

Turbo Leadership Systems

The **TURBO** Charger

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To our clients and friends

Issue 742

*Let It Be *Their* Idea

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**Engaging Leaders
listen, don't
interrupt and lead
conversations.**

Cultivating comfortable conclusions

Zach, Project Manager for a full-service mechanical and plumbing contractor in Wilsonville, OR, told Session 6B of Turbo Leadership Systems' Leadership Development Lab:

In the winter of 2018, I was working on a Washington County Public Service Center project. The general contractor hired a new superintendent. I had had a previous experience working with him on another project. He had a 'my way or the highway' demeanor. Our relationship was fractured. He simply rubbed me the wrong way. Whenever he called, it was always an emergency - 'I need a plumber,' before he was finished talking I would interrupt him and tell him he didn't need a plumber! I was good at breaking Leadership Principle #12 - Avoid Dogmatic Declarations. Arguments would ensue that usually ended with him still wanting a plumber, but me not giving him one. Even though I was right, it was a stressful and difficult way of getting what I wanted.



He called me a couple of weeks ago with the same old emergency drill, 'I need a plumber and I need a plumber now!' Instead of interrupting him, like I used to, arguing (Leadership Principle #13 - Avoid Arguments) and telling him he didn't need a plumber and wasn't going to get a plumber, I waited for him to finish before I said a word.



I employed Leadership Principle #6 - Be an active listener. I knew I needed to take these actions because things between us had gotten so contentious, that I had stopped answering his phone calls. Instead of interrupting him, I let him finish his reasoning and then asked questions like 'are the walls framed-in?' or 'are the counter tops set?' Then he would answer my questions and come to the conclusion on his own that he didn't need a plumber quite yet. With my newly developed ability to lead these conversations, I no longer ignore his

phone calls and our relationship is now one of mutual respect.

"The lesson I learned from this experience is the importance of listening to what people have to say before giving my input. No one likes being told they are wrong, especially if they haven't finished talking; haven't finished their story.



"The action I call you to take is don't interrupt others, especially when they think it is an emergency or they're complaining. Instead, just listen. Let them talk it out. Then ask a few carefully crafted, non-accusatory questions and let them talk some more.

"The benefit you will gain is less stress. Leadership Principle #8 - Let It Be Their Idea will kick in. They will solve their problems and this will improve your relationships."

(* Leadership Principle #8 - Let It Be Their Idea)



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