

“Love Works: Seven Timeless Principles for Effective Leaders”

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Kindle Notes by Dave Kraft

What I knew in my bones, is that doing the right thing in business doesn't have to come at the expense of the bottom line.

Of all the topics covered that night, the discussion about how people treat each other at work and using love in business was the only subject that generated strong applause. People were longing to learn more about leading with love. No matter what kind of organization you're part of, and no matter what level of leadership responsibility you hold, you're reading this because you're hoping that there's a better way to lead than simply “hitting the numbers” and caring only about the bottom line.

It's a way to lead that grows the bottom line and respects employees, a way to lead that demands accountability and gives second chances. All my life I had been living by the numbers because numbers were all my leaders seemed to care about. I wanted to work somewhere that rejected the false dichotomy between profit and people or profit and principles. Sacrificing values for profits is a flawed choice.

Have you ever wondered if it's possible to maximize profits and value relationships? Common sense tells us that people will perform better if they are treated with respect and trust.

Here are the seven:

PATIENT: HAVE SELF-CONTROL IN DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

Yet there is one unforgettable aspect of that experience that changed my leadership style for good: from that moment forward, I determined never to publicly admonish people in a way that would diminish their dignity. Leading with love is not an excuse to be “soft” on people. Yet at the same time, we must always admonish with patience and respect. It takes patience to praise with specifics, and praise without specifics can be worse than no praise at all. I can walk around town with a megaphone, praising my employees at the top of my lungs, but if what I say isn't believable and specific, it won't have the effect I want.

- Admonish in private whenever possible.
- Be stern but avoid malice.
- Be specific.
- Get people “back on the horse” with pointed praise.
- Move on without a grudge.

KIND: SHOW ENCOURAGEMENT AND ENTHUSIASM

Anyone who consistently makes you feel bad is not helping you be better~Sam Horn

Type A personalities tend to be so concerned with taking the next hill and leading the next charge that we forget to pause and thank the people who are helping us get there.

CEO needs to be expanded. It also stands for “chief encouragement officer,

Kindness in the context of leading with love begins with you — encouragement and enthusiasm start at the top whether you run the local PTA or a Fortune 500 company.

TRUSTING: PLACE CONFIDENCE IN SOMEONE

Do you wish you knew how to create a more trusting environment in your organization?

- Have you ever considered poor listening as a sign of distrust?

- How can you remain passionate and engaged while not showing signs of distrust by micromanaging?
- What if trust could make a day-to-day difference at your work?

When we interrupt or respond without taking account of what others have said, we send several messages — none of them good:

- My idea is greater than your idea, so I don't have to listen.
- Interrupting you is okay because your response isn't that important.
- I'm not listening to you because I'm already preparing my response.

One of the best ways a leader can demonstrate trust and respect is to listen to and involve team members in the decisions that affect them. People want to be involved in decisions that affect them because they understand that participation is a sign of trust from leadership.

One thing is clear about my time at that plant: decisions were being made for the workers and not with them.

If we want our organizations to display trust and respect, we need to make sure everyone is involved in the decisions that affect them.

Start by identifying who is responsible for the decision. After receiving all available input and doing the required analysis, they're the ones who actually have to decide. What comes next in the process are those who have to approve whatever decision is made. They need to approve that the decision is wise and appropriate. However, before the decision becomes final, it's necessary to consult the people who will be directly affected by the decision. They may be in other departments or branches of the organization, but trust dictates that they are consulted. Finally, the organization must find the best way to inform the rest of the team — people who may not be directly affected but should be kept "in the picture."

A leader may decide something, but the whole organization needs to execute it.

When team members know they are trusted enough to be part of the decision-making process in advance, their support of the decision will be stronger and the implementation of that decision will be faster and more effective.

If you inherently trust others and believe they want to do their best and get better, you can become a great leader — as long as you hire talented self-starters.

Leading with love isn't possible if you don't trust people. And when you do trust people, leading will be more effective than ever.

UNSELFISH: THINK OF YOURSELF LESS

For potential senior leaders, the Intense Development Program (IDP) ensures that each developing leader gets a mentor who spends time reviewing a specific career development plan and assures that the employee is "moved along" in the organization so the proper skills are developed.

If we become numb to the needs of our employees, their performance and ability to satisfy our customers will diminish over time, compromising the very "numbers" we were obsessed with.

As a leader's seniority increases, that leader should make fewer decisions.

TRUTHFUL: DEFINE REALITY CORPORATELY AND INDIVIDUALLY

Individual egos, weak leadership, and conflict avoidance can all lead to an unhealthy organizational culture where truth is not upheld as a key value.

Rule #1: Don't Shoot the Messenger

Rule #2: Don't Confuse Disagreement with Conflict

“Healthy disagreement is needed to arrive at the best possible solution,

Rule #3: Don't Assume People See It

Rule #4: Speak Now or Forever Hold Your Peace

You will have your opportunity to persuade the rest of the team to agree with your point of view, but if a vote of your colleagues goes against you — well, you had your chance to speak, so you'll need to get on board with the team. I expect you to support whatever decision we make when you leave this room.

Most people don't leave because of poor performance; they leave because they don't feel valued.

Leading with love means caring enough about an individual or a team to give and solicit truthful feedback. When leaders provide their teams with the truth about their performance as well as the tools to be successful, regardless of personal feelings, this is a sure sign of leading with love.

Ensure that the employee understands how serious the issues are before firing is an option.

Finding someone you can trust to give you honest feedback is a rare gift that all leaders need but few receive.

FORGIVING: RELEASE THE GRIP OF THE GRUDGE

If we don't forgive, anger lives in us, and angry leaders create fear in an organization.

It's like the Malacy McCourt quote: “Resentment is like taking poison and waiting for the other person to die.

DEDICATED: STICK TO YOUR VALUES IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Did you know that fewer than 10 percent of companies today have a clearly defined set of core values and behaviors to which employees are expected to adhere