

Turbo Leadership Systems™

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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Solving the Hole Problem



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**Maximize
Idea
Input
for
Best
Solutions**

Doug, a carpenter general foreman for a leading general contractor in the Pacific NW, told the Leadership Development Lab (LDL),

"It was Monday morning and I had just gotten back from a quick trip to Salt Lake City—sort of a mini vacation. One of the jobs completed while I was gone was at the Shell Refinery. On Saturday, they had dug out a big hole, 14' x 14' x 13' deep, and put in what we call a shoring box to hold back the dirt so we could work in the bottom of this deep hole. As I inspected the hole and looked at the survey marks, something just didn't look right. I called for the carpenter foreman to come over and help me figure it out. After about 20 minutes, we discovered the survey marks for the layout were off. I called the pipefitter general foreman and went over it with him. I called the survey company and learned that they had misread one of the numbers and, as a result, marked the box in the wrong place.

"We gathered together and talked over all possible solutions—a mini brainstorming session. All ideas were put on the table, and the best and simplest idea presented itself.

"The lesson I learned is the more ideas I get from everyone involved, the easier the solution seems to show up and then the problem doesn't seem so overwhelming.

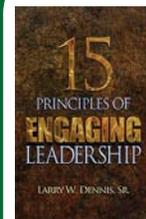
"The action I call you to take is to get as much help as needed and don't be afraid to ask for help. You don't have to solve all the problems by yourself. Someone out there has the best solution, and if you don't ask them, you might miss it.

"The benefit you will gain is your problem won't seem as big and you can relax and not be overly stressed out. People will look up to you and you

will set the example of "asking for help when needed."

As Doug learned, brainstorming is a great way to solve problems, even problems that are 13 feet deep. What problems are you facing? Get your team together and have your own brainstorming session. Start by putting your issue in the "can"—use the word "can" when you write your questions: "In what ways can we . . . ?" Encourage everyone to contribute ideas, and refrain from making any judgments during the brainstorming session. Be open to all ideas and write them down (on a flip chart, for example). After your team has generated all possible solutions, look at options in light of resources (time, talent, capital, etc.) to determine the best possible solution—the one that will work best now. This can be accomplished through consensus or a majority-vote. You will be surprised at the open, productive communication that results.

Brainstorming is also an important part of innovation: When we conduct Turbo's Leadership Team Advance, we ask executive teams this question: "What, today, is impossible to do and, if you could do it, would revolutionize your business?" Try this question with your team!



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