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The Competitive Edge, Inc.



Photo by Hugh Foster

“BE DARING, BE FIRST, BE DIFFERENT”

Measuring Integrity

“In great matters men show themselves as they wish to be seen; in small matters, as they are.”

- Gamaliel Bradford

Integrity in business, everybody talks about it, strives for it and claims to be promoting it within their organization. The days when integrity was assumed are long over. Global Crossings, MCI WorldCom, Adelphia and their cohorts have changed the face of American business forever. Companies must now "walk their talk". When negotiating with potential partners or attempting to solidify long-term relationships, companies must now prove their commitment to ethics and integrity.

herself within the same guidelines as the Chairman of the Board or the mail clerk. There is an expression that says, "Ethics and integrity are caught - not taught". One of the key mechanisms to identify ethical behavior is to examine how your organization has handled previous problems. What kinds of complaints have been lodged to your Human Resource Group? How were they handled? Are you experiencing unusually high supply costs? Turnover Costs? Marketing costs? These are ways that top management can gauge the prevailing attitude of their employees.

Management is being faced with a formidable challenge. How can you manage what you can't measure? Who judges an organization's integrity? Customers do, employees do, suppliers do and shareholders do. It has been suggested that a business case should be built that addresses the issue. What is the basis for the business case? What would happen if we lose our credibility in the marketplace? Apply this question to your relationship with each of your key clients and your target growth areas, and you now have a financial measurement that you can apply to your Return on Investment calculation. Once you fully understand that you cannot afford not to have an ethics program in place, it is time to define your program to meet the needs of your customer, your employee, your supplier and your shareholder.

Top management is responsible for the definition and initial communication of acceptable ethical behavior within your organization. The Human Resource Group assists them in two key areas, first the continued communication of these expectations, and two the hiring of committed and ethical employees going forward. Understanding the impact of a tarnished reputation in the marketplace is imperative for the leadership team. All we have to do is look at the impact of Martha Stewart's indictment on Omnimedia!

There are a number of tools that can be utilized to help identify and promote ethical behavior. CEI would be more than happy to assist you in choosing tools that would work best in your environment. As always, I can be reached at 770-487-6460 or email me at www.competitiveedgeinc.com.

Integrity begins at the top. Expectations of personal behavior should be defined and applied to the entire employee base. The outside sales person should conduct himself or

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"I am sure that in estimating every man's value either in private or public life, pure integrity is the quality we take first into calculation, and that learning and talents are only second." - Thomas Jefferson

CEI's Next Train the Trainer



June 23-25, 2004
Peachtree City, GA

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us".

- Oliver Wendell Holmes

Our next issue:

Got a question?
Need an answer?

ASK JUDY

Let Advice from the Edge know your questions and then watch for Judy's advice in future issues.

Industry Recognition

On February 29, 2004, Judy Suiter received The BluePrint Award presented by Women Looking Ahead, Inc. at their 10th Annual Georgia Entrepreneurial Night. Judy and her fellow honorees were nominated by corporations with which they were affiliated through professional relationships and were recognized for their outstanding diligence and commitment to consistently providing quality services for their clients as well as their communities.

Competitive Edge, Inc. was also recognized for its international presence as a top human resources training and consulting company specializing in candidate selection, team building, executive coaching and sales training.

Judy was joined in the celebration by her family, friends and employees. Judy is shown here with her sons Drew (left) and Brett (right). Additional pictures of this event are available on Judy's website, www.competitiveedgeinc.com, in the *Photo Gallery*.



Book Review

This month's selection is "The Mother of All Minds", by Dudley Lynch and recently published by Brain Technologies Press. This is not a casual read, nor is it geared toward a general audience. However, for the human capital community, the book provides both a new definition for evolution of the human mind and some solid advice on how to interface with others who think in ways contrary to your personal thought processes.

Lynch builds upon the works of Dr. Clare Graves who defined the six (6) levels of what Lynch calls "Alpha" thinking. He explains that these six levels have served the human race well since their inception with the caveman, but that a new "Beta" mind is emerging. Mr. Lynch recognizes that while the Alpha levels address self-preservation, the Beta mind addresses issues greater than the itself and demonstrates behaviors that can help make complex things happen appropriately. The Beta mind understands that there is a need to solve a problem bigger than itself, listens to reason, welcomes diverse sources of information, spots patterns and significant relationships, carefully chooses the minds one interfaces with and, if necessary, will solve the problem alone. This book is available at www.braintechnologies.com.

Competitive Edge, Inc. has new products available! They are the "Introduction to the DISC Model" and "Introduction to the Values Model" CD-ROMs.

