



Following Through

As a leader, the idea of following through on what we say, the promises we make, may not seem important, but this idea carries far more weight than many others. As leaders we can find our employees watch our actions more than they listen to our words. The same can be said for our peers. Our actions carry far more weight than our words. Please do not mistake this statement and think your words carry no weight, they do, in fact they carry a lot of weight. Yet people will follow our actions more than they will follow what we say.

In order to be an effective leader, we must ensure our actions and words align. What we say must be matched by what we do. And this can be summed up quite simply as follow through. Each action we complete must be matched by the words we say, and vice versa. In a meeting, if we state each employee will have the opportunity to apply for a coveted position, then we must ensure each employee has this opportunity, even if this means we must go to each employee personally and ask them to apply. The time we spend following through on our words will actually be an investment in time saved in the future.

Once our employees and peers understand we mean what we say and we follow through, a culture shift will happen. People will begin to place real value on your words and stop waiting for the follow through as they understand it will happen. In order to ensure we can follow through on our words, we must learn to manage our time and to not make threats or empty promises.

Here are some tips to help you create a culture of follow through.

1. Never react to anything. Never be driven by your emotions. All words and actions must be logical and realistic.
2. Never allow anyone to goad you, pressure you, or place you in a situation where you feel you must make a promise.
3. Give yourself time to think through what you are promising.
4. When setting a deadline, give yourself a few extra days to allow for any needs which might arise.
5. Never make threats, only make promises.
6. Learn to control your emotions.
7. Make sure your needs are met before entering into a conversation.