



Transformational Leadership & Service Podcast

Episode 23 Transcript

Controlling Emotions -- Rationally

It happens all the time. Leaders find themselves in critical situations, for which they are not emotionally well prepared. A tension-packed meeting with the boss; a heated conversation with a disgruntled customer; the receipt of a less than stellar evaluation; those and many other situations cause emotions to surface. How you handle such emotionally charged experiences can alter the way others view you and your leadership abilities (good or bad) from that time forward.

Managing emotions is an important aspect of realizing full leadership potential. Unfortunately, it is an aspect that is all too often overlooked. In an attempt to offer some helpful hints concerning the rational examination of maintaining emotional control, consider the following.

1. To control emotions...be constantly aware of them.
 - a. Human beings are emotional beings. Some people tend to display their emotions publicly. Others spend time and energy pretending they are devoid of virtually all emotion. Leaders must realize the first step in controlling emotions is to recognize that good or bad, emotions make us who and what we are.
2. To control emotions...investigate them.
 - a. Being aware of our emotions means that we must learn to be honest with ourselves. We must constantly evaluate the variety and range of emotions that we experience. At the same time, we must identify those common or frequent situations, or "triggers," that cause certain emotions (especially negative ones) to surface.
3. To control emotions...take ownership of them.
 - a. It has been said that we have little control over the things that happen to us. But we have ultimate control over how we respond to those things. The best leaders learn early on to take full responsibility for and ownership of the emotions they are experiencing and the behaviors that follow.

4. To control emotions...share them.
 - a. I said *share* them—I did not say *show* them! Don't be afraid to tell people how you feel. If you are upset, tell them—don't show them—that you are upset. If you are frustrated, explain your level of frustration—don't exhibit your frustration through some sort of uncontrolled emotional outburst.

5. To control emotions...match them with your intellect.
 - a. Whether you like it or not; whether it is true or not; people tend to believe the more uncontrolled your emotions, the less intelligent you are. Conversely, if you exhibit the ability to control your emotions when others can't (or don't), people tend to assume you are far more intelligent than the others by which they compare you.

Remember, emotions are delicate things. So is your leadership reputation. Don't ignore either of them in your quest to be your best!