

# Turbo Leadership Systems™

# The **TURBO** **Charger**

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Issue 247



To our clients and friends

October 13, 2009

## Tomato Basil Soup



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*Your future is  
determined by  
your culture*

It's about 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 2nd. Here I am at Starbucks in the JJ Marriott on Pennsylvania Avenue, about two blocks from the Whitehouse in Washington DC. I am taking a break after hiking around the Whitehouse square. The nourishing Vivanno blend drink tastes great!

Reflecting on my day since arriving in Washington DC and my little walk from the Henley Park Hotel, my first stop was at a restaurant I'll leave unnamed. The restaurant is part of a national franchise headquartered in Chicago. Earlier in the week on the HR Forum cruise out of New York harbor, I had dinner with the vice president of human resources of the firm. She's an enthusiastic, vivacious lady who spoke in glowing terms about the exceptional customer service she and the president of her company, a former executive with Burger King, are dedicated to. When I walked into the restaurant, the clerk at the front counter immediately said, "May I help you sir?" So far, so good. I replied, "I'll bet you can. What's your soup today?" She said, "I don't know", and hollered down the way, "What's our soup today?" "What'd you say?" "What's our soup today?" I said, "I'll just walk down there". I walked down the counter and asked, "What's your soup today?" "Tomato-basil." "Do you have anything else?" The young man lifted the lid off the second pot, burned his hand, cursed. "It's some kind of chicken noodle." "I'll take a cup of the tomato-basil." It was one of the most delicious soups I've ever eaten. When I got up to leave, I asked the young girl behind the counter if she knew where the Verizon store was, she just shook her head "no", didn't say "Sorry, don't know", didn't say "Maybe someone else here can help you", she just shook her head. This store has some customer service problems and fell far short of what the HR director had said they are committed to.

After several wrong turns, I found the Verizon store about six blocks away. When I walked in, a young man who was slumped on a ledge near the front door greeted me, "Can I help you?" He didn't stand up. "I'm looking for a charger for my Bluetooth." A little discussion ensued. He told me they didn't have a charger. "Well, maybe I'll get

another Bluetooth." A second gentleman stood up, and at the speed of a snail, walked in the most deliberate, slow manner I've ever seen anyone walk while waiting on a customer. He continued to deal with me in this disengaged, mechanical way for the next several minutes. I paid for my new Bluetooth, he bagged it and off I went.

I concluded that this lackluster, discourteous service is not unique to the restaurant or the Verizon store; it's just the way it is in Washington D.C. I noticed the street vendors were slumped down talking on cell phones. There was no interaction with the people walking by, no commenting when someone got close to their stands. I overheard someone ask about a price. I'd given up - this is how all service is in Washington D.C. Then, when I walked into Starbucks, I had an entirely different experience. They greeted me warmly and answered my questions enthusiastically. I said to the ladies working there that it felt like I was on a different planet.

We learn once again that each business has an opportunity to create its own culture, regardless of the environment, the norms, or the workforce pool. You, as a manager, have no one to blame for your culture, the level of commitment of your team. You are the crafter, the architect of your culture. Your culture is a reflection of you.

**Give us a call or send us an  
email to learn more  
about our  
NEW EXECUTIVE  
BRIEFING**

*"The 5 Characteristics of a  
High Performance Team"*

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