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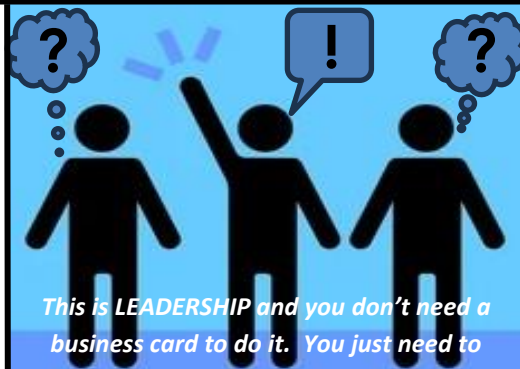
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ANYONE WHO KNOWS ME WILL TESTIFY THAT I'LL DRIVE YOU NUTS WITH MY BELIEFS ABOUT THE WAY OUR BUSINESS AND SOCIETAL ENVIRONMENTS HAVE CHANGED. NOT SIMPLY ABOUT HOW THEY'VE CHANGED; RATHER HOW WE HANDLE IT. ESPECIALLY GIVEN THE SPEED AT WHICH IT'S CONSTANTLY HAPPENING AND THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF THE DIRECTIONS IT TAKES. TECHNOLOGY IS NOW INVENTING TECHNOLOGY. THIS PLACES GREATER DEMANDS UPON PEOPLE LIKE US TO PERSONIFY AND MANIFEST THE BEHAVIOURS THAT DIFFERENTIATE US COMPETITIVELY. IT'S ESSENTIAL THAT WE DON'T IGNORE IT AND IT'S ADVANTAGEOUS IF WE DON'T JUDGE IT TOO HARSHLY – ESPECIALLY WHEN THE CHANGES THAT AFFECT US MAY NOT ALWAYS BE IN HARMONY WITH OUR UPBRINGING OR OUR BELIEFS. POLITICAL CORRECTNESS WOULD BE AN EXAMPLE. THESE SAME PEOPLE WHO KNOW ME MAY RECALL THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION I UNCEASINGLY ASK; "WHAT THEN, IS THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE CHANGE?" WHILST THE ONLY WRONG ANSWER WOULD BE THE AFOREMENTIONED TO "IGNORE IT", THERE ARE DEGREES OF BEING RIGHT. ADAPTING TO OR EMBRACING CHANGE ARE BOTH GREAT ANSWERS. HOWEVER, WHENEVER IT'S POSSIBLE, THE BEST WAY TO HANDLE CHANGE IS TO CAUSE IT. THE ADVANTAGE IT HAS IS THAT IT'S THE ONLY PRO-ACTIVE OPTION. THAT'S WHAT ENTREPRENEURS DO. NOT ALL BUSINESSPEOPLE ARE ENTREPRENEURIAL IN THEIR APPROACH. THE MORE ENTREPRENEURIAL YOU ARE IN YOUR APPROACH TO WHATEVER JOB YOU DO, THE MORE YOU'LL BE NOTICED, REMEMBERED AND COPIED. IF YOU TRULY ASPIRE TO A FULFILLING CAREER, THIS IS THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENT TO ACHIEVING ONE. LIKE ANY GREAT CHEF – KNOW THE RECIPE BUT REMEMBER THAT IT'S THE METHOD THAT WILL DIFFERENTIATE YOU. THE RESPONSE I OFTEN ENCOUNTER TO THIS IS, "I'M JUST A SMALL FISH IN A BIG POND! HOW DO I CAUSE CHANGE??!" OK, LET'S DO IT.

WHAT IS INITIATIVE?

Most people seldom cause change and the reason is that they either don't know where to start or they lack the courage to try or to see it through. Starting is initiating. Some people like doing that. They're the ones that display initiative. This gets noticed and career paths are often created for them. It matters not what your role is or how experienced you are or what credentials you may have. The ingredients are far more primal than that. Courage, imagination, willpower, resilience and authenticity. There's a start. Crave to have them. Cultivate them. Practice them. Make them second nature. Once you're seen as authentic, you'll be granted authority. You'll be the author. An author creates. Creation is causal.



This is LEADERSHIP and you don't need a business card to do it. You just need to SET AN EXAMPLE

ALL WELL AND GOOD AY. SO – HOW?

Knowing the recipe won't make you a chef – just a cook. It's the method that creates your point of difference. The first step is to ensure you are appealing. It starts with your personal presentation and finishes with the way you choose to behave. Presentation precedes performance. Check! Now, how friendly are you? If you're not consistently AND proactively friendly 100% of the time, you'll be overlooked by someone else who is. Is your boss friendly? If he or she isn't, it'll create an atmosphere that goes all the way down the line and ends up noticed by the customers. The collateral damage on the way happens to morale. Either give the boss some 'friendly pills' or get a new boss. Add to your friendly disposition an open mind, curiosity (it fuels the desire to learn) and enthusiasm. Humans are herd animals and as such, the masses take their cues from the leaders. Yawning is contagious but so is laughter. Enthusiasm is very contagious. It's obvious in your body language and your willingness to participate and contribute. It makes you a 'go-to person.' If that's not leadership, I don't know what is. It makes you credible and being credible is your best credential. If this sounds basic, consider how many times you've heard managers say, "let's get back to basics" My question would be; "why were they ever abandoned in the first place?" Movers and shakers never forget the basics. This means they can devote their energies to innovation, evolution, learning and earning. Does that sound like a good plan?



Time is not the issue. We all have the same amount of it. It's the decisions we make that determine our futures. Learn to manage yourself and you'll save bucketloads of time. Your best tool for this is a mirror. Take a look in one from time to time and ask yourself how you'd feel if you just met you or witnessed your behaviour as a stranger. Don't obsess but DO assess. If you can, you won't need others to intervene. This is true self-help. BE THE BENCHMARK by owning it.

BE AWARE AND BEWARE: Beware of comfort zones. They are seductive and they breed regret. Nothing memorable was accomplished in comfort zones. Be careful of benchmarks. You can't be sure the people who set them were doing all they could & it's possible you might be better. Rather, consume yourself with what you may be capable of. It's worthier!