

The Secret to Helping Others Excel



**THE COURAGE
OF A LEADER**
INSPIRE, ENGAGE AND GET
EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS

The secret to helping others excel is not only about effective use of a technique or smooth implementation of a set of behaviors. Instead, **the secret is in your outlook, your thoughts and beliefs about the individuals you wish to improve.**

People can tell when they are being fed a line. We know when the person across from us is doing all of the right things yet, doesn't believe in what she's doing. When actions are not sincere, we can feel it.

I worked with a Production Supervisor several years ago who was extremely frustrated with one Operator in his group. He told me about how he had tried everything to get this guy to change: he'd told him the new expectations, asked him what he wanted, put him in charge of his area, and so on. He kept going round and round and trying new things and yet, the Operator continually reverted to his typical ways. The Production Supervisor felt he had exhausted all possible options. I asked him, "What do you think about this Operator, honestly?" The response was immediate, "He's old, stuck in his ways, resentful that I'm younger than him and he's playing me." I nodded. I got it. I understood why he thought that. I looked him in the eye and said, "Here's the thing. You've tried everything – everything – except changing your outlook." There was silence for a bit. He knew what I meant. I saw him taking it in. He was going to have to do some more work.

There's a well-known quote from Peter Drucker, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast." You know this one? I don't think this could be more true, and there's more about why in the Engage People's Hearts, Minds and Brains chapter. And, I believe similarly that "Belief eats behavior for breakfast." Having the appropriate beliefs, or outlook, is way more important than perfectly executing the seemingly appropriate behaviors.

Belief eats behavior for breakfast.

If you want to help a person improve, you want to believe some of the following about the individual.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • is intelligent | • has a unique dream/vision or goal |
| • is capable | • has strengths, talents, and skills |
| • knows how to solve problems | • knows how to learn |
| • is responsible for own choices | • is a whole and complete person |
| • is personally accountable | • knows how to be clear |
| • is creative | • has own values and principles |

Beliefs Needed to Cause Improvement

Why? Why do you need to make at least some of these assumptions? So you can be a courageous leader who trusts the capabilities of those around you and coaches whenever possible. Coaches empower,

encourage critical thinking and thus, enable team members to find their own best ideas to improve and achieve the desired results.

Coaches ask questions more than they tell information. Let's contrast what we get when we *ask* versus what we get when we *tell* to clearly see the power of coaching.

What we get when we ASK and TELL

What we get when we ASK	What we get when we TELL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their ideas • their thought-processes • their concerns • their feelings • buy-in • engagement • trust • deepened relationships • long-lasting solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our ideas • our way of doing things • quick response

WITHOUT a coaching perspective, you get...

- ...NO new ideas or perspectives
- ...NO increased levels of engagement
- ...LIMITED performance

What you might be wondering now, and what the Production Supervisor I worked with several years ago wondered, is how. How do I possibly believe what does not seem to line up with what I'm experiencing? If you want to shift your outlook about a person, you've got some introspective work to do. There's just no way around it. Here's an exercise to unlock your current outlook and open yourself up to some new beliefs.

Tap into the Secret to Helping Others Excel Exercise
<p>Pick a person you want to improve.</p> <p>Ask yourself the following questions. (Don't edit yourself.)</p> <p>Look for all possible responses and capture all your thoughts.</p>
<p>What might make a great, well-intentioned person act like that?</p> <p>How has the person been hurt, let down, or frustrated?</p> <p>What does this person have at stake? How might this person feel threatened?</p> <p>What do you think this person cares about?</p> <p>What experience does this person have? What experience does this person have that you don't?</p>

Take time responding to each question. Really look and look again.
Usually I encourage folks to move forward as swiftly as possible. In this case, you want to take your time to really truly, genuinely shift your outlook. You need to take the time here, with the inquiries, in order to move forward with velocity.

Look across your responses for possible new ways you could think about the person. What's opened up in your outlook? What possible new beliefs could you adopt? Again, take your time and capture all potential new perspectives. Then look for what you can authentically think – even to a degree – about the person.

Which ones can you genuinely believe?

- The Work by Byron Katie (www.thework.com)
- Book: Leadership and Self-Deception by The Arbinger Institute

The Production Supervisor who believed he had tried everything, went back and did some more work. He looked for new evidence, realizations, and thoughts that could shift his outlook. We had a coaching call. He said he was ready, that he was feeling a little bit differently about the Operator. I told him to do some more searching, I didn't feel he'd made a genuine shift. He reflected more and later he told me that he apologized to the Operator for not acknowledging the full value of his experience. The Supervisor had plans to back up, redesign the changes with the Operator's input, and have the Operator decide the implementation steps and pace. The Operator stopped him as he was sharing these plans and said while he appreciated all that, all that he really wanted was the acknowledgement and to tweak one piece of what had previously been introduced. This tweak would make all the difference in his mind. And, it did. The process change was implemented in half of the planned execution time, which the Production Supervisor said was an aggressive timeline to begin with.

The Courage of a Leader



perspective, asked more questions of those around you, and pushed decisions down to where the experience and information is most prevalent. What kinds of questions make the most powerful coaching questions? See the diagram below.

Coaching Questions

Powerful coaching questions, like the ones listed below can be used as appropriate in the general order/flow listed.	
Desired Future What do you want to achieve? And, why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you want to achieve? • What would you like to have happen? • What does success look like to you? • Why is this important to you? • What are the benefits for you? For others? For the group? For the organization?
Past What got you here?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the history? • What patterns exist? • What actions have you taken to address the situation? • What's worked? What hasn't? • What had an impact? What didn't? • Who has dealt with something similar? • What do you and others need to release?
Present What's the current situation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's the current situation? • What's going well that you can build on? • What's holding you back? • How are you and others feeling? • What ideas do you have to move towards what you want? • What ideas are you most inspired to take? • Who can help you?
Immediate Future What will you do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's your plan of action? • What will be your first step? • What resources/support do you need? • What's the timeline?

Remember, you've got to have empowering beliefs about those you're coaching to be truly effective when asking these questions and attempting to improve the performance of others.



To help others improve:

- ask more than tell
- take on a coaching perspective
- push decisions down to where the experience and information is

AND... none of this works without the SECRET to helping others improve:
Believe the individual can improve