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"Achieving Excellence" Issue 21 - September 2021

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Welcome

Welcome to the September issue of "Achieving Excellence" which is inspired by clients and friends of Seventeen Gorman Advisors. We enjoy new ways of thinking and new ways of helping you achieve your goals.

Seventeen Gorman Advisors is a consulting practice focused on improving individual and organizational performance through skill building programs and developmental services.

Our approach to problem solving and issue resolution involves client participation at all points in the process. Above all, we listen to our clients to understand their needs and goals so that the solution we develop together - as true partners - provides a sustainable business advantage.

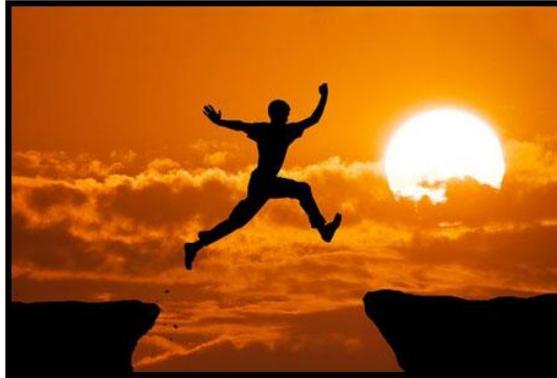
Best Regards,

*Jeffrey C. Leventry
Principal*

In Your Quest For Excellence

"The better you are at surrounding yourself with people of high potential, the greater your chance for success." - *John C. Maxwell (Leadership Expert)*

Advice for Achieving Success from a Future Hall of Fame Coach



In early August, the Pro Football Hall of Fame inducted its classes of 2020 and 2021 in Canton, Ohio. During his induction speech, Harold Carmichael (one of the all-time great receivers for the Philadelphia Eagles) thanked those who supported his football career, thereby helping him achieve greatness. Chief among them was his football coach Dick Vermeil who gave him an “invaluable piece of advice” that Carmichael has used in both football and life. Coach Vermeil said “Do your job better than anyone else and surround yourself with good people.” Carmichael believes he employed that advice throughout his career to attain the ultimate honor for a pro football player.

Throughout my career, I have received similar advice from Managers and Mentors who invested in my personal success as a professional. But, in a practical sense, what does this really mean and how can we apply it to achieve our goals in business, and in life?

What is meant by “do your job better than anyone else”?

Without definition and concrete action steps, this advice is often relegated to the “hollow words” category. Therefore, what does it really mean to perform your role better than any other employee in the organization?

This is how I define this sage advice:

- Understand your role or position and the expectations your boss has for you on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. What are the performance objectives that you and your Manager have agreed to for the year and how will you monitor your progress in achieving them?
- Find an approach that supports your ability to stay focused on the tasks at hand, and eliminate distractions that stand in the way of your goals. Organize your work and develop a plan of action that fosters discipline and execution of your plan.

- Forge strong working relationships with colleagues and collaborate with them regularly to develop synergy while also enhancing your productivity. Building your own coalition with trusted partners improves your work product and gets you noticed by your Manager and other decision makers in the organization.
- Finish what you start and seek feedback along the way. In business, it is not how well you start but how well you finish, and whether you attain the bottom line results that your Manager expects from you.
- Constantly seek opportunities to improve your skillset and enhance your personal development. Avail yourself of learning programs that deepen existing skills and create new skills that are relevant to performing your role in the firm. Arrive early or stay late to ensure that you have time to devote to your professional development.

Although this is not meant to be an exhaustive list, this advice has proven to be critical to the success of many employees whom I have personally mentored and professionally developed over the course of many years.

What is meant by “surround yourself with good people”?

In my experience, the people you associate with have an enormous impact on your success in business, as in life. In fact, American entrepreneur and motivational speaker Jim Rohn asserts that, “You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with.” Therefore, we all need to choose our social network wisely, taking into consideration the traits we value most.

With this in mind, this is what I mean by “surrounding yourself with good people”:

- Those who demonstrate integrity and honesty in all situations
- Those you can trust in difficult or sticky circumstances when the stakes are high
- Those who exemplify a superior work ethic and who are willing to go the “extra mile” to accomplish the task at hand
- Those who possess a positive outlook and an optimistic attitude that motivates you to succeed
- Those who are productive and successful in their role, and who will challenge you to perform at the highest level
- Those who have your best interests in mind
- Those who provide you with candid feedback and perspective so you can make optimal decisions that impact your career

How can you apply this advice to achieve your own success?

There is no simple answer or roadmap that explains how to apply the above advice to your advantage. In fact, it takes hard work and a deliberate investment of your time on a regular basis. Experts agree that success does not normally happen overnight.

However, making time on a weekly basis to improve your performance in your role typically pays dividends in the long run. Having a plan of action and monitoring your progress as you execute your plan is the first step to doing your job better than anyone else.

