

Turbo Leadership Systems

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

Issue 878

Beep . . . Beep of the Heartbeat

January 11, 2022



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TURBO
LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS

Closely Monitored



Monday, December 13 at 5:50: after Donna Lee's double by-pass, open heart surgery Zack, her attending nurse, called to tell me they had taken the ventilator out of Donna Lee's mouth. He said I could come over to see her now. I rushed around and got over to the ICU quickly. Donna Lee was lying on the bed, unconscious, eyes closed, puffy face, labored breathing, pumps on her legs, tubes and wires on her hands, neck, and torso.

Red liquid was coming out of the clear plastic tubes from her abdomen. I asked, "What's that?" "Blood," he said casually. It was a tube from her abdomen to drain out excess and keep fluids from building up around her heart and lungs. Sounded pretty important. There were at least ten body functions being monitored, measured, and recorded on the various instruments in the room and back at the nurse's station. The most recognizable to me was the steady "beep . . . beep . . . beep" of her heart monitor.

I asked Zack one of my dumb questions, "Which monitor do you watch most closely?" He said, "Well, they're all important. Blood pressure is the most important for your wife right now." The next thing he said was music to my ears, "Since your wife has an extraordinarily strong heart, none of the other monitors have to be watched as closely."

I've asked this or a variation of this question to thousands of managers over the years. The answers I hear too often are subjective, "I just watch how people feel. *I can tell how things are going.*"



You can't watch everyone on your team do their job. Your span of control is too broad, and if you could or tried to, you'd be breathing down their necks. You'd be micromanaging them. So, how do you know what's going on if you're not watching them every minute of the day? You must have clearly defined performance objectives with appropriate, reliable monitors in place to tell you how things are actually going. Part of what you're doing with appropriate monitors is training your team members what to focus on and how to track of their performance.

You, and they must learn to measure performance not just by feelings, "*I think things are going fine, I feel like everything is alright.*" That's not good enough! You've got to have some accountable systems of measurement, some indicators, to tell you in real time how things are going. The better your monitoring, and measurement methods are, the freer you and your team will be to innovate, improvise, and improve performance at every level.

Innovating is how you gain and sustain competitive advantage.

How you gain and keep your competitive advantage.

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