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Aspire Consulting, Ltd.

Aspire... Higher



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Aspire: Alphabetically Speaking

(Z)

Zeal according to dictionary.com; is an enthusiastic devotion to a cause, ideal, or goal and tireless diligence in its furtherance.

At **Aspire Consulting**, we understand that when we are each working in areas that are related to our life's purpose, we do come close to working with tireless diligence. We help our customers understand the areas where their employees are most likely to bring their devotion and diligence. That helps both the employee and employer move towards greater results.

[More Info about Aspire Consulting](#)

We have launched our Blog!

We are always looking for additional ways to get information out to our valued customers and decided that a Blog would support this effort.

Look for us at [Aspire Consulting Ltd. Blog](#)



Our goal is to bring you timely, applicable information and thoughts that you could apply to your day.

Let us know what you think and want to hear more about!

Laurie and Susan

Tip of the Month



Aspire Consulting, Ltd.

combines passion, purpose and performance to achieve results driven solutions for our customers. We partner with businesses and organizations to stimulate individual, team, and organizational development.

Our highly effective solutions lead to dramatic and measurable improvements in several key areas for our customers including the ability to:

- Lead and Manage
- Grow and Innovate
- Capture and Retain Loyal Customers
- Fuel Financial Growth

The benefits to our customers include:

- Increased Internal and External Customer Loyalty
- Improved Profits
- Improved Productivity
- Improved Performance and Quality of the Services They Deliver

We look forward to the opportunity to talk with you about how we can partner with you and your company.

The Crow and the Pitcher (From Aesop's Fables)

A crow, half-dead with thirst, came upon a pitcher which had once been full of water; but when the crow put his beak into the mouth of the pitcher he found that very little water was left in it, and that he could not reach far enough down to get at it. He tried, and he tried, but at last had to give up in despair. Then a thought came to him, and he took a pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped it into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher. Then he took another pebble and dropped that into the pitcher. At last, he saw the water mount up near him, and after casting in a few more pebbles he was able to quench his thirst and save his life.

Little by little does the trick. Consistent small steps will lead to big results.

[More Info on Leadership Development](#)

And Then There Are the People

When is the last time you had a conversation with someone where you really felt like the person you were talking with was engaged in the conversation and was really interested in what you were communicating?



Their body language, eye contact, and tone of voice were focused and inviting and surrounding distractions seemed irrelevant. Every one of us can remember a meaningful conversation and what it felt like to "be heard." Being heard is an important component to how we measure our self-worth and self-confidence.

Emails, voice mails, text messages, and the limit of 140 characters on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter are the very common forms of today's communication. Technology has given us the ability to share ideas with anyone, at any time and anywhere in the world. Our global environment requires this technology to be successful, and it will foster continued innovation at an awe-inspiring rate.

However, the true essence of business is built around people and the future innovations people can and will inspire. Every piece of technology existing today and every new innovation that will inspire our world tomorrow is a collaboration of people listening, communicating, and working together.

Advances to communication portals and the speed at which we can communicate are necessary. Don't forget to really listen along the

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Food For Thought

Process Improvement and Motivation

"Managers do not motivate employees by giving them higher wages, more benefits, or new status symbols. Rather, employees are motivated by their own inherent need to succeed at a challenging task. The manager's job then is not to motivate people to get them to achieve; instead, the manager should provide opportunities for people to achieve, so they will become motivated." - Frederick Herzberg.

What does this theory have to do with process improvement? When done properly, motivation is a core component to process improvement, total quality, 6 Sigma, lean, or whatever other description one uses to express this philosophy that according to W. Edwards Deming causes 85% to 90% of an organization's problems. It has been proven time and time again that "bad processes will always squash good people."

Typically, employees do not go to work thinking "I can't wait to get to work to see what I can mess up today." Most employees are committed to doing a good job and providing results. Very often, however, when management does not see the desired or forecast outcomes, they search

way. Take a step back and evaluate your listening ability and techniques. Do any of the following apply to you?

- You check and answer email while talking on the phone (personally or professionally)
- You respond to texts while in a meeting or at your child's soccer game
- You watch your children IM or text while doing homework or at the dinner table
- You spend time updating Facebook instead of reaching out to someone and having a real conversation
- You engage in a conversation with an employee while you shuffle papers and respond to a receptionist call that Mr. Smith is on line two

If we are honest with ourselves, we are all guilty of one if not many of these listening infractions. We get caught up in the crazy and scattered pace of life. Let's take a step back and remind ourselves that good listening is essential to effective communication, and here are some simple habits that can improve our listening ability:

- Take time to listen. Stop, take a deep breath to clear your mind, and really listen to an employee sharing ideas or to how your son's day at school unfolded.
- Be attentive. Put the world on hold and pay 100% attention to the person talking with you. They believe what they have to say is important and so should you.
- Listen with an open mind. Don't be judgmental. Listen to everything the person is communicating, and before judging the value of the information ask questions to better understand the scope and depth.
- Listen for feelings. People repeat those things that are important to them. Listen to what is said but also to how it is said. Feelings often speak much louder than words.
- Listen for retention. While listening, summarize the highlights of the conversation in your mind so you can play it back to the person with whom you are talking. It will help you implement the important details later, and it will send the important message that you were really listening.

Finally, listen to others in the way in which you want to be listened to ... you will be astounded as to how much more you will get accomplished and learn if you stop and really listen. You will be amazed how much you miss if you don't!

[More Info on Team Leadership](#)

In their own words...

"Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you'll land among the stars." ~Les Brown

for the bad apples. The question becomes "who caused this to happen?", rather than "what caused this to happen?"

It is our experience that the question "what caused this to happen?" more often reveals the cause of bad outcomes than "who caused it to happen?" "What caused this to happen?" is typically a defective or ineffective process. A process is the series of interrelated steps it takes to complete a task, and this applies to both business and manufacturing processes. Management designs the majority of a company's processes and employees are instructed and trained to follow them - good or bad. If the process is good, then the outcomes are good. However, if there is waste and variation built into the process, the outcomes will neither be consistent nor predictable. Employees might know of a better way to do things, but management won't allow or encourage them to find it. Even if permission and encouragement are given, it is important that process improvement be done correctly. Without the proper understanding and knowledge of process improvement tools to guide the discussions, greater frustration is created during the analysis, the decision process and the improvement phases. Giving employees an opportunity to truly participate in process improvement is one way to motivate them, according to Frederick Herzberg's above definition of motivation. Highly motivated employees who have been given the opportunity to be involved in process improvement will generate enhanced results for

"The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra." ~Jimmy Johnson

"Teamwork divides the task and multiplies the success." ~Author Unknown

the organization. Additionally, the employees who are actually doing the work attain greater employee loyalty and higher morale. Your customers are more satisfied and more loyal to your products or services.

[More Info on Customer Loyalty](#)

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