IDEA #1

Smart Ideas Shared

A Leadership Check up

Leadership is not always about strategies and tactics. It's often taking a real look at who you are being? The ten questions below will help you think about your leadership journey. Simply review the questions and then ask yourself, "Am I great at this?" Then give yourself a score between 1-10. Use this exercise as a reflection.

___Do you regularly express your gratitude to others and think about the things in your life that you are thankful for? Thankfulness can be powerful, because when we express gratitude the brain releases a surge of dopamine which is a neurotransmitter. Dopamine also increases the experience and duration of positive emotions.

___Do you cultivate optimism? People who think optimistically see the world packed with endless opportunities and ideas - especially in trying times!

___How well do you do at not trying to compare yourself to others? Comparing yourself or others to other people can be poisonous to relationships. The only person you should compare is yourself to yourself before today.

___Do you practice acts of kindness on a regular basis? We inspire others when we act selflessly, and helping someone is a powerful way to make you and others feel good inside.

___Do you nurture social relationships? Happy people are those who have deep, meaningful relationships. We feel and get inspired by people who "have our back," because they deeply care about us. Are you setting this example?

___Do you develop strategies for coping in tough times? It's inspiring when we see someone who can get to the state of "I'm OK" even when all hell breaks out. This is about managing your emotions and feelings so positive outcomes are reached.

___Do you forgive? When we learn to forgive, we discover that forgiveness can lead to feelings of understanding, empathy, and compassion for those who hurt you. It's a release that opens a door to a deeper discovery.

___Do you know how to discover what things make your heart sing, stir passion, and create drive in your spirit?

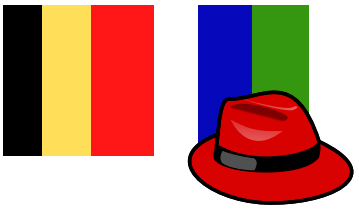
___Do you savor life's joys? Deep happiness cannot exist unless we slow down to enjoy our joy and accomplishments. Inspiring leaders celebrate the joys.

____Do you practice some type of spirituality? When we practice spirituality, or some type of religion, we realize "life" is bigger than us. It helps us surrender the idea that we are the "best"-or "the know it all" or the "person with all the answers." It also helps us grow personally.

___Do you take care of your physical body? When we honor our personal physical self, we feel strong, confident, and secure. These are three great traits that are needed in order to inspire others.

de Bono's Thinking Hats

IDEA #2



British physician, author, inventor and consultant, Edward de Bono, has had a major impact on the way we think, and in particular, in the field of creativity.

Mr. de Bono focused much of his work on creating a tool called *de Bono's Thinking Hats.* This tool offers a methodology for parallel thinking, which is when we focus our thinking on one thing at a time. It's pretty common when you bring a group together to do some problem solving that you begin to witness what I call "popcorn thinking." Different personalities approach problem solving in unique ways. The analytical types start diving deeply into the details. The creatives in the room start picturing new things that could happen. You'll have some pessimistic individuals that will want to mention all of the doom and gloom facts. Last, but not leaset, the positive people see nothing but opportunities.

When you use the Thinking Hats methodology you address all of those things, but you do it in an order so everyone's brain is focused and firing on the same topic. This increases the output of the thinking, because everyone is thinking in a specific order and focusing on one thing. In de Bono's work, he uses six thinking hats which illustrate the focus point of what the group focuses their thinking on.

Here are de Bono's Thinking Hats:

The Blue Hat: **The facilitator announces the discussion, method, big idea, or discussion.**
The White Hat: **The facilitator only allows the group to talk and think about facts, data, and historic information.**
The Yellow Hat: **The facilitator only allows the group to talk about the positive things about the situation. What's good? What's the value? What's the benefit? What do we like about the situation?**
The Black Hat: **The facilitator only allows the group to talk about their concerns, caution, consequences, and wisdom from past lesson and risks. What do they not like?**
The Red Hat: **The facilitator only allows the group to express their gut feelings and emotions. What do you sense about this? Any opinions you feel strongly about? Any prejudices showing up? Any passion?**
The Green Hat: **The facilitator only allows the group to do some creative thinking and ask questions such as: What if we...? Did we ever think to do...? Is there another way? What is an outrageous way to do the same thing? How can we look at it differently? What new things are possible?**

