

Dale Carnegie Study Uncovers Four Leadership Blind Spots

Overall Job Satisfaction More than Doubles when Leaders Exhibit these Key Behaviours

It's become accepted wisdom that long-term, sustainable profit and growth are derived from customer loyalty, loyalty comes from positive customer experiences, and those experiences are created consistently only by engaged employees.

Success though, is ultimately driven by exceptional leadership, where leaders appreciate the importance of each individual employee, putting in place systems and creating a culture that delivers a positive employee experience.

That makes it particularly disturbing when recent studies continue to suggest that leaders' performance in many organisations still has a long way to go:

- Only 13% strongly agree the leadership of the company communicates effectively with the rest of the organisation (Gallup, 2017)
- Just 15% of employees strongly agree the leadership in their company makes them enthusiastic about the future (Gallup, 2017)
- Only 23% say that their leaders, overall, are effective (Ketchum Leadership Communication Monitor, 2016).

A Dale Carnegie survey of over 3,300 full time employees from a cross section of industries, company size and positions from 14 countries identified key four leadership characteristics that motivate and inspire people:

Blind Spot #1: Showing Appreciation

Leaders understand the importance of human capital and most undoubtedly feel they appreciate their employees. Yet fewer than half of the employees in the study said their own supervisor makes them feel sincerely appreciated most or all of the time. Often it is the frequency of praise or not being sincere where most leaders fall short.

Blind Spot #2: Admitting When Wrong

A willingness to "admit when they are wrong" was the leadership behaviour that generated the largest disparity between its importance and supervisors' performance. While 81% of respondents said it was important to their motivation to give their best, only 41% said their supervisors could be trusted to do so consistently – a gap of 40%.

Blind Spot #3: Truly Listening

Asking isn't the same as listening, and employees know the difference. Just 49% of respondents said they could confidently expect that when they spoke with their leader, they'd truly listen most or all of the time. Actively listening is critical, and part of that is showing respect for what the other person has to say.

Blind Spot #4: Honesty With Self And Others

No one wants to think of themselves as dishonest, and yet 17% stated that their own supervisor is rarely or never honest and trustworthy with others. While the veracity of this belief may be called into question, it's the perceptions employees have that leaders must contend with in order to effectively lead. Additionally, 16% of respondents said their supervisor is rarely or never internally reliable, meaning these employees view their leader as behaving in ways that are inconsistent with their leader's own principles and core beliefs.

Why does this matter?

Data suggests that the return on investment on efforts directed towards these areas is significant. Research has shown that a high level of job satisfaction is both correlated with, and likely necessary for, a high level of employee engagement. Globally about 17% of respondents reported being very satisfied in their job, but for those with supervisors who frequently exhibit these important leadership behaviours, the number of employees who report being highly satisfied more than doubles to 36%.

What can leaders do about these blind spot areas?

Jordan Wang, Managing Director of Dale Carnegie NSW, says that "simply having an awareness of these blind spots may help all of us better see the gap between our actual behaviour and our desired behaviour, when it comes to getting the best from those who look to us for leadership".

He continues, "Leaders who choose to actively work to identify blind spots in these four areas and learn to overcome them on a personal level have considerable potential to impact the employee experience of those who report to them and interact with them".

When it comes to evaluating the impact of our own behavior, the Dale Carnegie research encourages leaders to keep these tips in mind:

1. Assume that we are not objective when assessing our own capabilities. Utilise 360-degree feedback tools.
2. Learn adaptive techniques that help approach and accept feedback constructively.
3. Appreciate the intent. Getting feedback that reveals blind spots can be uncomfortable, remember that the constructive feedback intent is to help.
4. Disrupt your routines. It is easy to become blind to things around us when we become set in our own ways and routines.
5. Simply take action. Become aware of and work to improve one's performance in these areas.

You can download the Dale Carnegie survey findings in our free 7-page White Paper:

Recognising Leadership Blind Spots and Discovering the Road to Motivating Your Employees

<https://www.dalecarnegie.com/en/resources/recognizing-leadership-blind-spots>

Join us to uncover leadership blind spots that may be impacting your own organisation at the Dale Carnegie Training workshop:

Uncovering Leadership Blind Spots and Discovering the Pathway to Motivating your Employees

Date and time: Tuesday 2nd April, 5:30pm

Place: Workbee, 54 Chandos Street, St Leonards

Tickets: \$49 RRP

Book early as this event is limited to only 30 participants

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/uncovering-leadership-blind-spots-discovering-the-pathway-to-motivating-your-employees-tickets-56384063251>

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