

Wroten & Associates

June 2014 Leadership Insight

Humor, Laughter and Leadership

"A sense of humor is part of the art of leadership, of getting along with people, and of getting things done."
- Dwight D. Eisenhower

There are many different types of leaders and according to statistics the vast majority of successful leaders have a sense of humor. A study by the Bell Leadership Institute found that the most desirable traits in leaders were a strong work ethic and a good sense of humor! Results reported in the Harvard Business Review showed that a survey of 1,000 executives discovered that 84% felt that workers with a sense of humor do a better job.

Humor eases your burdens, inspires hope, connects you to others and helps to keep you grounded, focused, and aware. Humor can be disarming. It puts people at ease and reduces the intimidation factor that powerful leaders may face with employees and clients. Humor also attracts others to us, enhances teamwork, defuses conflict and promotes group bonding.

Science has shown that the laughter that humor triggers creates healthy physical changes as well. It can strengthen your immune system, lower your blood pressure, boost your energy, diminish pain by triggering the release of endorphins, relieve tension during a crisis and produce a general sense of well-being.

A humorous perspective creates a psychological distance which can help avoid feelings of being overwhelmed. People who share a healthy, positive sense of humor tend to be more likable and are viewed as being more trustworthy. When it comes right down to it, humor is just another type of communication. When we use it properly it shifts our perspective to see situations in a more realistic less threatening light.

Humor is not about making light of serious issues or situations, and when using humor you must be aware of inappropriate work place humor. Teasing or making others feel uncomfortable, or using humor that involves prejudices such as racial humor, making fun of a disability, physical appearance, gender, or sexually based humor are completely inappropriate. Humorous comments should never exclude anyone or cause people to become distracted because they are feeling bad. Humor should always be used with consideration and sensitivity.

Be aware that as a leader others will be watching you. You set the tone! They are watching to see how you will react and handle various situations. Using humor appropriately will demonstrate your strong leadership skills. When humor is incorporated into your overall leadership style, it can be a positive motivator and connector to your co-workers, friends and family!

Wishing you a humorous and insightful month!

Positively provided to you by: Wroten & Associates and Marilyn W. Allemann, LCSW, CPC

**Thank you to all who attended Wroten & Associates' 6th Annual LTC Conference on May 29th!
The day couldn't have been a success without you!**

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