

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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Blueprint for Success



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*Your
mistakes
are one
more step
toward
excellence.*

Dave, a project manager for a Portland general contractor, told our Leadership Development LAB a great story about going out to a new job to which he had been assigned. He took his set of blueprints. When he arrived at the job site and opened up the prints to begin to familiarize himself with the job, the most important blueprint was missing. He called back to his office. They called the project design people; "Where is the blueprint? Where is the blueprint?" "Nothing here. You have it." "No, you have it!" A day later, still no blueprint. Three days later, still no blueprint. Everything was up in the air. Dave kept calling and saying, "It's going to be hard to do this job right without all the blueprints."

On the fourth day, Dave was looking through some of his drawings, and there, to his amazement, was the missing blueprint. Dave had had the print the whole time! Wow, was he embarrassed. What to do? Well, we know the right answer; call the office immediately and admit the mistake. We also know the other possible answers; hide it, throw it away, sneak it back to the office so it looked like it had been there the whole time. Boy, can we be creative when it comes to covering our mistakes.

If we wish to create an empowered organization, we must allow the space for people to be honest. Dave called the office, admitted that he had had the print the whole time, that he had lost / mis-

placed it, and the work went on.

What should our attitude as managers be toward mistakes? First, let's break the word down ~ MIS-TAKES ~ like in the movie business. Our son, Barry, used to own a video production business. When he was shooting a commercial or a training video and the first TAKE wasn't successful, he'd shoot a second take, a third take, and so on. There is no blame, shame, or attempt to shift responsibilities. We know that high performing companies have a similar attitude toward mistakes. They have learned that they must allow for and even encourage mistakes, especially mistakes that are inevitable while in the pursuit of a better way, a new way, an improved way. Unless there is an atmosphere that allows for mistakes, there will be no risk taking, and we may even create an atmosphere where people abandon their commitment to honesty. Continuous improvement will be replaced by complacency and adherence to policies and procedures. The driving force will be "play it safe."

The action I call you to take is Leadership Principle #11 - "When you blow it, show it." When you make a mistake, be willing to admit it and allow your team to do the same. This is how you create an empowered team and, at the same time, strengthen your own self-esteem. Strengthened self-esteem and empowerment will help you win in 2010.

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(LDL)

OPEN CLASS ~ MARCH 2010

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