

No More Yelling for the New Year

Paul got off the phone and checked his email again. There was still no information from Bob about the costs of the materials. He punched in Bob's extension as he began to talk to himself about Bob's lack of initiative.

After two rings Paul came out of his chair ready to blast Bob for his slow follow through. He went looking for Bob. He spotted him sitting at his desk, next to the phone. Paul's irritation burst out of its shaky containment. "Why the hell couldn't you pick up the phone? What do you think I'm paying you for? Do you actually do any work around here?"

The questions weren't real. When Paul let his frustration loose he wasn't having a conversation; he was venting and ripping. This was a pattern that Bob, and everyone else in the office, was familiar with and did their best to avoid.

There are many touted benefits of being the "Boss". But once you become the boss, you often face powerful frustrations. In our consulting practice, frustrations with employees, colleagues and partners trump any and all perks as a topic of conversations.

Dealing with the less-than-ideal attitudes and the inabilities of your team isn't something most leaders and managers in professional practices train for and so they depend on a learn-while-doing approach. But most of the learning is really just a replay of approaches that they use in personal relationships, and for some these approaches simply give a lot of permission to blast anger outward.

We can say without reservations that loud, aggressive, discharges of irritation are harmful to the productivity of your office. They inhibit trust, creativity, focus and loyalty. If you want independent workers who dazzle clients and patients with their relationship skills and technical abilities you will not yell no matter what.

Now don't read this as saying you have to tolerate poor performance or lack of follow through, you don't. But if you want to increase productivity and revenues, if you like working with competent remarkable people, if you want your practice to be exceptional, and if you want better performance and follow through, you will stop yelling.

And if you've tried and failed, then it's time you got help. There are a few simple coaching steps that you can begin to practice, and if you're serious about wanting to change, you will change. Why are we so sure? Because other clients of ours have done it and the odds are they started off worse than you.

It's also worth noting that while therapy may help, we're talking about coaching, not therapy; no questions about your childhood, no need to explore past hurts or wrongs. Our approach is a

“what do you want – here’s what to try” process. Sure therapy can be helpful, and if you want it we’ll be glad to refer you to someone who matches your style and needs, but most people can make a lot of progress with a coaching/behavioral approach.

Loudly or aggressively expressed frustration and irritation hurt workplaces. There are simple steps you can begin to take to cut back the number of times you “lose it.” You will see improvements in your office and in your level of stress. Call or email if you want to know more.