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the Leadership Difference

Laugh and Learn

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Welcome to the Leadership Difference

Greetings!

In this issue, Dave talks about how just changing the way you think can dramatically affect your success, love, and happiness. Of course there are a couple of wine suggestions and an update on Dave's newest book.

Changing The Way You Think

There is no shortage of resources for self-help. One trip through Barnes & Noble and you can find entire sections of the book store dedicated to advice on becoming more successful, better at relationships and happier with your life. Heck, I wrote one. As far as I can tell from thumbing through a few of these books, they all offer sound advice. There's just one problem. They all require that you change the way you think, and changing the way you think is pretty darn hard to do.

The keys to being successful, happy and developing great relationships largely reside in your own head. Success, happiness and love are all concepts that are defined by the individual. What constitutes each of these varies from person to person. How else can you explain the happiness of a person who has endured so much tragedy, while another lives a charmed life in misery? Many a person without two pennies to rub together has experienced the richness of a beautiful sunset. We probably know of the love between two people who others have shunned. In each situation, it is the individuals' perception of their experience that leads to their happiness, success and love. Somehow, their cognitive schemas - the ways they organize their thoughts and perceive reality - have combined to create their blissful delusion. And it is a delusion; all our lives are simply the result of our own unique schemas.

To achieve success, love and happiness, we must change the way we think. To change the way we think, we must commit to three very challenging strategies. First, we must embrace an internal locus of control. There are no external elements that will make us happy. Feelings of success do not correspond to our job or our income. Love doesn't find us. We, and we alone, are responsible for these things and we must be accountable for them.

Second, we must become more self aware. We must understand that our cognitive schemas, while compelling and the source of our own reality, are not the only way of thinking. We installed these schemas as the result of our own life experiences. They may have been very useful at one time. For example, my mom struggled with addictions when I was a child, so I developed an approach to life that involved control. My cognitive schema for control was very useful in protecting myself from my mom's difficult behavior. Unfortunately that same need for control can inhibit my ability to be happy. Because of this, the way I think is a barrier to my own goals.

My dash of pessimism no doubt was a response to my father's fatalism. One of his favorite lines was, "Cheer up; things are going to get worse." The man survived the Depression and World War II. Keeping your hopes in check was a survival schema for him. Unfortunately, that schema does not serve me so well. That pessimism can run contrary to my success at times. By being aware of your own negative schemas, you can begin to adjust them.

Third, remind yourself that just because you THINK something doesn't mean that it's REAL. What you think is a delusion, not objective reality. Teaching yourself to think in ways that are more supportive of your pursuit of success, happiness and love is the goal. It is not easy because we are all so sure that our thoughts reflect reality. They do not. Our thoughts reflect the collection of experiences we have had. Many of these schemas are no longer useful, but they still define our reality. Until we change the way we think we will never achieve more success, happiness and love. In this way, we are indeed, "our own worst enemy."

Be accountable for your own life's outcomes, pay attention to your own negative schemas and change the way you think so that your perception of life is more conducive to success, happiness and love. It is not an easy formula, but since the alternative is discontent, unhappiness and mediocrity...it's well worth the effort!

The Power of Understanding People: Hollywood Style (The Book)

I am making progress; slow, deliberate progress. I am still hoping to finish the book in 2011. Whether or not it is actually released this year is another matter. Since this book is based on our most popular seminar and the content is so important to me, it has been a real challenge for me to write. Thank you to all of you who continue to inquire about it. I promise, I will get it completed. Eventually.

In the meantime, you can experience the seminar! It is available in full or half day versions and can be customized to address teamwork, selling skills, leadership or customer service applications. Heck, I even do a wine tasting event based on this content. To learn more, please contact me(dave@theleadershipdifference.com) or Lisa Jennings (lisa@theleadershipdifference.com).



A Whole Lotta Rosé

Every summer I trumpet the virtues of Rosé wines. They offer fantastic flavors of strawberry and melon, and their crisp acidity and lower alcohol make them excellent for both quaffing and pairing with summer fare. This summer, we are planning a Whole Lotta Rosé (sorry, AC/DC!) party and letting our friends choose their favorite Rosé from these four distinctly different wines:

- Bodegas Muga Rosado Rioja 2010 (Spain)
- Les Vignerons de Fontés Priuré Saint Hippolyte Languedoc Rosé 2010 (France)
- Hey Mambo Kinky Pink Rosé 2009 (California)
- Barnard Griffin Reserve Rosé of Sangiovese 2010 (Washington)

All four are under \$12 and feature different grapes and winemaking styles. They are also easy to find online or at your local wine retailer. I challenge you to pick up a bottle and send me your thoughts at dave@theleadershipdifference.com. Let's see which bottle is the biggest crowd pleaser!



NOW AVAILABLE!!

Dave's most popular seminar is now a book!
Order The Power of Understanding People today!