

Leadership Forum Notes  
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*Seeing How to Serve: Leveraging Our Perceptual Skills to Increase Engagement*

Ms. Pohl begins the session with some statistics. In the U.S., \$450 billion per year are lost in productivity due to people not being engaged in their work. That is more than sick-leave (\$260 billion/year). 71% of U.S. workers are not engaged, and 16% are actively disengaged (taking you down and getting nothing done). This happens when people do not feel valued or included. How do we stop this and turn it around? How do we, as leaders, use a holistic approach and consider people in their entirety?

We look at IQ (intelligence quotient), EQ (emotional intelligence), and PQ (physical state) when we “see” others. Our goal is to really take notice of the PQ, what our colleagues (spouses, students, workers, etc.) faces and bodies are doing. This is something that we instinctively notice already, but we do not leverage it, generally. Our goal is to use this information to engage others.

- 1.) Identifying what engagement (or disengagement) looks like. What do we see when we “see” people? It is suggested when looking to remain very objective and look for *physical* characteristics in the eyes; do not judge or interpret at this point.
  - a. Picture of a baby. The terms used by work-shoppers to describe what they see are: calm, serene, engaged, present, eye contact, symmetrical. This is what engagement looks like.
    - i. Humans are drawn and attracted to symmetry for biological reasons, and for the most part, we are all born with symmetry. Life changes this, and our faces and bodies can change as well.
  - b. Two pictures of two different women and two pictures of a man are also presented throughout the session. A “before” and an “after” picture are put up for each of them, who came in for coaching. (Care is taken to make sure that the distance of the camera and lighting are similar for each photo taken.) In all 3 instances, the differences in the pictures are very evident.
    - i. The characteristics similar in the “before” pictures include head tilting, different height in eyebrows, differences in the focus and appearance of each eye, pursed lips, tight jaws, and even shadows or creases/wrinkles on some faces.
    - ii. Characteristics in the “after” photos showed changed posture, release of jaw tension, joined eye focus (or more focus from the left eyes), and evening of features (creases/wrinkles and eyebrows or cheeks), etc.
- 2.) How can we “flip the switch?”
  - a. Positive feedback.
    - i. Feedback is the key—not “constructive” criticism. Constructive criticism is still criticism. It’s not the same as feedback. People often get disengaged because of criticism. It shuts the system down over time.
    - ii. We don’t often ask people what they are the “Picassos” of.
  - b. Take the time to see others and explore their strengths and brilliance.
    - i. Many people are disengaged because they are in the wrong positions.
    - ii. As leaders, we can seek out what someone wants and try to help them find the right spot.

- iii. To get the information, sometimes we have to look for physical characteristics and reactions to dig a little deeper. Some questions to ask (don't ask *why* or *how* yet):
    - 1. What is your vision, or what do you want to do?
    - 2. What are you doing when time stops, and you are in the flow?
    - 3. If the sky is the limit, where would you take your career?
    - 4. If money is no object, where would you go?
  - iv. Figure out what your employee (worker, student, etc.) wants before you start figuring out how to put her there.
- c. You must meta-task.
- i. Listen to what she says.
  - ii. Watch for changes in the eyes (you'll often see a spark in the left eye when someone starts talking about what she likes or what engages her).
  - iii. This takes practice, strength, and endurance because you must put your "attention out." You use your "rabbit ears" to receive the information and then your "satellite" to give the feedback and engage.
  - iv. When you notice the positive flicker, allow the person to talk about that. Ask her to tell you more about it. This may help you identify this person's strength and brilliance.
    - 1. Sometime this is all more difficult with people who are already high-performers, but you can still see the changes when people talk about things that excite and engage them.