

## Don't Be Evil

You have a choice as a manager. You can choose to treat people with dignity and respect or you can choose to treat them in a negative and destructive manner. How you choose to work with people determines the type of people you will get to work with. Good people only work with good managers.

What can you do to ensure you work with people in a dignified and respectful manner? Compare your behaviour to the list of behaviours below and select those areas where you could improve. Set yourself some behavioural goals. Look at those behaviours you wish to improve. Identify those trigger point reminders that indicate to you that your behaviour is in need of improvement. Seek help if you find yourself unable to change on your own.

- Do the things you said you would do. Even if you haven't achieved the promised result, provide a progress report. When you keep people informed they are less inclined to start rumours or misinterpret what little they have been told.
- Give people credit for their efforts. Recognise people for their input and their ideas. Never claim ownership of something given to you by someone else. It costs nothing to credit the right person; yet the payback is enormous.
- Encourage your people to challenge decisions and their relevance to your organisation's mission. Promise to listen and reflect upon their concerns. In this way your people will help keep you grounded.
- Avoid micromanagement. You hired the person on your team. Why would you hire someone you have no confidence in? If you cannot trust people get out of management. Focus on the desired outcome and trust them to put in place an appropriate process. Treat people as adults and let them get on with the job.
- Avoid managing in a vacuum. You will never know all the answers. Build a support group around you of advisors, mentors, coaches and colleagues. Better still involve the people in your work group. They work at the coal face, they know better than anyone how best to get the job done. Ask them, listen, reflect, test different options and be guided by their feedback.
- Be aware of your emotions and how your behaviour is influenced by your emotions. This is a biggie, but don't beat yourself up on this one, you will never be perfect, instead aim for continuous learning. Each time you stuff up, take time to reflect, identify how you will recognise the emotion/behaviour connection in future and determine how you will act in future. With time your frequency of emotional reactions will diminish.
- Watch the language you use and be aware of the impact of things you say and do. Upon appointment to a new job many years ago I was greeted by my CEO with the words 'don't

get any ideas about gunning for my job'. What impression do you think that made? How long do you think I remained in that organisation?

- Avoid allocating blame. Everyone makes mistakes, even you. It is pointless focussing on the past. What has been done cannot be undone; instead the real issue is how do you prevent the mistake occurring again in the future? To achieve this you need to identify the root cause of the issue rather than the person that made the mistake. Take time to meet and discuss the contributing factors. Simply pointing to someone and saying "don't do it again" is insufficient, you need work with them to identify the core factor that needs to be changed to avoid a reoccurrence.
- Develop the potential of your people. In particular develop your successor. When you free yourself from the fear of being replaceable you free yourself to seek ways to add true value to your organisation. All that time spent worrying about who might be sneaking up to displace you or who might make you look incompetent is wasted time and effort. When you develop the potential of your people you are freed to work on developing relationships, fostering collaboration and sensing the emerging environment.

Do these things while applying common sense and you will become a truly inspiring leader.

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*This management tip has been brought to you compliments of John Coxon & Associates. We have developed an Integrated Management Process (IMP), including a suite of diagnostic tools, designed to help you develop the potential of your management group and align their effectiveness with your mission, strategy and outcome. We work with management teams and managers in the health sector and not for profit sector in Australia and New Zealand. Telephone Australia (03)5561 2228 or NZ (0272) 583232. Email [john@johncoxon.com.au](mailto:john@johncoxon.com.au) or go to our website at [www.johncoxon.com.au](http://www.johncoxon.com.au) or [www.johncoxon.co.nz](http://www.johncoxon.co.nz). Please feel free to pass this information onto anyone you feel may benefit.*