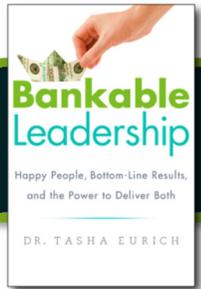


Bankable Leadership Tip Sheet #5



Treat Adults like Adults

Most leaders and organizations treat their employees like children. Though few do this on purpose, the act of using policies to substitute good judgment or helping employees to such an extent that you're not letting them take responsibility has exactly that effect.

But when leaders let go of tightly controlled policies and give their team true ownership for their behavior, amazing things happen. And the research on this is clear—when leaders do this, they create happier people and better results. There are two approaches Bankable Leaders take to treat their employees like adults:

- **“Act as If:”** Examine the assumptions you're making about your employees and ensure you're assuming the best.
- **Engineer Ownership:** Giving employees responsibility and control over their universe.

Tips to “Act as If”

Examine your assumptions: What assumptions are you making about your employees? That they are talented, capable, and motivated? Or that they are unskilled, lazy, and inept? Make the decision to view your employees as competent, well-meaning professionals with good judgment. When you make a judgment about an employee, ask yourself:

- Why do I believe that?
- Do I know that for a fact?
- What is an alternate explanation for this behavior?

Choose conversations over policies: Instead of writing policies, have direct and honest conversations with employees and set clear expectations for what you expect. Create clear and swift consequences for the few who use bad judgment.

Whittle down your policies: If you influence policy in your organization, practice the “Adult Test.” Would I need to tell a smart, high-performing employee to do this? If not, consider eliminating it and instead setting clear expectations and consequences for bad judgment.

Tips to Engineer Ownership

Delegate: Ask yourself whether you're holding onto projects you should be delegating. For each employee, find one additional responsibility that they'd be excited about and be clear about exactly what you want them to do.

Empower them: Ensure you're pushing decisions down so that those closest to the customers can exercise their judgment. Ask for your team's input on projects and work assignments. Above all, give them a voice in the decisions that will directly affect them.

Give them control: Give employees a choice about how and when to complete their work whenever possible. Allow flexibility in how they structure their work and non-work time.

More resources available at www.BankableLeadership.com

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