



# CUTTINGS

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Compiled and edited by Geof Cox

## Being a Leader Doesn't Make You One

**M**ost leaders have the technical expertise to do their jobs effectively. In fact, that's usually the reason they were promoted in the first place. But it's the ability to relate with and motivate people which is far more important. Research shows that when people can work in a climate of respect, caring, honesty, collaboration, cooperation and trust, they maximise their contributions to the organisation.

The problem is that most leaders aren't born with the relationship skills they need. When it comes to dealing with people problems, newly promoted leaders too often feel like they're unprepared. And when inevitable problems and conflicts arise, they feel frustrated, even helpless. This is the case put by Brian Anderson writing in HR.com in January.

To Anderson, the characteristics of the most effective leaders are:

- They decrease the power differential between self and team members.

- They create conditions for distributing the leadership function throughout the group.
- They show respect for intrinsic worth of team members.
- They show respect for team members as individuals.
- They understand that people aren't there to be used, directed or influenced to accomplish only the leader's aims.
- They listen with empathy.
- They demonstrate acceptance.
- They express their own beliefs, needs and ideas honestly, clearly and without blame.
- They work to resolve conflicts in a way that creates mutual need satisfaction.

If you lead people, you owe it to them (and to yourself) to honestly and frankly assess the current conditions your team members are working under.

Do you really trust the capacity of the team and of the individuals in it to solve the problems facing them? Or do

you basically trust only yourself? Do you create a climate in which your team can have creative discussions by being willing to hear, understand, accept and respect all input? Or do you find yourself trying to influence the outcome of discussions?

Do you honestly express your own beliefs and ideas without trying to control those of others? When there are problems and conflicts, do you make it possible for them to be brought out into the open, or do you subtly communicate that they should be kept hidden?

These – and more – are proven, tested people skills. And they are just as learnable as technical skills. It takes training and practice, practice, practice, but the payoffs in morale, productivity and energy are both measurable and immeasurable.

*Brian Anderson is the founder of BA Search Group an executive search, coaching and consulting practice in Naperville IL [www.basearchgroup.com](http://www.basearchgroup.com),*

## Seven Ways to Engage

**T**om Terez offers some ideas on how to engage the unengaged 50 percent plus of your workforce:

### START WITH PURPOSE

People want their work to have meaning. They want those tasks and projects to promote some greater good. When's the last time you talked about your overarching mission?

### HUNT DOWN THE BUSYWORK

Over months and years, every workplace maintains meaningless procedures and process steps that steal time from meaningful work. Try taking a critical look at how you spend your time. Pinpoint one or two time-draining activities you can ditch right away.

### INVITE PEOPLE IN

If you're analysing a problem, brainstorming ideas, weighing options, reviewing data, or doing anything else

that requires brainpower, reach out to more people for input.

### RE-INVENT YOUR MEETINGS

Many meetings are a one-way routine in which the boss simply delivers information – something that could be done more easily by e-mail or handout. The best meetings are forums for dialogue in which all participants can shape the agenda, ask questions, and freely share their views.

### GET SMART ABOUT SPACE

Thomas Edison designed his Menlo Park invention factory to be the best of both worlds. The first floor had separate workspaces so people could focus on their individual developments, and the second floor had community work areas where parts and pieces were turned into inventions. In your own workplace, are there complementary

places where people can work alone and work together?

### LEVERAGE THOSE STRENGTHS

What are your own top strengths and the top three strengths of your three main colleagues? Not sure? Stop everything and come up with answers right now. Everyone has great strengths that are waiting to be put to work.

### SHARE THAT KNOW-HOW

The people around you are some of the smartest people you never knew. They have expertise and rich life experiences that remain hidden. So why not set aside an hour for your own impromptu University? Take turns spending 10 minutes each teaching something -- anything -- to the team.

*Initially published on HR.com by Tom Terez [TomTerez.com](http://TomTerez.com), [BetterWorkplaceNow.com](http://BetterWorkplaceNow.com) and [InnerBest.com](http://InnerBest.com)*

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# Snippets

A collection of thought provokers and quotations...

- ✂ “Worry a little bit every day and in a lifetime you will lose a couple of years. If something is wrong, fix it if you can. But train yourself not to worry. Worry never fixes anything.” *Mary Hemingway*
- ✂ “There are two kinds of light--the glow that illuminates, and the glare that obscures.” *James Thurber*
- ✂ “They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.” *Carl W. Buechner*
- ✂ “The heart of a fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of the wise man is in his heart.” *Benjamin Franklin*
- ✂ “As human beings, our greatness lies not so much in being able to remake the world - that is the myth of the atomic age - as in being able to remake ourselves.” *Mahatma Gandhi*
- ✂ “A discovery is said to be an accident meeting a prepared mind.” *Albert Szent-Gyorgyi*
- ✂ “Don’t be the Lone Ranger. Problem solving, like leadership in general, requires involvement of others. Remember that in any problem situation, your greatest resources are the people around you. Don’t make the mistake of assuming that you must solve every problem by yourself.” *John Baldoni*
- ✂ “The only real prison is fear, and the only real freedom is freedom from fear.” *Aung San Suu Kyi*
- ✂ “If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten we belong to each other.” *Mother Teresa*
- ✂ “Remember that there is nothing stable in human affairs; therefore avoid undue elation in prosperity, or undue depression in adversity.” *Socrates*
- ✂ “Management is what we do, leadership is what we feel” *René Carayol*
- ✂ “I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.” *Martin Luther King, Jr.*
- ✂ “Broadly speaking, the short words are the best, and the old words best of all.” *Sir Winston Churchill*
- ✂ “Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away.” *Antoine de Saint-Exupery*
- ✂ “When you are through changing, you are through.” *Bruce Barton*

## Customers want to feel better

On her blog on the HeartMath website, Kim Allen shared a story about being an irate customer, which probably every one of us can relate to at sometime in our recent past.

She made a 'heated' call after five days without power (she was living in a remote area where the lines had been brought down in several places as a result of trees being blown down in gales).

What stood out for her is how the customer service representative responded to her. It would have been perfectly understandable if she was a little edgy from dealing with hundreds of irritated customers, but she wasn't. Rather, she calmly responded with a compassionate, "I really wish I can help you."

Of course she couldn't solve the problem. She was miles away from the fallen tree and could only tell me how much longer the crews might take to restore power.

However, her ability to stay calm and establish a comforting tone totally disarmed the situation. Instead of an angry exchange, the outcome was Kim actually thanking her for listening and going back to a book by candlelight with a smile

Backing this experience with research done by Richmond Events Ltd and commissioned for the Marketing Forum 2002 we find that 51% of consumers feel apprehensive, nervous, worried or mistrusting as they enter a customer experience. This is not a surprise – they are concerned about the response they will receive.

What is a surprise is that their satisfaction accounts for only 14% of the total experience. Fully 80% reported they want to feel confident, reassured and a sense of delight! In other words customers want to feel better.

So whether your customers are consumers or the workers you serve in the next department, you can't always fix things or solve their problems. But you can set the tone in the interaction. The power to turn required courtesy into sincere care is yours.

So, next time you're asked to serve, take a deep breath and remember how you want to feel when you're the customer. When you feel better first, the rest is easy.

*Kim Allen, www.HeartMath.com*

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To discuss any ideas and to access the network, please call me direct:

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