

WANTED! HONEST DISCUSSIONS!

A hidden ailment that continues to limit organizational success is the inability to have honest discussions. What do we mean by that?

Here's a laundry list of examples:

- Is everything in the sales pipeline a real opportunity? Is that 80% probability of closing the deal accurate?
- Are some of our competitors products/services actually better than ours but we won't admit it?
- Is that project really in "red" status but we'll find a way to rationalize it as "yellow" trending to "green?"
- Can we admit that an initiative has failed, cut our losses and redeploy time and resources into other areas?
- Do we say we have a collaborative culture since it's one of our "values" yet we rarely work together in groups and no one feels comfortable pointing it out?
- Our day-to-day business activities don't always seem to match the vision or strategic objectives but not a word is said in meetings (break room, lunch and happy hour are a different story!)
- Our meetings are BORING with no respectful, civil disagreements or passionate debates on any issues.

We've got more but you get the point. The bottom line is that we can't solve problems without admitting we have them. These scenarios run rampant through many organizations.

Why? A void of honest discussions is typically a symptom of larger issues which revolve around a lack of trust and a fear of retaliation.

If people don't trust each other, they don't share. If people fear retaliation or ridicule in front of their peers, they won't say a word. It's as simple as that!

These issues are leadership issues. The leader is responsible for creating environments where people feel comfortable having honest discussions. If the leader does not create this environment, these discussions will not happen.

I'm not just talking about the CEO. I'm talking about anyone who is responsible for leading a team of people.

If you create this environment and people do feel comfortable sharing, you'll see an immediate positive impact:

- problems will be identified and solved more quickly
- time and resources won't be thrown away on unproductive efforts
- true collaboration will occur resulting in organization-wide improvements
- meetings will be productive with deep, meaningful discussions

Create an open and trusting environment and let us know your results!