

Karen Mathews & Associates Newsletter

Intentional Influence

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Welcome to our inaugural edition of Intentional Leadership Ezine. Our hope is that you will find it insightful and enjoyable. We welcome your topics of interest and concern because it is our desire to make this a relevant resource. So let us know what you'd like to see in this newsletter. In addition, we value your feedback so please feel free to [email us](#). It is my personal intention to bring you information that is practical and useful so that you may become a more effective leader whether you are leading an organization of 1 or 10,000.

**"Most powerful is he who has himself in his own power"
- Seneca**

Your Tips are Welcomed!

Do you have a tip to share regarding intention and/or leadership? If so please send it to us and we'll publish one per month.

• Intentional Leadership - (Read Time: 4 minutes)

Why is Intentional Leadership relevant? Effective leadership is about being more deliberate or "intentional," as I like to say. Lead yourself first to become more effective, innovative and better enjoy your work with less stress. "Leadership" means to lead others on a path to a goal. It also means that we lead by example, our behaviors. Do you remember your first boss? Was he or she good at leading or horrible at it?

The question is - do you want to get real energy from your team or have them behave placidly doing the minimum and other "cya" behaviors? With intentional influence you can turn your team around and help them to excel. As the leader, your behaviors are basically the tools of influence that leverage the responses from your

cue for defining acceptable behaviors. If you think that adults are impervious to bad examples, think again. Remember Enron?

The energy of the environment helps to create people's perception and experience of how hard or easy it is, how much synergy there is or not and how stressful it is. It also creates how quickly work can be done, how well the customer feels attended to and on and on. That's not to say that problems don't come up when the leader is intentional, it just means that leaders can be more resourceful and flexible to deal effectively and strategically in difficult situations.

People respond to us directly based upon our behaviors, regardless of what we say. This is truer as a leader since we create the space and set the tone for the work environment because our followers are, well, *following* us, modeling us. Essentially we can better leverage influence by being aware of and intentional of how we're thinking, feeling and behaving in the workplace. Think of yourself, your energy and attitude as a tool unto yourself: self as an instrument of influence. It is our will coming through in our intentions.

Remember the story of the man with the lost keys? He was looking for them under the light post at night time. Someone came by to ask him if he needed help and asked where he thought that he dropped his keys. The man replied that he thought that he dropped them 20 feet away in the parking lot. When the passerby asked why he wasn't looking for his keys over there, the man responded "because the light is better over here".

Setting Intention

To understand what it's like to set intention deliberately experiment a bit. A great way to get an experience of what it is like to set an intention, try saying out loud "I wish xyz", then say "I want xyz" and then say "I intend xyz". Notice what you're thinking and feeling after saying each statement. You should be aware of a varying degree of certainty of having the outcome that you want. That feeling of certainty, being in touch with our will, and the direction it gives to our behavior is what helps us to accomplish, achieve and excel. It's leading ourselves in the direction we want to go and being in full alignment with it.

What is the outcome you want and what are your options to get there? Be willing to risk groping a bit into the dark, the unknown, looking for new keys. Don't be like the man looking in the area that is known just

because it is familiar. As you get more familiar with this technique the territory will illuminate.

Key Point

Something to keep in mind about setting intentions: you cannot set an intention for someone else's behaviors since ultimately you do not have control over their behaviors, only influence upon the person. Your internal state will translate into behaviors that will influence others. You will naturally and automatically mentally sort for thoughts and behaviors in ways that match your intentions; it will help keep your intended outcome at the top of your mind. When you model that behavior others will match it and your natural influence will help to take your team where you want them to go.

This indeed may seem like a small step, but like a pebble in a pond it will create ripples that can have profound results. Your behaviors come out of what you're thinking and feeling. Take charge of yourself, begin by being self aware - lead yourself to experience passion for your vision and goal then share that feeling with intention.

If using influence intentionally seems simplistic because of conflicting influences and interests within teams and organizations it is but one element of Intentional Leadership that adds to effectiveness. I will address that issue next month in the next edition of Intentional Leadership on the topic of Intentional Teaming.

Thank you for reading and I hope you enjoyed this newsletter. Please feel free to pass it onto your friends and colleagues. We never intend to spam anyone, if you would like to opt out please click on "SafeUnsubscribe" at the bottom of the page.

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• Leadership Tip (Read Time: 1 minute)

Experiment with intentional influence to have more productive meetings and build trust within the team. Some suggestions are to intend to:

- Start and finish on time,
- Stick to the agenda,
- Be fully present,
- Pay attention to the dynamics of the team - what is being unsaid?
- Ensure that everyone knows their ideas are wanted and needed,

- Disallow side conversations and work on electronic devices (these detract from full attention on conversation),
- Model being open to different options,
- Ask provocative questions that lead to constructive disagreement with richer solutions,
- Have action items assigned to actionees with completion dates and follow up for accountability.

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