LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS: CREATING A FEEDBACK CULTURE

Amazing that no matter how much changes, so much remains the same.

Here is what we are talking about. Leaders are individuals who have followers. We believe that people follow when they see a leader as credible. Credibility is essential for effective leadership.

Leaders are those who create the environment where teams and individuals live up to their greatest potential, and fundamental to that environment is the creation of a culture of feedback.

We know that creating a feedback culture is essential to trust, speed of work and efficiency, better talent management, quicker decision-making, and more. Then HALT! We run into this conundrum: Why is it that all organizations (no matter where in the world) have difficulty developing a culture of feedback? Why is it that we don't do feedback well?

Just like anything else that we know is important but are blocked in doing, we need to *simplify* the process and develop *routine*.

Here are five suggestions for simplifying and routinizing a feedback culture:

1. Create a plan for yourself, like "Feedback Fridays," where you have a personal routine to collect feedback from the stakeholders involved in your current projects as frequently as appropriate, perhaps weekly or quarterly. We suggest you don't say, "Give me some feedback." Rather, you say, "I am working on project X and issue Y.... how's it going as far as you are concerned? What do you need from me on this project that would help you better meet your needs?" And you keep asking these types of questions with follow-up. When one project ends, start asking about another.

2. Set aside non-negotiable time for feedback sessions with your direct reports as well as all of your other stakeholders. Start talking with people about how you are serving them, how they are serving you, and what it is that you can do collaboratively to make the organization and one another more effective.

3. Have feedback luncheons where people come together with a "brown bag" to share what they are learning and give each other feedback. One system for that could be where each person might say, "I am working on X. Can you give me two tips on how to handle this better?"

4. Speak the truth to leadership and remember that the truth is the truth as it appears from the teller's perspective.

5. Compliment those who are creating a culture of feedback. Applaud their courage and put them in key positions for promotion and influence.

How would you rate the culture of feedback in your organization? How many of the above tips can you begin to implement this week?