



A Different Kind of Leadership

Summer is upon us... Time to travel, right? Many of you are planning trips, some even to other countries. Fun!! Enjoy your travels!

There is another kind of travel we can all do... particularly as leaders.

***Every soul is a unique country that - sadly-
is often left unexplored.***

That statement is a quote from Gary Thomas in a book about, of all things, marriage. I think this is one of the more profound leadership ideas I've pondered in a LONG time... Why, you might ask...

Well, most of us have heard all the buzzwords regarding a great leader. Words like VISION, TYPE A, DRIVEN, GOAL-ORIENTED. More recently, we've heard words like HUMBLE, LISTENER, MULTIPLIER, INSPIRATIONAL, SERVANT-LEADER. All of these, wielded properly, are good. BUT, what do leaders lead? Stated more properly,

Who do leaders lead? PEOPLE.

It sounds trite to hear the following phrase repeatedly: *Your people are your greatest resource.* It's true, but too often leaders end up USING, and dare I say DEPLETING, this most valuable of resources. How do we **GO GREEN** (make sustainable and renewable) our HUMAN resources? What would this sort of leadership look like?

Maybe it starts by EXPLORING... As leader, can you explore the "country" of the souls of the people you lead? *WHOA!! Slow your roll here, Mark! I've got deadlines to meet, projects to complete.* Well and good... but if you DEplete your most valuable resource, how will those deadlines and projects play out for you?

Make a start. Listen to your people's stories. Really LISTEN to UNDERSTAND, not just to "make them feel good" so you can GET out of them what you want/need.

***What if you wanted something more
FOR them than you want FROM them?***

What if your people knew that statement were, in practice, true about your leadership? I would venture to say, *Watch out!* Your people, your team, will go places neither you nor they ever imagined.

You might say, *That's impossible! I have 200 people I'm responsible for.* Maybe so... but whether you lead 200, 100, 50, 10 or 1, start with one. You might be surprised. If this kind of leadership is caught more than taught, it might become contagious within your organization. What if?

One more idea: try words of AFFIRMATION (one of the Five Love Languages) rather than what we normally call "Feedback." Just try it... even if your sample size is small. See what happens.

***With our words, leaders,
we either breathe LIFE or DEATH
into our people, our teams.
Choose LIFE!***

I believe it was CS Lewis, twentieth-century philosopher/theologian, and author of *The Chronicles of Narnia*, who said:

***You have never locked eyes
with a mere mortal.***

So, happy trails this summer! Take a moment to STAND and STARE... at nature... and, maybe into a "soul" that until now, has been left unexplored. You'll be glad you did!