

Respecting others

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you will help them become what they are capable of becoming."

-Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Every once in a while, I get fed up with all the nastiness in the world, and say to myself "Why can't we just get along?"

Well, I'm no saint -- I'm just as likely as anybody else to forget all about my pondering question, and get mad at someone for something stupid.

And yet, the world would be a better place -- a much better place -- if we spent even half as much time building up each other as we do tearing each other down.

It seems to be almost predictable -- in times of stress like we're going through now, people get into a blame game. Each complains about the other people. One person makes allusions against another one. Somebody decides that someone else isn't pull his/her weight.

In short, as we get stressed, we're more likely to try to assign blame -- and often, that blame doesn't belong where we try to assign it.

While it can be an important exercise to assess where we have gone wrong, and gone right (if that phrase can be used here), most of the time, name calling and rumor mongering hurts ourselves much more than it hurts the target of our frustration.

We'd be much better off if we were to give each other the benefit of the doubt, and try to understand each other.

Altogether too often, once-solid organizations can turn into fragmented little pools of name calling, blame, and "land wars," where one part of the organization goes hunting for space or responsibility the other side has.

It perhaps seems trite to say it, but we need a good dose of the "Golden Rule" in most organizations. We need to actively attempt to see the other person's point of view, learn from that viewpoint, and then make the organization stronger as a result.

Each of us has strengths that we bring to a situation -- and helping ourselves to

understand other people allows us to leverage those strengths to build up a company to greater heights than it could otherwise achieve.

As leaders, we should concentrate on helping other people grow -- and do it in a positive way. Each of us should learn to understand ourselves, and the people around us, whether they be coworkers, bosses, family members, or other leaders. We should work on building up those people, and ourselves, through positive, directed effort, aimed at producing an end result of making those people greater.

We will find that as we actively work to build up those around us, we will actively work at building ourselves up -- and as a result, if we follow this course of action, we will find the ultimate beneficiary of our actions will be us.

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