

Do You Have Likeability?

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My son Jonathan recently finished his first year of school at Boston College and was fortunate to find a summer internship at a local mortgage company. He showed up early every day and exhibited a positive, friendly attitude with everyone he met during his first two weeks on the job. He treated his co-workers with respect, was polite and well-mannered and showed genuine interest in his colleagues at the firm. Before he knew it, Managers were providing him with positive feedback and giving him special projects outside his normal job responsibilities. When we debriefed his initial impressions of his new work experience, I explained to him that he possesses a special character trait called “likeability”.

What is it?

Likeability (often referred to as Referent Power) is one of the 5 Bases of Power that gives you the ability to influence others and achieve success. It can be defined simply as – “readily or easily liked or pleasing”.

There are many examples of people who possess this trait and have used it to achieve success. John F. Kennedy used it to become President. Michael Jordan used it to market athletic apparel. Tom Hanks used it to do wonderful things for military veterans.

How do you get it?

While some people believe likeability is something you are born with, others firmly believe that likeability can be taught or learned. Some of the ways you can become likeable include the following:

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity
- Gain credibility through knowledge and expertise
- Be positive, upbeat and smile
- Show respect and be courteous
- Act with genuine concern for others
- Follow through on promises and act responsibly

How can it be used?

In the workplace, those who have this likeability factor are given opportunities that others never receive and use it to advance in the organization. It also affords an employee the ability to contribute to the organization's value proposition. Additionally, likeable people are more apt to be hired, receive help or instruction and have mistakes forgiven.

For Leaders, likeability gives you the ability to have others follow you to accomplish strategic goals. For Managers, it gives you the ability to have your direct reports pay attention to you as you coach and mentor them. For Individual Contributors, it gives you the ability to have positive interactions and relationships with your peers and your Manager.

The importance of likeability in the business world (as in all aspects of life) is undeniable and is a critical personality trait that improves your ability to influence others as you pursue success in your chosen profession.

If you would like to unlock the secret to improving your likeability factor (as well as your influencing skills) to achieve better business results, please contact us.