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I. Huddle Up - Communicating About the Anti-trust Virus

When I was about 10 my mom taught me an important lesson about trust. I am putting it into practice a lot these days. Why? Because as I move from executive to executive, client to client, diagnosing obstacles to growth, I am encountering what I think is the worst virus in organizations today: a lack of trust.

“Shandel,” my mom said, “I will trust you until the day you break my trust. After that I will absolutely love you and forgive you, but it will be impossible to trust you at the same level I fully trust you today.”

She gave this example: if I said I was going to Sears and went to a movie instead, she would always wonder if I was lying the next time I said I was going to Sears. But what if the loss of trust is not like an intentional adolescent fling? What if it's unintentional and you have no idea trust has been broken?

COMMUNICATION IS CRUCIAL

Say everyone was doing their best but business grew so fast it was out of control and stress levels were high for so long that now everyone is burned out and fighting in their passive-aggressive, politically-correct way? The first sign that trust is eroding is a lack of communication, and it's a biggie.

If you do not recognize there has been a breakdown of communication, you will soon see its evidence: high turnover, disgruntled attitudes, an apathetic work environment. All the while, your goals aren't being reached, or worse yet, they're being reached at too high of an emotional cost.

The bottom line is you cannot have sustainable growth without a fully engaged team and your team will not engage if there is a lack of trust.

RESTORING TRUST

Where does leadership fit in? Leaders are usually the last to know there is a breakdown of trust and it can really take them off guard. First, leaders have control, thus they can be deceived that all is well. It is easier to trust when you know all the information. Second, when trust erodes people stop talking while they disengage. Leaders can mistake apathetic acquiescence as healthy agreeable compliance. Third, some leaders may be so far out ahead strategizing at 30,000 feet that they are not connected to the reality at ground level. Thus when a problem is brought up, the leader jumps to action before seeking the true source of the problem—furthering the lack of trust in leadership.

Those are just three reasons leaders are often blind to lack of trust and a breakdown in communication. What's the anti-virus solution?

I have observed that you can regain trust—but it takes a deliberate commitment, hard work, lots of proven time, and a little divine intervention. If you can catch early the lack of communication that leads to unintentional breakdown of trust, you can restore it fairly quickly. The key is team building. But remember,

taking no action to eradicate this virus is a deliberate choice. Take action today!

BEGIN IT NOW!

Shandel

II. Pep Talk - Monthly Quotes

"Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him and to let him know that you trust him." - Booker T. Washington (1856-1915)

"To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved." - George MacDonald

"When it comes to trust, the only passing grade is 100 percent. If people can't trust you all the time, then they will consider you untrustworthy." - John C. Maxwell

"First rule of accomplishment: Build a team of people who BELIEVE in what they are doing." - Coach Freeb

"In order to have a winner, the team must have a feeling of unity; every player must put the team first-ahead of personal glory." - Paul Bear Bryant

III. MVP Award - Successful People Living with Intention - Elliot Lurie



Elliot Lurie is CEO of Custom Design Marketing. Elliot's desire is first for his people and then for results, and he pushes hard for both. The CDM team is special to my heart. They are an efficient, hard-working team who genuinely care for each other. When discussing vision, Elliot painted what he really wanted and then rolled out his five-year plan to open an office in Scottsdale, Arizona, while growing the Washington division. What has happened since has amazed even me. I'll let him tell the story, but this guy did it right and is being rewarded for it. Life often does that for people who live with intention! (And for all you AZ readers – he's an amazing golfer, so welcome him into the fold...and watch out!)

Here's Elliot...

Over the last 12 to 18 months my company, Custom Design Marketing, has gone through a tremendous amount of positive change.

CustomDesign Marketing was operating in a dysfunctional manner and it all started from the top. The company was navigating the choppy world of business without a rudder. I realized my behavior was affecting morale and productivity. I was not getting what I wanted out of my staff. They weren't working together. They were a group of individuals going about their day without a focus on personal as well as company goals.

I desired a positive work environment, an environment my employees felt proud of and where they were happy to walk thru the door every morning. I also desired more productivity and greater results. I knew I had to change. With Shandel's help and guidance, we as a team have each made great strides individually and collectively to turn things around.

Then we turned to the future. At 43 I took a good long hard look what I really want out of life, love and business. I looked at one year, five years and ten years down the road. I realized that I could create an environment for my staff that would allow them to reach their personal goals while at the same time reaching our corporate goals as well. I knew that doing that would be the key in getting me to where I

want to be.

My goal was to spend time in Arizona and Washington during the good weather months in each state. The vision was to expand my company and create an Arizona office and develop that marketplace while at the same time keeping the Seattle office running on all cylinders. So, my wife and I planned to move to Arizona in 2008 or 2009. The launch date for the AZ office was October 2006.

As it is turning out, with a vision and strategy in place, coupled with that entrepreneurial drive and spirit, and a good coach, the Arizona division was launched eight months ago. My wife and I are moving towards splitting time the way we want early next year.

It has been a whirlwind of change. All good. We all have dreams, wishes and wants. I encourage you to have a clear plan and maintenance of clarity of what exactly it is you want out of life. Do your best to create the environment for those around you in a way that they can achieve what they want out of life. In return you will achieve yours.

- *Elliot Lurie*