Teach Others What You Know and See How <u>You</u> Gain

By John Madden

Empowerment comes from teaching others things they can do to become less dependent on you. -- Ken Blanchard

When you plan to teach what you learn to others, you immediately become a better student, a better teacher, and a better leader. You'll also gain more time to be creative and to extend your own knowledge and experience. If you fail to do this, you'll be doing everything yourself, you'll have no succession plan, and your effectiveness as a leader will be weak.

How can you teach others what you know?

1. Immediately share what you've learned.

2. Make it interesting and applicable.

3. Make a list of tips, suggestions, or information you can share with others.

<u>Immediately share what you've learned</u>

When you return to your office from a convention or seminar, you should have a plan to disseminate all information that other people need or could benefit by as soon as possible. This rarely happens because of poor planning and procrastination. By the time you return from an event, your desk and computer have already been loaded with stuff that needs your attention, so the importance of the material you've just acquired has diminished in favor of those "urgent" items now taunting you.

When I ran a group of hotels, my managers often attended conventions and seminars. I encouraged them, after each event, to make a summary of what they learned and present it to their staff in a training environment, with a copy of the highlights to me so I could follow-up on their successes. Another benefit was that I was able to measure the return on investment related to the expense of multiple attendances at these events. At first there was some resistance, but everyone soon realized the benefits, both to them and to their employees.

Make it interesting and applicable.

All information shared must have a purpose, not only for the communicator of the information, but also for the receiver. Often we teach some of our great knowledge to others, only to find little or no interest. Perhaps we were inept at articulating the benefits of this knowledge – or how to apply it. Teaching information or knowledge without immediate benefit or application to the learner is often unproductive.

I presented a seminar on interpersonal skills to a group in a manufacturing plant. One lady said on her evaluation that the information really helped her to identify the causes of conflict between her and her teenage daughter, while she had no problems getting along with her coworkers. In other words, the information was applicable to her in one way, while it was applicable in other ways to someone else. Make sure that the information has meaning and some benefit for the recipient. There must be a link - a connection - between what you share and what the recipient needs and/or wants in order to do a better job.

<u>Make a list of tips, suggestions, or information you can share with others.</u>

Take a half hour to yourself this week and write down some tasks or techniques that you could teach your staff, your colleagues, or your family members that would enhance their competence on the job or in completing a particular task. We often see people tackling a job or a problem, and we just know that there's a better and simpler way of doing it. We know how we would do it. But because we think we're too busy to show them, or that it will take too long, we let it go and thus prevent their possible success – and ultimately our own. It's also about helping others be successful. Remember what Zig Ziglar said, "You can have anything in life you want if you'll just help enough other people get what they want. Teach them what you know – it's always a win-win!

John Madden is an international speaker, trainer, and author of *"Leap, Don't Sleep"* *(How to get different results by doing something different). He specializes in customer service, coaching skills for managers, stress management through humor, creative problem solving, and interpersonal skills. You can reach him at 316-689-6932; email at john@LeapDontSleep.com;* <u>*web site:*</u> <u>*www.LeapDontSleep.com*</u>