific material simple to understand and apply through a wealth of easy to use tools, examples, conversational rituals, and practices for all levels of an organization.

In this month's Servant Leadership Focus, we are featuring articles that Judith has written for publications like the Harvard Business Review and the Huffington Post aligned with her new book. **These articles are not just informational but transformational!**



Addicted to Being Right

By: Judith E. Glaser

I'm sure it's happened to you: You're in a tense team meeting trying to defend your position on a big project and start to feel yourself losing ground. Your voice gets louder. You talk over one of your colleagues and correct his point of view. He pushes back, so you go into overdrive to convince everyone you're right. It feels like an out of body experience — and in many ways it is. In terms of its neurochemistry, **your brain has been hijacked.**

In situations of high stress, fear or distrust, the hormone and neurotransmitter cortisol floods the brain. Executive functions that help us with advanced thought processes like strategy, trust building, and compassion shut down. And the amygdala, our instinctive brain, takes over. The body makes a chemical choice about how best to protect itself — in this case from the shame and loss of power associated with being wrong — and as a result is unable to regulate its emotions or handle the gaps between expectations and reality. **So we default to one of four responses:** fight (keep arguing the point), flight (revert to, and hide behind, group consensus), freeze (disengage from the argument by shutting up) or appease (make nice with your adversary by simply agreeing with him).

All are harmful because they prevent the honest and productive sharing of information and opinion. But, as a consultant who has spent decades working with executives on their communication skills, I can tell you that the fight response is by far the most damaging to work relationships. It is also, unfortunately, the most common.

That's partly due to another neurochemical process. When you argue and win, your brain floods with different hormones: **adrenaline and dopamine, which makes you feel good, dominant, even invincible.**

It's the feeling any of us would want to replicate. So the next time we're in a tense situation, we fight again. **We get addicted to being right. I've coached dozens of incredibly successful leaders who suffer from this addiction.**

They are extremely good at fighting for their point of view (which is indeed often right) yet they are completely unaware of the dampening impact that behavior has on the people around them. If one person is getting high off his or her dominance, others are being drummed into submission, experiencing the fight, flight, freeze or appease response I described before, which diminishes their collaborative impulses.

Luckily, there's another hormone that can feel just as good as adrenaline: oxytocin. It's activated by human connection and it opens up the networks in our executive brain, or prefrontal cortex, further increasing our ability to trust and open ourselves to sharing. **Your goal as a leader should be to spur the production of oxytocin in yourself and others,** while avoiding (at least in the context of communication) those spikes of cortisol and adrenaline.

Here are a few exercises for you to do at work to help your (and others') addiction to being right:

Set rules of engagement. *If you're heading into a meeting that could get testy, start by outlining rules of engagement. Have everyone suggest ways to make it a productive, inclusive conversation and write the ideas down for everyone to see. For example, you might agree to give people extra time to explain their ideas and to listen without judgment. These practices will counteract the tendency to fall into harmful conversational patterns. Afterwards, consider see how you and the group did and seek to do even better next time.*

Listen with empathy. *In one-on-one conversations, make a conscious effort to speak less and listen more. The more you learn about other peoples' perspectives, the more likely you are to feel empathy for them. And when you do that for others, they'll want to do it for you, creating a virtuous circle.*

Plan who speaks. *In situations when you know one person is likely to dominate a group, create an opportunity for everyone to speak. Ask all parties to identify who in the room has important information, perspectives, or ideas to share. List them and the areas they should speak about on a flip chart and use that as your agenda, opening the floor to different speakers, asking open-ended questions and taking notes.*

Connecting and bonding with others trumps conflict. *I've found that even the best fighters — the proverbial smartest guys in the room — can break their addiction to being right by getting hooked on oxytocin-inducing behavior instead.*



Your Emotions Influences Others

By: Judith E. Glaser

The concept of emotional contagion includes the influence of one person's emotions on another. At work, employees tend to mimic the leader's behaviors. We-centric leaders have a positive contagious effect as they attract the energetic spirit in others for performing at their best -- naturally. Leaders and strong personalities can have a positive or negative emotional contagious effect on an individual's thoughts, attitude and behavior. **A single interaction is capable of having a rippling effect, shifting a person from negative to positive energy.**

