

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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Beat Bad By a 5-year Old



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*New players
can be great
winners*

Roger, a paper machine technical assistant for a large paper mill in Mackenzie, British Columbia, told Session 2B of the Leadership Development Lab (LDL):

“Earlier in my career, during our department’s Christmas party in 1993, my coworkers, their spouses and children were all gathered at my best friends’ house. I worked with his wife in the Technical department at the mill and they were gracious enough to volunteer their home for this years’ party. There must have been about thirty of us altogether. “After a delicious turkey dinner, the grownups were all scattered throughout the living room and kitchen enjoying drinks and good conversation, while the kids played games and sang Christmas carols. Then the voice of a 5-year old rang out, ‘Aunt Bal, do you want to play checkers with me?’ That was my wife, and she readily agreed to play.

As the game progressed in the middle of the living room carpet, a crowd gathered around to watch. Within minutes, the youngster had ‘smoked’ my wife, taking all her checker pieces hostage. The game was over in no time. My wife, being the good sport she is, thanked the 5-year old, shook his hand, and proceeded to get a cup of coffee. While in the kitchen, I stood beside, nudged her side gently with my elbow and said, ‘So, a 5-year old whipped your butt playing checkers, huh?’ Of course my voice was loud enough so others could hear what I had just said. Just as my wife was giving me the ‘look’ out of slight embarrassment, I heard some-

one call me. ‘Uncle Roger, do you want to play checkers with me now?’

Nobody was going to beat me at checkers, I thought, especially a 5-year old. I rolled up my sleeves and proceeded to the living room. ‘I’ll teach him who’s boss’ I told myself. We began to play. Click, click is all I remember hearing a few times before the words ‘I beat him, I beat him!’ shrieked out of the youngster’s mouth. Apparently he was a formidable opponent.

As I got up to go get a drink, I heard my wife’s voice say, ‘Soo . . . a 5-year old can also beat you at checkers, huh?’ There was much laughter in the background. I could feel my face getting flushed as I looked for the hole in the floor to jump into. Yep, I definitely had egg on my face.

The moral of the story is ‘never underestimate the potential of a 5-year old, because if you do, you too could have egg on your face!’

What a fantastic example of the egg we get on our face when we criticize, belittle, or put down the performance of another team member. Roger had obviously underestimated the task of beating this 5-year old. It was only after job sharing that he understood how tough the job could be. The strife and criticism between departments and disciplines that erodes teamwork inevitably shifts when there is a real understanding of the scope complexity challenge of doing the other departments’ job. ###

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