Have you ever had the challenge of presenting a one or two-day training program using the DISC and/or Values Reports in which several of the participants missed one or the other, or both, of those sessions? Our new CD-ROM products are your solution.

The "Introduction to the DISC Model" CD-ROM is a 30 minute power point presentation with audio support to give a person a basic understanding of this model and the information included in their DISC report.

The "Introduction to the Values Model" CD-ROM is also approximately 30 minutes with audio support and reviews the basics of the Personal Interests, Attitudes and Values Report and Model.

Another product we are working on is a new "DISC and Values" Laminated Card which shows the interaction between each of the four DISC behaviors and the six Values presented in grid style. For example, it will describe how a *High Theoretical value with a High 'D', 'I', 'S', and 'C' behavior* will act. Look for this product in the next 30 days.

"The most important persuasion tool you have in your entire arsenal is integrity".

- Zig Ziglar

Did You Know That...

1. Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated.
2. Peanuts are one of the ingredients of dynamite.
3. Two-thirds of the world's eggplant is grown in New Jersey.
4. Almonds are a member of the peach family.
5. There are 293 ways to make change of a dollar.
6. There are more chickens than people in the world.
7. A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.
8. It's impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
9. The lifespan of a tastebud is ten days.

"Don't worry so much about your self-esteem. Worry more about your character. Integrity is its own reward".

- Laura Schlessinger



ADVICE FROM THE EDGE Everyone Is Self-Employed

Earlier this week, I received a phone call from a client who started off the conversation with "I don't know if you've heard but a lot of things have been changing in our organization and, quite frankly, I'm not very happy with some of them." He then went on to tell me some of the changes which included him being given a very different job to which he did not feel he was well-suited. He went on to say that he was contacting me and a number of other individuals in an effort to revive his old network to perhaps assist him in finding a new opportunity. He also was very specific that he did not want to consider starting his own company using his expertise! As I was listening to him, I started thinking about all the similar calls that I had received in the past few months and decided it was time to address this issue.

Let me start by sharing one of my favorite quotes from Jim Cecil, "When you need a friend is not the time to make one." In other words, "when you need a network is not the time to try to develop one." There were really two things about my client's request for assistance that concerned me. First of all, this person (and most of the others I have talked to) said he did not want to start his own company. The reason, "I need an income I can depend on and healthcare benefits". I tell people all the time that they are already self-employed. However, at the present time they have contracted their services to a specific company in return for a specific compensation plan. The reality of today's world is that **EVERYONE IS SELF-EMPLOYED**. There is no guaranteed job security. Every person who is employed with a company should be managing their career, professional, and personal networks as if they were self-employed. Individuals have to keep up with the people in their networks and that takes **WORK** which is why they are called **NETWORKS**. If you want the benefits, you have to make the deposits.

What I see happening in many organizations is that they have a lot of people working for them because they want the paycheck and benefits but who are de-energized by the job tasks. Therefore, they show up for work with an energy level at 70% instead of 100%. Then, by the end of the day (or week), they are too tired to attend the professional dinner or to give up their Saturday to attend a professional luncheon or seminar they had previously scheduled. The next thing that

usually happens is they start to see the "handwriting on the wall", and have the sense that their job is going to be eliminated or they are going to be fired. Immediately, they start contacting everyone they have ever had any kind of relationship with seeking help. The reality is that if they spent the same amount of energy trying to succeed with their current employer they might not need to expend their energy on trying to survive.

So what are the skills that people need for success in today's business environment? They have to be able to adapt to change. The gentlemen I spoke of earlier said he did not feel he was well-suited to his new job. The job he was transferred to was a sales position and he said he never liked selling. What is ironic is that all the most successful people I know sell, whether they sell products, services or ideas. Being able to successfully sell yourself and/or your ideas is critical in business today. So was the real issue the job or was it being put in a position where he had to change his perceptions of selling? You must accept responsibility for your own career path.

Lastly, you must be willing to change your internal dialogue in order to maintain a high energy level. When people don't enjoy what they do, they usually start the week off with less than 100% personal energy and then participate in negative self-talk that lowers their energy level even more. When their boss sees their lack of enthusiasm, it moves them one step closer to dismissal, which then creates the self-fulfilling prophecy.

In conclusion, if you are one of those people who think you should be looking for a new opportunity, ask yourself the following questions:

1. How much energy and time will it take to find a new opportunity?
2. If or when I find it, how much time and energy will it take me to adjust to my new environment?
3. If I spent the same amount of time and energy on trying to make the best of my present position, what kind of results might I achieve?
4. Do I really need a new job or a new attitude?

Let me leave you with another one of my favorite quotes, "Successful people play out of their comfort zones."