October 2004: "Interior Designers"

Introduction

This month's email is sourced using ideas from a range of client management and executive coaching meetings, and from my workshop: © Getting Dressed on the Inside.

Are you a good interior designer? Your mindset, attitudes and beliefs have a powerful influence on your effectiveness.

Crafting an excellent meeting agenda, putting on your best interview suit, researching the 'right' negotiation technique, practising your speech – these are some examples of typical 'external' preparation. But there is more to achieving an influential and successful impact than what is visible to the outside world. By improving your internal preparation, you can achieve a better outcome.

How your 'interior' can help

Some of the areas in which people express an interest around 'interior designing' include:
* improved communication style
* enhancing collaborative teamwork
* influencing change
* peace of mind
* job satisfaction
* greater control over their direction
* improved leadership style

They say things such as, I'd like to:
* have more confidence
* have less fear and more courage
* worry less about what others think of me
* communicate with influence
* communicate with confidence
* reduce my internal negative mind chatter
* make a better impact

Exercising the Interior

"Things held in the mind create after their own kind. Whatever you focus your attention on, you will get more of it in your life." ("Your Authentic Self - Be Yourself at Work" by Ric Giardina)

(1) What holds you back?

Are you aware of how your beliefs and thoughts drive you? Irrational beliefs, negative thinking, unhelpful thoughts, unrealistic thoughts, faulty thinking, self-defeating thoughts, internal criticism – these limit how you operate. For example, "If I tell my colleagues the truth they won't like me"; "I have to be perfect at everything I do"; "If I make a mistake in the presentation it will be a disaster". At times you might not be aware of your invisible drivers and how they impact your choices and decisions.

There are a range of tools to use and activities you can do to tackle limiting thoughts. For example, monitor your internal thinking and notice thoughts and beliefs that hold you back: try to rationalise and dispute them. This can help shift your energy to a more positive level.

Besides thoughts, other 'weakeners' can include your health, relationships, environment, work, and not being true to your values. Monitor these, and notice which have an 'internal' impact on you, and then take action e.g. does your inner health create the energy you need to be your best?

(2) What strengthens you?

Positive emotions and your inner strengths are significantly helpful in achieving effective outcomes. Focusing on your positiveness helps negative emotions to dissipate. Your strengths are a buffer against difficulties, and help build resilience - it's important to 'shore' up and emphasise your strengths. Notice what is working for you, and bring these into your work. Look also at which areas in your health, relationships, environment, work and values are strong enablers for positive effectiveness, and look for ways to maximise them.

Quotes

"The success of an intervention depends on the interior condition of the intervenor" - Former CEO Hanover Insurance, Bill O'Brien

"You can always cope with the present moment, but you cannot copy with something this is only a mind projection" - Eckhardt Tolle, (Author of "The Power of Now")

"You will become as small as your controlling desire; as great as your dominant aspiration" James Allen, 1864-1912, British-born American Essayist

"Become a possibilitarian. No matter how dark things seem to be or actually are, raise your sights and see possibilities - always see them, for they're always there" Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, 1898-1993, American Christian Reformed Pastor, Speaker, Author

"Positive energy created in positive ties [networks] delivers extraordinary results" - Cameron, Dutton and Quinn, in "An Introduction to Positive Organisational Scholarship

"Muddy water let stand becomes clear" - Lao Tzu fifth / sixth century B.C

"What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say" - Ralph Waldo Emerson , 1803-1882, American Poet, Essayist

"What counts…is not only what leaders do and how they do it, but that 'interior condition', that inner place from which they operate. In order to enhance the capacity for creating profound innovations, leaders have to become aware of, and change, the inner place from which they operate as individuals, as teams and as larger collective entities." - Otto Scharmer, co-founder and lecturer of the Leadership Lab for Corporate Social Innovation at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

"I keep my mind focused on peace, harmony, health, love and abundance. Then, I can't be distracted by doubt anxiety or fear" - Edith Armstrong

About This Article

My aim is to provide you with information to assist you at work, with your own development, and in developing your staff. The theme for 2004 is 'Building Collaborative Workplaces'. Each month I concentrate on an area based on topics raised by my clients. Material is drawn from journals, books, articles and shared experiences.

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