



Unleashing Heart-Centered Leadership by Vaughn Samuels

If asked for your title, you could easily give a quick answer. If asked for your job description, you could quote from a handbook. But if asked to define the legacy you are creating, could you provide a solid answer? The subject may have entered your mind before but can you recall it with clarity? If not, then how realistic is it to believe that your legacy will be determined by anything deeper than the contents of your inbox?

In understanding our legacies, “more than the sum of its parts” could not be more applicable. There will always be phones to be answered, reports to be finished, and quotas to be satisfied. However, when you look back at the leader that had the greatest impact in your own career, do any of these legitimate pursuits etch a mark into your memory? More often than not, the feedback received from a leader’s heritage is that someone “took time to listen”, or “lived what they asked of me”, or “saw me for who I was capable of becoming, not who I currently was”. Beyond the business goals that we must accomplish to be successful, the remnant of your life’s work will be measured by what you did to transcend the superficial and to restore the humanity that gets otherwise lost in the whirlwind of the daily grind. Consider first the insightful approach of self-examination; be sure that the values you embrace inwardly are being reflected outwardly in your everyday actions with the people that surround you.

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Heart-centered leadership is not a directive to be soft on your staff, or to avoid holding them accountable for results. It is instead a perspective of searching for the truth in all things and doing what is ultimately right, rather than just what appears in the flash of the moment. Heart-centered leaders use lessons from the past to guide choices in the present, and catapult careers to their utmost potential. They are aware that what is done today will resound beyond tomorrow, and their decisions are mindful of this cause and effect. In so doing, they shape the future of their associates as well as their own, building in the process, their legacy as a leader.

The essence of HCL is this: The driving force behind workplace behavior is that people have value and they want you as their leader to see that value within them. Therefore when you are communicating with your staff, look for the true meaning underneath the words they are using. Listen in order to understand, rather than stalling in a point of judgment. Nurture and develop the best in your people, and you will bring out the best in your business.