Acts of attitude and behavior are the physical manifestation of emotional responses to thoughts and feelings. Thoughts, attitudes and behaviors carry an energy that can be contagious, attracting the same energy source in others. **Leaders' awareness of the power associated with positivity and negativity is at the core of creating a We-centric culture.** A focus of the Creating "WE" Institute is to equip leaders to strengthen the intuitive sense in recognizing the difference between positive and negative thinking and the associated emotional contagion impact. Once we understand how we think, we introduce the skills and practices of Conversational Intelligence -- which enable us to "navigate with others" through our human and often emotional states. Leaders who learn to harness emotional energy and engage people in transformational conversations are becoming the most valued leaders across all business sectors globally.

Conversational Intelligence, How Great Leaders Build Trust and Get Extraordinary Results, introduces seven characteristics that provide a library of positive and negative reference tools. Use it as a springboard to become mindful of your thoughts, words, and actions and to have a more positive impact on the work environment. Leaders who derail reflect the negative behaviors; those who succeed reflect the positive behaviors.

The seven dimensions represented as derailers and success factors:

•Humanity and healthy interpersonal relationships. Derailer behaviors are judging and blaming -- critical of others, creating fear of the potential for mistakes; Success factor behavior is appreciating -- healthy interpersonal relationships; valuing the contributions of others; trust, openness and candor; respect individual talent; value diversity.

•Aspiring and achieving high performance. Derailer behavior is overt or covert threats, intimidation and pressure to achieve goals; Success factor behavior is striving to achieve high aspirations, high performance -- openness to imagination to achieving goals.

•Navigating. Derailer behavior is withholding -- creating boundaries and roadblocks, making others feel restricted. Success factor behaviors are sharing -- openness and collaboration with others.

•Generating. Derailer behavior is knowing -- self-indulgent, using knowledge as power against others, causing others to give in. Success factor behavior is wondering -- nurturing innovation, which leads to inspired breakthroughs.

•Expressing. Derailer behaviors are dictating-- dogmatic about compliance and status quo. Success factor behavior is developing others -- allowing them to speak up and express their voice; take risks to develop themselves and others.

•Spirit. Derailer behavior is conforming -- using force to keep others in-line. Success factor behavior is enthusiastically celebrating success -- engaging others in creating benchmarks for success; celebrating achievements and developing a spirit of reinvention.

Each characteristic provides distinct variations of positive and negative aspects such as those found in the Community characteristic; positive leaders view themselves as members of the team; negative leaders' view is being in-charge of the team. **The leader's ability to master communicating and living the attributes of the positive attribute creates a culture naturally performing to its highest potential.** These characteristics are intended to prime the leaders' thought process for positivity. ***It takes practice in positive thinking to become embedded in the leaders' DNA.***

Your Emotions Influences Others (cont'd)

By: Judith E. Glaser

Conversational Intelligence (C-IQ) tips

Eight Steps to Positive Change

- Wear a smile, it is contagious.
- Be clear on who you are and what you stand for.
- Use words that inspire, encourage, and motivate.
- See the positive and negative side to everything, and practice adapting to the positive.
- Practice being consciously in control of your emotional state, creating opportunity to choose a positive action.
- When interacting with others, stay open; it allows for listening to new possibilities and provides positives responses.
- Practice making positive statements, avoiding the words not, no, and can't.
- Use negative situations as an opportunity for strengthening mindful awareness

What Can Leaders Do!

Leaders are in a position to bring vision, understanding, clarity, and agility to the environment and create a positive momentum for change. **Meeting the challenge requires not only a positive mindset, but to also consistent mindfulness of shifts in his/her emotional state when interacting with others.** It is then that leaders trigger emotions that either stimulate or dampen behaviors--many times at the subconscious level. A leader's ability to intentionally channel positivity contributes to developing a healthy, productive, and harmonious workplace.



This publication was produced by Michael J. Stabile, Ph.D. at

Empowering Thinking

Equipping Leaders

Coaching reminders:

Mike is available for individual leadership coaching.

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