

Increase your leadership influence

By Margaret Seidler, Consultant

As a leader, you earn credibility and trust over time in the workplace. That reputation is often based on how others see you respond to challenging situations. In addition, that reputation can increase or decrease the amount of influence you exert within your organization.

You have the opportunity to build your leadership reputation and positively influence the future. While you cannot control certain events, you can always control how you respond when times get tough.

You do not have to hope success will come; you can make it by being more conscious about those responses.

It is easy to be successful when things are going well. What separates the men from the boys and the women from the girls is how you deal with the tough stuff that is unexpected. This is a pivotal moment in leadership because your choice impacts the situation, your future, your employees' futures as well as your organization.

In tough situations, I see three options: become a victim of circumstance, step up to the plate and do something, or realize when something is out of your area of influence and just "let it go."

Stuff happens! It is a cold, hard fact of life. It leaves you frustrated, maybe even scared, and definitely feeling out of control. In the perfect world, everyone does what he or she is supposed to do and nothing goes wrong. OK, so life is not perfect. So then what can you do?



Avoid comments like these

- They wouldn't let me.
- They don't tell me anything.
- It's not my job.
- I don't like them.
- They won't listen to me.
- They don't get it.
- I can't change them.
- I'm too busy.



Draw on leadership skills like these

- Breathe deeply to get centered and grounded.
- Actively listen to understand the situation to make an informed choice.
- Ask others for their help in creating a solution.
- Hold people responsible for their role in the situation.
- Determine if the challenge is "out of your area of influence." If yes, then practice serenity.



Influential people want to be known as someone who can be depended upon and responsible for leading through tough times and dealing with problems. Build your reputation as someone who chooses to remain aware when times get tough.

So what is your choice, victim or leader? Think about it. It is all within your control.

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