Our brains are "patterned recognition systems" that we rely on to help us quickly evaluate our surroundings and respond accordingly. However, we can get stuck with patterns and even completely zone out. These patterns occur so frequently in our brains that we don't even know when those patterned neuro-pathways are lighting up. In de Bono's work, he provides techniques to nudge the brain out of its thinking. Some examples of this are:

>Challenge any assumptions you may have about your problem
>Insert random elements that might encourage you to look at the problem differently (such as pretend there is a constraint)
>Look at things from different perspectives

negotiations

IDEA #3

Vistage speaker, Jack Kaine, has been teaching the ***Art of Negotiation*** to CEOs, Presidents, and Business Leaders worldwide for decades. He is amazing speaker and expert who can help any leader gain leverage at the negotiation table. Here are a few tips that I have garnished from his wisdom and insights from one of his many Vistage Peer Advisory Board presentations:

SLOW DOWN

Slow down and focus on negotiations rather than bargaining. When you focus on negotiating, you are focusing on "what's right." When you focus on bargaining you are focusing on win/lose. The only time we bargain is when we want a larger piece. It becomes a "he says / she says game." In negotiations, you simply try to enlarge your piece by adding elements to the negotiation.

MISTAKES TO BE AWARE OF:

BEWARE - You move too fast to give the cost when they ask. First you must educate them, and if they ask for the price you simply say, "I'd be delighted to answer your questions."

Always make negotiations personal. You want such a 'tight' relationship with the client that people will have to REJECT you rather than your corporation. If you put a price on yourself then you become a commodity. In today's soft economy, when you change your price you always itemize what you provide, so the service adds up to more than the price. Be proud of your pricing, because what you charge is worth more in the mind. Always go higher on your price rather than lower. People will PAY FOR CERTAINTY. You could pay only $310 for golf clubs on the internet and pay $400 at the golf shop. But you won't be certain to get the level of service needed when you buy from the pro shop.

BEWARE: Never bargain with yourself. Develop a budget, establish a price, and then don't cave in (you could move a negotiator into a bargainer if you give them a concession). Never ever make a concession the minute you know you can make it (if you choose to). Instead wait a day or so. You want to add time into their uncertainty. Never make a concession if you can't explain it (all you will do is lose creditability). You will also lose your power if you cannot explain your concession.

BEWARE: The person who asks the most questions determines the content and the direction of the negotiation. So, ask questions! And you better be prepared to ask those questions and answer the questions they will have for you. The person who listens the most will have the greatest outcome. Ask yourself, "Are you listening to talk" or are you "listening to learn?" Next to wanting to be loved, the

human race wants to be heard and understood. Words make up only 7% of communication, while tone accounts for 38%, and body language is 55%. So, hear their words, watch their body language, and listen to their tone. NEVER NEGOTIATE VIA EMAIL. Mirror their position and stance when you are listening. If they are in conflict with what you say they will change their position. If they change, and then follow yours then you are leading them!

BEWARE: Prescription before diagnosis is malpractice. Please, prep for your negotiations. What are your perceptions of the person? Their company? This negotiation? What are the assumptions you have? Each party has to gain clarity.

BEWARE: Forget to appreciate your customer or the prospect and you will lose them. Businesses only go where they are invited. They stay, however, where they are appreciated.

BEWARE: You cannot gain leverage until you look at the point of view of the other person. What are their negative viewpoints? What are their concerns? What don't they trust? It's important you create a climate of what's right not WHO IS RIGHT.

BEWARE: If you are in a negotiation, and you know there is a certain "tactic" being played such as the "good cop/bad copy tactic", then just call it out in the open. Get the white elephant out on the table.

Start practicing these tips today and see how they can help support your next negotiation conversation, and tap into the Power of Peers to take advantage of their insights and unbiased wisdom.

Like many leaders, you do not have to lead alone.
I invite you to interview for a seat on a Vistage Peer Advisory Board.
Decisions are too critical, uncertainty is front and center in the minds of leaders and yet our leaders are RISING to new heights.
In 2020, Vistage CEO members grew their annual revenue on average by 4.6%, while non-members with comparable businesses saw revenue decrease by 4.7% according to Dun & Bradstreet data study.
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