

PHL|HP CONSULTING GROUP

Building and Sustaining **H**igh **P**erforming Organizations



A Message from
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Founder and President

This Holiday: Be Positively Successful

The holiday season brings out many different reactions from people. Some feel an abundance of good will and friendship, others respond with grumpiness, sadness, pessimism, while still others are optimistically hopeful. This season will be no different than seasons past, but it is worth mentioning that your emotions influence not only you, but have a direct impact on the emotions of the people around you.

I, and many of my colleagues, concur that there are some people who have a greater propensity for “global satisfaction” and the transmission of positive emotions, such as joy, love, and positivity. One cannot have what is known as a ‘Pollyanna’ response to life – where all is rosy and beautiful because we are aware that an individual’s life circumstance has an enormous impact on how they feel.

Yet, there are still many people who seem to have so much that is positive in their lives, but are so dissatisfied and others who may appear to have far less, but to be so much happier?

One theory is that **people who act grateful and positive tend to become happier people**. Being and acting grateful is good not just because it promotes what David Brooks denotes as ‘eulogy’ traits – those characteristics that are not defined by what we ‘have’ but by ‘who we are’. Many people are not born or bred to be positive and happy, but the theory is that if you act appreciative, grateful, and positive, you will be happier with your lot in life and this will, in turn, be transmitted to others. Another theory is that when we act happy it stimulates parts of our brain that elicit positive emotions and pleasure. This is good for everyone!

Focusing on positive aspects of life tends to make you feel happier.

What does this have to do with leadership?

Since **acting happy, positive, and optimistic tends to bring out similar emotions in those around you**, it would follow that **your workforce will also be happier, more committed and more productive. A happier workforce leads to the success of YOUR company and this leads to greater profitability, which, of course, will make you a happier leader**. And, we can all be thankful for emoticons that can provide emotions that we may not be able to articulate ourselves :)

I’m sure you have noticed that the most popular CEOs and Presidents smiled a great deal. This is not just for the press – remember the Kennedy/Nixon debates and the affability of Reagan as opposed to Carter’s demeanor of doom and gloom. **Projecting happiness and optimism translates to likeability and people want to work for a likeable boss.**

Here we are at the holiday season. What better time than the holiday season to change our behavior and test this theory?

I often speak about the importance of being an authentic leader and there will be some questions as to whether this is authentic... You may even say, “What’s wrong with me showing my negativity if that is how I’m feeling?” **Can you act differently than you feel and still be authentic?** The answer is **YES!!**

By making positivity and gratitude a part of your daily life, **by acting happier** even when you are not feeling that way at the moment, **your feelings will be uplifted and that will become an authentic expression of who you are**-a leader who chooses to be grateful for what s/he has, who focuses on small accomplishments as a way of building to larger outcomes, who heaps praise on deserving employees. These positive emotions and behaviors are contagious!

For me, this season is an opportunity to express to you how grateful I am for the opportunity to work with so many talented and appreciative leaders who welcome me to their companies, whose trust I have earned, and who value my contribution to their professional development and the success of their company.

Happy holidays to all and may 2016 be a year of peace, joy, good health, safety and continued success for all of you and those you hold dear.

With optimism and gratitude,
Phil

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