

Money and Self-Mastery: The 4 Channels to Profitable Leadership

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Using as a backdrop a quote from the December, 2001 issue of Harvard Business Review, “Leadership’s First Commandment: Know Thyself,” achieving greater profitability through leadership is a function of self-awareness.

True Stories

In a letter to his fellow participants a month following his Personalized Leadership Development Program (within which a self-awareness workshop is subsumed), Michael tells everyone “Thanks to my new and improved delivery system, I saved our company about 50K just from this one business meeting.”

You may ask, “What about long-lasting effects?” Here is a CEO’s testimony two years following his five-day experience in a personalized leadership development program: “Since leaving that workshop, my company has quadrupled its sales and bottom line.”

Both individuals had personality styles that had unnecessarily on occasion sabotaged followership and therefore profitability. Leadership styles range from the barking bulldozer type to the dysfunctional pleaser type. Then we have some people who are hybrids, giving away their power, say, in the name of fear of confrontation, which creates resentment that culminates in overt anger, thereby forfeiting their credibility. And leaders without credibility forfeit a strong bottom line.

Personal style and profitability – just how strong is the link? Imagine someone with an abrasive style presenting to his team a fool-proof strategy that could save their Fortune 500 Company several hundred thousands of dollars, and suppose the team members are so turned off by the presenter’s personal style, that they willingly defeat the proposal. The first author has witnessed this several times through 360° feedbacks to executives in her workshops.

So if you are leading and no one is following, then you have a leadership crisis on your hands. A negative personal style of lacking empathy may be what leaves followers empty and uninspired. Or perhaps it is your lack of honest feedback that leaves big decisions to what the second author calls “**negative risk taking**,” decisions based largely on assumptions vs. “**positive risk taking**,” decisions based on data from an aligned team that has the courage to incorporate intuition. Or maybe it is a negative personal style with individual team members that can create information hiders or have you perceived as one. If you are the only one with the wherewithal to fix the problems not being reported to you, you’ve just contributed to the deflation of your bottom line

What must happen for one to change his or her personal leadership style to a winning one? First of all, change does not take place without an accompanying emotion. Reading books on leadership rarely captures the depth of emotion necessary to catapult one to such heights of change. The power of words can effect change when a process that engages emotions is used. Personal awareness workshops that engage participants in such fashion are the ones producing testimonies such as those appearing at the beginning of this article.

Creating Profitability through Four Channels of Self-Awareness: Channel-Shift Actions

There are four major avenues to mastering self-awareness, *Mind, Body, Emotions and Spirit. You are the instrument of your leadership.* Mind, body, and emotions - put them all together, and you have a personality, which becomes your delivery system. And if they don't like your delivery system, they won't be following your lead.

Change involves a shift in some combinational form of all four channels. Although it could be as simple as a thought transplant, emotion is the fuel that creates the shift in the machinery of the mind. Your body then physically delivers your mind/emotion communication. When you are orchestrating mind, body and emotions from your primary channel, your spirit, you get optimal results. The following offers an overview.

The mind channel: Imagine your mind as a powerful bio-computer that you began programming at birth with likes and dislikes along with strategies to not only attract that which you like but also to avoid that which you don't like. At some point you automate these programs and beliefs and on a very basic level, accept them as Truth. However, as circumstances change that make it compelling to inventory and edit certain self-defeating programs, people without self-awareness miss such an opportunity. And this doesn't even address those programs that got stashed away in your subconscious, only to come out later to wreak havoc on your otherwise good intentions. But suffice it to say that one must ultimately drive out negative energy from the subconscious, and that involves an emotional process.

The emotions channel: People may forget what you have said, and they may forget what you have done, but they will never forget how you made them feel. Feelings invite a thought that mirrors the degree of negativity or positivism of the emotion. Because of the marriage between the mind and the emotions, this is not a cause and effect relationship, but rather a correlative one, and thus it is reasonable to assume that changing an emotion can help one reframe the original thought into one that carries a built-in resolution. Such creativity involves the interplay between the mind and emotions. We are not talking about anger here, which is almost always a cover-up for fear and/or hurt. Furthermore, internal, private emotions can also work the mechanisms of change. When the pain of lack becomes great enough, one is then ready to dig deep enough to draw out the emotion necessary for change.

The body channel: Our body language can allow others to misperceive our intentions and needs. To present an open, engaging style, one may need to tweak posture, facial expressions, and even voice. Suppose Harry receives feedback regarding looking arrogant, only to find that his bifocal glasses cause him to lift his nose up in the air. Then there are those who tend to look at people with face slightly turned to the right or left. While this can be a function of hearing loss, if you happen to be one of those with an angled face, you are likely sending a subtle – and oftentimes untrue – message that you are holding what the other person is saying in suspect.

The primary channel for optimizing you – the spirit: The next time you hear yourself say, “I must make up my mind,” or “I’ve got to stop feeling this way,” or “I’ve got to take better care of my body,” ask yourself, “If you aren’t your mind, your body, or your emotions (meaning, you simply have these three aspects of yourself that you purposefully direct at will in order to survive in your world), then who are you? It may be helpful to think in terms of a very creative *spiritual being* that uses mind, body, and emotions to formulate a personality to survive and thrive. As we get socialized, we tend to forget our origins (a spiritual being) but instead begin to think that we are our mind, body, and emotions rather than having them.

Becoming self-aware is getting back to the essence of our *being*, and thus operating from our center. You will know that you are there when you begin consistently experiencing positive, can-do thinking along with compassion for others. Prosperity, joyousness and aliveness are your birthrights, and self-awareness is your starting point, your ultimate pathway.

Dr. Holly Latty-Mann is President of The Leadership Trust, and **Teresa Spangler** is CEO of Creative Leadership Adventures, LLC and are writing their first book on leading, living, and loving through a four-channel optimization process. They partner in the Triangle area of NC to deliver a full range of leadership/creativity workshops and on-site consulting activities designed to fuel organizational productivity and profitability. For more information, www.leadership-trust.org and www.cladventures.com.

Excellence In Action: Make the commitment to master your four channels, Mind, Body, Emotions and Spirit. Prosper and profit through greater self-awareness.