Likewise, carefully selecting members of your social network who meet your

standards takes time and effort. Because it's important to surround yourself with good people, I suggest that you take your time and diligently evaluate your network utilizing the traits referenced above. You should also use actual business experiences with those in your network to test your selection process, as well as your final network decisions. Those who do not pass your test should be removed from your network, which may afford you opportunities to add new members who will support your quest for success.

In light of the above, what steps will you take today to do your job better than anyone else and surround yourself with good people who will fuel your ultimate success?

The Pitfalls of Using Coercion as Your Primary Approach for Influencing & Motivating Your Team



Earlier this year, I wrote an article that articulated the benefits of using [soft power as part of a Manager's toolkit](#). The article suggested that employing the two types of soft power (Referent Power and Expert Power) is how the most effective Managers influence and motivate others in an organization.

The advantage of using soft power in the workplace is that it does not rely on a formal position or title, but instead relies on interpersonal relationships and credibility. In other words, the employee believes that the Manager's request is reasonable, and what is being asked is important to accomplish. As a result, it has the ability to affect long-term changes in attitudes and behavior so that your employees are more apt to support corporate priorities and objectives.

In contrast, coercion is a short-term approach based upon authority, and should be limited to those situations that may require quick action or compliance. Derchat Keltner (a Social Psychologist) believes that, "Coercive power forces people to do things, while soft power inspires them to accomplish objectives."

What is meant by hard power?

Management Authors Richard Daft and Dorothy Marcic define hard power as "influence that stems largely from a person's position of authority in the organization." They believe Managers utilize their position "to get compliance from those in a lower position on the hierarchical ladder." They further assert, "when Managers absolutely have to achieve results mandated by their position, they

may use hard power to do so.”

The three types of hard power that are generally recognized in the field of Management include the following:

- **Coercion** – this is based on the Manager’s ability to punish or recommend punishment. Under this approach, people follow orders to avoid punishment such as criticism, demotion or withholding a pay increase.
- **Legitimate Power** – this power results from a Manager’s formal position or title. People accept his or her right to issue orders or direct activities at the firm, based upon the Manager’s position on the organization chart.
- **Reward** – this is derived from the Manager’s ability to provide or withhold rewards. People comply in order to obtain the desired rewards, including merit raises and promotions.

Many Managers utilize a coercive approach because it is easy to apply, requires very little thought, and is a learned behavior from personal experience working for Managers.

How is coercion utilized by Managers to influence and motivate others?

Like soft power, coercion can be used in many ways to support the achievement of corporate and team goals or objectives. While there may be times when coercion may be appropriate, reliance on this technique as a Manager’s primary influencing tool can be detrimental to the Team, as well as the organization.

Here are some common examples of how coercion is utilized by Managers to achieve a desired result:

- threatening to withhold a merit raise if a project is not completed by the due date
- reminding team members that you have the power to punish them for undesirable behavior by virtue of your leadership position in the organization
- warning that subpar performance results will be weighed heavily against you in the annual performance review

What are the pitfalls of using a coercive approach?

Experts agree that utilizing coercion as a Manager’s main influencing approach can produce a negative impact. In many cases, it is the manner in which this management style is used (together with the perception of the tactic by employees) that creates a problem.

In addition, coercive methods often lead to unintended detrimental consequences that help destroy a positive corporate culture. Some of the ways that an over-reliance on coercion harms employees (and the organization) include the following:

- It can lower job satisfaction and reduce employee engagement so that the organization does not always get the best effort from its employees.
- It may reduce employee creativity and hinder the innovation needed to develop new products and services.
- It may create resentment by employees, and in an extreme case, result in

retaliation against the supervisor.

- It can demotivate employees and help destroy morale, which negatively impacts employee productivity.
- It adds stress to an already stressful business climate, which may fuel employee turnover.
- It may damage the reputation of the Manager as others notice his / her inability to execute on corporate goals and initiatives.
- It may hinder the Manager's ability to accomplish career success as he / she aspires to a Leadership role in the organization.

In conclusion, Managers who build good working relationships with their subordinates so they perform their jobs for internal reasons (i.e., intrinsic motivation) rather than because they have to, empower their Teams to achieve better business results and are able retain valued employees.

In light of the above potential pitfalls, what steps will you take to limit the use of coercion and focus instead on implementing soft power approaches for influencing and motivating the employees in your organization?

Our Offerings Include The Following:

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Skill Building Programs

Seventeen Gorman Advisors is pleased to offer a range of programs that are designed to develop competencies and enhance skills.

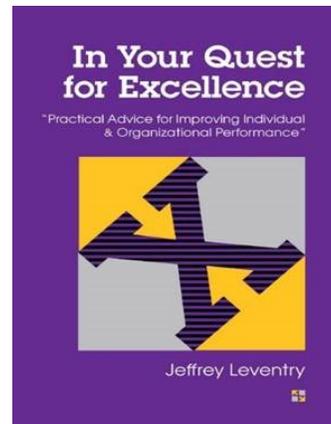
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