

The 8th habit of self leadership

Nalisha Patel recently interviewed Stephen Covey (author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*), following his talk on the 8th habit at his "Leadership Greatness" seminar in Auckland. First focus on self leadership and then encourage your team to unleash their own talents says Covey.

Nalisha: So how did you move from the 7 habits, to bringing on this 8th habit of leadership? How did this awareness come about?

SC: Two things. One, the 7 habits deal primarily with personal and inner personal relations. The 8th habit deals with organisational and leadership issues – finding your voice.

Most people get their sense of worth from being compared to other people. When you avoid this comparison-based identity, you affirm the intrinsic worth of each person. Then they grow up with confidence and courage, otherwise the cultural DNA takes over. In this case, later in life they will live up to the cultural DNA and not to finding their own voice or doing what they love to do.

Nalisha: If you have established your own worth, how do you go about teaching other people to find their own "voice"?

A: Most people achieve their level of own success, largely or partly because someone believed in them when they did not believe in themselves. Adults tend to believe in their own worth and in their own potential because they were being affirmed socially.

The cultural DNA reinforced their natural or spiritual DNA. Provide opportunities for other people to find or express their own voice.

Nalisha: What is the best way to actually change a culture within a business if what you have right now is not working?

SC: The culture needs to reinforce each person's natural self, rather than being based on comparison with other people. People who grow up with a comparison based identity gradually lose the ability to be happy for the successes of other people.

You need to get the people involved in the very problem you are talking about so they emotionally connect with the answer. You cannot just impose an answer or solution on them. You have to create it together synergistically. If they create it, they own it. This then creates a complimentary team meaning our strength is made productive and our weaknesses are made

irrelevant through the strengths of others.

Nalisha: How does synergy then tie in with this non-comparison based identity?

SC: If people learn to reinforce their natural self and have courage and confidence, they can become synergistic because they are inwardly secure. However, the inability to synergise means you are vulnerable and that you are at risk. The people who have their security come from within are not vulnerable.

What your parents teach you at a young age becomes the basis for your authority to be open and creative with other people. The first three habits (Be Proactive, Begin with the end in mind, Put first things first) are so vital to develop that internal security to be able to practice what really makes you happy.

Create intrinsic motivation

Some of the key notes from Stephen Covey's seminar were based around creating intrinsic motivation in each of your team members. This eliminates co-dependency which generally leads to passivity. By giving your team members meaning to their work, then are more fulfilled and therefore the culture of your business will flourish in a positive direction. By implementing the 7 habits and then introducing the 8th habit of self leadership, you can create a complimentary team where your people are your greatest asset. Invest in unleashing their natural talents and your business will prosper.

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The second thing that happened was that we moved from the industrial age into the knowledge worker economy. This means that the value added from goods and services comes from people rather than manual work and machines. It becomes extremely important that you focus upon the work and potential of people.

Nalisha: What do you think is the best way to cultivate leadership qualities at a younger age, especially for Generation Y'ers?

SC: I think the best thing is for parents and teachers to confirm the worth and potential of each child so that they constantly come to believe in themselves.