

Biz Buzz



The Power of Personal Leadership

A client of a small professional services firm doesn't get a response to his detailed voice message. He becomes frustrated and searches the directory in his local paper for an alternate service supplier. What's the bottom line impact of this slip in customer service and lack of personal leadership?

The Conference Board of Canada has cited dispersing leadership throughout an organization as a business imperative. The pace of change is increasing at warp speed. Couple this with soaring customer expectations. No one leader can respond to ever increasing demands. This is particularly true in a small operation with limited resources. Instead, leadership must be dispersed throughout the business with personal accountability becoming the norm. But what does personal leadership look like? Let's go back to our example. What happens when the situation is handled this way?

The receptionist takes the details of the message to a specialist in the firm for input. Knowing this person's day is booked solid, she displays initiative by returning the client's call within hours with answers to his questions. He tells colleagues about his positive experience which translates into referrals to the business.

What creates such high customer focus? And how can it become the norm in your business?

- First the receptionist has *clarity* about her responsibilities and expectations of how she performs her role. She understands the impact her performance has on the success of the business as a whole.
- She's *competent* and confident in her capabilities. She knows she can respond to the client's query with appropriate input and displays the confidence to take hold of it vs. waiting until someone else has time to respond.
- She's *committed* to doing whatever it takes to exceed customer expectations.

When these three elements are aligned, the full potential of employees gets unleashed and focused on making the business the best it can be. Engaged employees create successful businesses. What does the formal leader do in a workplace that operates like this?

- Set clear direction for where the business is heading and communicate this to employees frequently.
- Communicate clear goals and expectations to each team member aligned with that direction. This goes beyond communicating *what* needs to be done but also *how*.
- Coach and develop team members to perform to their full potential. Then empower them to do just that.

If you do this consistently, leadership will disperse across your organization. You'll have engaged employees and raving customers.



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Send/Receive

■ Is Your Email Stationery?

You would never send out a business letter without using company letterhead so why would you send a generic black and white text email message? This is a missed marketing opportunity when a typical business uses email for 85% of its written communication. Professionally designed email stationery can:

- create an email communication standard
- strengthen your brand
- drive website traffic
- differentiate you from competitors
- promote specific services or products, and
- make key contact information available immediately

Email stationery is inexpensive to design, quick to set-up, and easy to use; don't overlook this simple yet effective marketing tool. Contact ideas company to brand your email: www.ideascompany.ca

