

Turbo Leadership Systems

The **TURBO** Charger

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LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

Issue 908

How Was Your Weekend?

January 17, 2023



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*Don't ask
questions just
so you can
talk.*

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available for private,
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development programs.*

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LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS

Complain, complain, complain

Kevin, Engineering Manager at Silver Eagle Manufacturing, a company developing innovative transportation accessory equipment based in Portland, told Session 6B of the Leadership Development Lab:

"When we were given the Pearl assignment, I knew who I had to choose. I chose Dave H. Dave is my designer, drafter, estimator, do-all-er. The situation used to be that I did a lot of complaining to Dave, not about him, just in general. Dave's desk is just outside my office, so he's the first person I see when I leave my office. That made him easy to complain to about projects not going well, or if I'd gotten a bad email.



"As I became more aware of, and began paying attention to my habit of complaining, I started to notice that the more I complained, the more Dave complained. I have also been guilty of not being a good listener to Dave. Our relationship wasn't great, we don't have any issues, but we don't connect as well as we should. I would ask him about his weekends, and I would look for ways to relate to his stories and, without being aware of it, butt in. This would cause Dave to shut down and not finish his story. I could tell this caused some tension.



The action I took was to begin to actively listen (Leadership Principle #6 - Be An Active Listener) and to let Dave talk, to let him finish his story. I also stopped the 3C's (Leadership Principle #3 Don't Criticize, Condemn, or Complain) to Dave, and everyone else.

"Now as I pass Dave's desk, I only comment on the good things that are happening at our company. I have begun complimenting Dave on his work and complimenting others around our office. Now that I've made this change, I've noticed Dave seems much happier and regularly compliments others. As for the listening, when I ask him about his weekend, I just listen and only chime in when he asks about mine. I know all about his four kids that he sent off to college in the last few months.

Dave is much more willing to talk about work projects. I feel his creativity has improved since I've made these changes. This has resulted in some fresh, new ideas to make each of our projects a little easier.

"The lesson I've learned from this experience is how important it is for me to stop complaining and showing genuine interest by just listening.

"The action I want you to take is to set a positive example, stop the 3Cs and start listening, really listening.

"The benefit you will gain is a team that will work better together and be happy doing it."



*"The measure of mental health is
the disposition to find good everywhere."
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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