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THE NEW SCHOOL LEADER

If you pick up a training or human resource magazine these days, you're likely to find at least one article about how to work with, maximize, engage and otherwise lead the "Millennials". Sure it rhymes with perennials, but these people aren't just popping up in the spring, they are with you day-in and day-out in the workplace.

Millennials are also known as "Y's" or the "how to engage generation." Then there are Generation Xers, the boomers, and the echo boomers. It all seems like alphabet soup. Does paying attention to this really make a difference in how things happen at work every day? Researchers tell us it does.

What is very certain is that managing is changing and challenging today. You and your leaders cannot afford to be "old school."

Old School vs. New School

Management speaker, author and trainer Tim Connor describes the old school leader as a ". . . top down autocrat while giving lip service to bottom up responsibility, decision making, goal setting and problem solving." Furthermore, he says that these old school leaders are arrogant, closed minded, and often aloof and inaccessible. They believe to win means beating someone else." He goes on, but you get the picture. Does this sound like someone in your organization and in fact, several people? Your organization could be headed for turnover, low productivity and morale, and poor customer service. Maybe you are already there.

On the flip side, Connor explains that the leader of the future, our "new school" version, listens to employees, customers, and suppliers to create partnerships inside and outside the organization. "They empower people by pushing decision making, authority, accountability, problem solving, goal setting and risk taking down through the organization."

This kind of environment is one that is ripe for growth.

Leading the Diverse Workforce as a New School Manager

With all of the diversity in your workforce, new school leadership takes managers who are trained to focus on what people do (their behavior) rather than their attitudes or personal characteristics. They also must possess critical skills necessary to delegate, evaluate performance, deal with complaints and resolve conflicts in a positive and effective way. They support each team member's sense of self-respect and dignity.

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As Connor says, "They create a strong team approach to projects, programs, objectives and solving problems. They encourage cooperation and open, honest communication. They reward creativity, mistakes that contribute to improvements and honest feedback."

Benefits of New School Leadership

Whether you have leaders who are new, experienced or aspiring there are many benefits to bringing your leadership into a more forward thinking, culturally and relationally sensitive way of approaching work. The benefits of this new leadership are:

- Retention
- Morale
- Productivity
- Improved customer and supplier relationships
- Open communication and discovery of issues as a chance for positive change
- Become known as a great place to work to improve recruitment
- Maximization of talent and resources

Dwight D. Eisenhower said it best - "You do not lead by hitting people over the head - that's assault, not leadership".

About 5.12 Solutions

5.12 Solutions (five-twelve) is the corporate training and professional development company that inspires people to make timely and meaningful change. With a uniquely fresh approach to adult learning, 5.12 Solutions helps people develop the soft skills they need to be successful through instructor-led training, team building workshops, online learning, and public seminars.

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