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Who you are is what you get

To transform your life you have to understand how to take full responsibility for what you can make happen. And this means learning the difference between what you can control and what you can't.



I've wasted a lot of my life trying to control the things over which I had no control and getting more and more stressed when I failed.

It was always important to me how people treated me and if they didn't treat me in that way I spent lots of time trying to get them to do so – I thought it was my right.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE

As a group exercise on my Personal Leadership Programme I ask people how they'd like to be treated by everyone they meet. Together we come up with a list that almost always includes things such as with respect, honestly, openly, kindly, as an equal, with integrity, as an individual, and so on. I then ask them, 'Can you make people treat you this way?' Of course, the answer is absolutely not. We might be able to influence them, but we certainly have no control over making them. How often in life do we spend time trying to get others to treat us in the way we think

Here's an
idea for
you...

Look for someone in your family or team at work who's not performing as you think they could. Think about what you could give them that would enable them to improve their performance. It may include things like truly listening to them to understand their needs, giving them some more information, supporting and encouraging their ideas more, giving them appreciation or developing their skills and knowledge.

people treat you and if you can't control it, then why spend lots of time worrying about it? The only place where you have power is in areas where you do have complete control.

we deserve to be treated and getting upset when they don't? I certainly behaved this way, especially with my children. The reality is this. We have no control over 'get', we only have control over 'give'. So the conclusion that we come to is that if we want people to treat us in the ways that are important to us, then we in turn need to be respectful, honest, open, kind, treat others as equals, behave with integrity and show that we think each person is unique. This doesn't necessarily mean that they'll then treat us in the same way, but it's certainly going to make it more likely. The key here is recognising where you do have power and where you don't. You can't control the way

MOTIVATION – WHOSE JOB IS IT?

How often at work do you hear managers questioning how they could motivate their teams more effectively? However, where does motivation come from? It comes from inside of you. So, how can anyone push a button that's inside of you. The knack of motivation is getting them to motivate themselves. If you believe your role is to motivate them and you do a really good job, what happens when you're not there? So turn your thinking the other way round. Instead of thinking about how

you can get them to perform better, how can you get them to be more creative and how you can raise levels of awareness, think instead about what you can give them to enable them to perform better, what you can give them to enable them to become more creative, what you can give them to help raise their levels of performance.

For some key pointers check out IDEA 4, *Impact of appreciation*; IDEA 14, *What comes first*; IDEA 19, *Boost your thinking power*; and IDEA 11, *Who's pulling your strings*.

Try another idea...

There's a huge amount of research supporting the effectiveness of this approach, often known as 'servant leadership', and you'll find books and articles about this everywhere. The guru of servant leadership is Robert Greenleaf, and he believes that you should turn an organisation on its head so, for example, the CEO is at the bottom and his focus is on what he can give his directors to enable them to become more effective in every way. And the directors are thinking, 'What can we give to our direct reports?', and so on. At the 'top' the people at the coalface are totally focused on what they can give to their customers to enable an even more fulfilling and profitable relationship.

This works in exactly the same way in your home life. What is it that you can give your partner or your children to enable them to become happier, more loving and more fulfilled?



'From what we get, we can make a living; what we give, however, makes a life.'

ARTHUR ASHE

Defining idea...

How did
it go?

Q This is so simple! I can't believe I didn't think of it before. How quickly will people change once I start doing things differently?

A That depends on how long they've been managed the 'old' way! Share with them, openly and honestly, what you've just learned and ask them what you can give them to enable them to become more effective. That will encourage them to take more responsibility for themselves.

Q One of my children is a real lazy little git! Nothing seems to get him motivated. He just sits around listening to music or playing computer games. I'm at my wits' end. What do you suggest?

A Been there, got the T-shirt! Do you still cook for him, clean for him and do his washing? Do you also tell him that he's lazy and doesn't do anything to help, and generally whinge at him most of the time? I was like that when my children were younger. Firstly, look for things where you can tell him he's doing well. There must be something! Secondly, stop doing things for him. Tell him you now believe that he's intelligent enough to be able to do things for himself and that you trust him to do them. Finally, get him to do his vision for his life and then ask him daily, 'If you knew you could you do one thing today that will take you closer to where you want to be, what might you do?'