

Your Business Matters!

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THINKING

STARTING

GROWING

EXITING

How Can I Become a More Effective Leader?

Some of the difficulties that entrepreneurs encounter tend to revolve around people problems rather than skill deficiencies. Skills can be learned somewhat quickly, but behaviour tends to be ingrained from an early age and can be more difficult to modify.

Leaders of groups of people must constantly interact and influence others: motivating, coaching, listening, communicating, selling, and partnering. If you project an inconsistent image, explain poorly, fail to develop relationships, or make yourself psychologically or physically unavailable, managing is much more difficult.

As such, you should consciously create the culture you want, using yourself as the vehicle using these practices:

1. Be available: Make time for people, be approachable and give them your undivided attention - no texting or taking phone calls when they are speaking. This conveys to them that what they are saying is important and you are interested in their opinion.
2. Respect differences of opinion: Accept the fact that others may not see things as you do. Be willing to listen and consider new ideas. Know when to assert yourself and when to let others' ideas change the way things were done in the past.
3. Empower your employees: Delegate tasks and leadership roles and encourage your employees to solve problems. This demonstrates that you have confidence in their abilities. Do not make the mistake of redoing what they have completed, or offer your ideas of how you might have



completed the task. An empowered employee can lead to increased creativity, productivity, motivation, teamwork and loyalty.

4. Communicate Openly: Hold regular staff meetings. Provide thorough expectations for all tasks to be completed. Be prepared to renegotiate expectations when you recognize changing circumstances. Also recognize that not every project, relationship or transaction concludes successfully. Ask your employees how they might have performed the task differently – and be assured that the mistake will not be repeated. Be fair.
5. Express appreciation for jobs well done. Words of praise and recognition encourage employees to continue to meet and exceed expectations. Be mindful of how each employee prefers to be rewarded and recognized. Some are comfortable with public recognition; others may prefer to be privately rewarded.

For more information, resources & helpful tips visit: **Business Resource Centre** 519-756-4269 www.businessresourcecentre.ca
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