

Inspecting What You Expect

A large part of the human condition is one of not doing something unless we have too. This attitude is inside us all and it is a good thing since it forces us to choose whether or not we wish to succeed or fail or whether or not we wish to simply ignore an opportunity.

I have found my own team members, most with higher degrees of education, with a similar being inside them that does not allow them to win. There is a constant failure factor there.

Within the heart of each of us is a great trickster. This trickster insures that everything we do is by choice. This is the part of us that challenges the rules and keeps us from moving forward towards our goals with a feeling of “why bother.” This trickster, who I like to call the “inner saboteur” needs to be not denounced but honored since it gives us a choice in each opportunity that comes up. As I have learned from my wife sometimes procrastination is the best answer.

When you’re dealing with this inner saboteur, you are dealing with true genius. In most cases this is the smartest part of the person you will see. The inner saboteur has 1000 reasons why things won’t work, why you did not so something, why you are not wrong and it wasn’t your fault. You and I have been convinced by this “inner saboteur” to go into another \$30,000 worth of debt, to not do things we know we probably should have done, or to take risks that we probably should not have taken. This can have maddening results for ourselves and the people we’re dealing with.

There is a saying that chaos is where ideas are born. That nothing can come to you or to a company without some struggle. That anything that is worth having must be earned. Thus at the height of pain, the height of struggle comes success. I am told it is much like giving birth to a baby – there is that critical moment where you are on the line between life and death and you choice to go through it all and have the kid. Thus we give birth to new a company.

I say all this because we can deal with things a lot better if we realize that **struggle will be a reality when we are moving our company**

forward. That we will not make changes without having to earn those changes. And that our people will show their true genius, in many times, resisting all attempts that we make to help the organization move forward. If we accept this as what will most likely happen, we will be less disappointed and be proactive in taking charge of the situation.

As managers we must expect that people will not do the things they are told to do. This is natural. This is what will happen 90% of the time. This is simply because you cannot have a good policy followed that will benefit the company without great struggle. There is no gain in an organization without pain.

One company I work with has felt for a number of years that it would be a good idea for their team members to call in at the end of the day to tell where they are in the job they are doing. This would help management to better schedule the work and give out more work if the person is done. They issued this policy to their people and saw tons of obstacles appear.

1. "I couldn't find a phone."
2. "I didn't remember to call."
3. "I wasn't going to work tomorrow so I did not call since you knew that."
4. "I could not remember the number."
5. "I, as a manager, should not have to call in because I talk to other managers any ways."
6. "My wife doesn't like me calling after I get home."

All these reasons pored out and more. It was then up to the managers: Give up or to push forward and work through the obstacles.

What would you say was the actions needed in this situation?

There is a part of us, that is inside us, that defeats us more as managers than our people do. It is a raging angry part that wishes to destroy, shame and tear apart. I know this part very well for when I am in contact with it I am so angry I can hardly speak to my people, I almost shake. That part that says, "Why can't people just follow directions? Why can't they just do it? What is the world coming to???" If they don't care, I don't care! I'll just fire them all! Who cares! I'll just give up!" This part of us is a difficult part of us to deal with, especially when we've tried to do something 15 times and it still does not work. Being a manager in a business is so

frustrating because in your heart, you **do** really care and you want people to move forward and are willing to risk your future on them. You then look at other people who do not work in small businesses, family who work in government jobs or some large corporation and you wonder if you've made the right choice.

But is this not the same inner saboteur making sure that we want to be where we are at? That we are still committed. A comic book character, Pogo once said "We've seen the enemy and it is us." This inner saboteur forces us many times on a daily basis to re-evaluate who and what we are and what we have committed ourselves to be. For we know that in all the chaos there is an answer, we can feel it but we don't know exactly what the answer is.

There is a part of us that wants to be like a God. That we are the only ones that can do it and that no one else can. But we look around and realize that that's not true, that it can be done if we will it to be done and do it in the right way.

Thus you inspect what you expect. You first do this by again and again explaining what you **expect** and you do it with this guideline:

Company policy is not there for the employee to change at will.

Many times you'll have a employee say "Well I didn't do it this way because I thought in this situation it would be better to do it that way." You explain to the team member that they must follow policy and cannot change it without the ok of the owner. This helps the employee to understand that there is no maybe in this policy.

You explain the policies with great training and serious. You have the employee repeat back the policies. You explain what you expect. You make them know that there is no choice in the matter that this is what they are to do.

You then accept that fact that there is a 90% chance the new behavior required and explained will not be followed. If it was then there would be a concern because it would mean that we are dealing with robots and not people (like invasion of the body snatchers!) We celebrate our own and our people's humanity and **inspect what we expect.**

We become detectives. Where is the policy breaking down? Who is doing it and who is not? What are the excuses and how do we overcome them? You restate that this is a policy that must be followed. You show your seriousness by counseling the person. Give a verbal and then written warning. You help people to go through the pain. You let them go if after 3 months they still can't follow it.

In inspecting what we expect, we are being the coach that expects more of their people than they do of themselves. I again urge you to consider that people do not follow new policies so much because they don't want to follow your directive as much as **due to a genuine fear of success.**

When we are having people be winners, they are bumping up against their self-image and this is more difficult than being losers. It is easier to move toward death and mediocrity than towards success. Our role is to understand their low self image as not that much different than our own and to pull them through the void to success. Thus we are on the same side of the fence on the same team with the person struggling with them to take the steps to succeed. To do this takes great caring and belief.

There is quote from the book The Prophet that says:

*“Your Pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding.
Much of your pain is self-chosen.
It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self.
Therefore trust the physician and drink his remedy in silence and tranquillity.
For his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen.
And the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of clay
which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears.”*

Thus **inspecting what we expect** is painful both for ourselves and for our team member. But the pain that we go through is where the success goes from. You and I have both sat down with great leaders, maybe one in your company when they had just had another painful day of running a business of being a leader. They have a certain glaze in their eyes but also certain determination that says, “I will succeed!” But it is at that moment that you realize that ***at that point the struggle will be the source of great victory.***

Thus we begin a new day with a new beginning to explain what we expect and then inspect what we expect.

