



Q&A

CORPORATE COACH ACADEMY

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BECOMING A PEOPLE LEADER

Q Some of my colleagues seem to have a way with people. Not only do they have the ability to create a working atmosphere that is friendly, warm, and charged, but they can also convince their people to "die" for them! I cannot even get half of what they are getting. My people are calculative and always expect something back for any extra work put in. Neither do they appreciate what I have done for them. Nothing seems to please them. Even the company's lavish social functions do not excite them or get appreciated. They have no sense of attachment to me or the company. What is causing this in my people, and what can I do about it?

A The truth is there is little left between you and your people. To them, the workplace is a "wasteland" of work, work, and only work - with nothing

else! Such a place breeds negativity, discontentment, politicking, disloyalty, and even sabotage. On the other hand, your colleagues have probably invested a lot of effort and time to build strong relationships with their people, which gives them an edge over you. With this, their people will want to do almost anything for them.

Perhaps the two qualities you can cultivate more of are empathy and sincerity. Having empathy requires you to be warm and sensitive to your people's emotions, ideas, and circumstances while sincerity requires you to show you really care for them emotionally, not only financially. Look around you. There are many situations in the workplace where you can display these qualities to prove your worth to your people.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What do you want to project about yourself to your people?
- What are the gaps you are noticing?
- How might you be contributing to this situation?
- What can change this?

WINNING THE WORKPLACE WAR

Q I am at my wits' end trying to cope with the many "cold wars" waged by my people against me. They are on a "go-slow campaign", coming up with excuses for not taking up more work, going missing in action, and other undesirable behaviour to silently protest my leadership for reasons I do not really know. Their actions are infuriating me as they know I am aware of their hidden agenda but they are not the least bothered about it. What should I do now?

A: You are absolutely right that they want you to know they are unhappy. To them, doing all those things you mentioned is their way of gaining control over you in retaliation to the way you use your formal authority to control them! It could be your leadership style they disdain as being too punishing, unreasonable, or even bad.

You need to be calm and objective about this situation now. If you overreact you might end up the bigger loser in a tit-for-tat situation. It is worthwhile to sit down with the "ringleaders" to get them to reveal what their underlying

issues are. If you objectively feel you are right in what you are doing, then this will be a good platform to explain yourself and get their buy-in. However, if they have good grounds for their grievances, then be brave to admit them, fix them and move on. Doing this is a show of your courage and sincerity, which will help you earn the trust of your people. You will soon be respected as a real leader.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What do you learn about yourself in this situation?
- Who is the bigger loser if this situation persists, and why?
- What can you control to improve the situation?
- What is needed now?

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