



Emerging Leaders Insights

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Four ways to be seen as a leader, even when you're not in charge

By Jill Geisler

In the past few years, I've worked with organizations as they identify and train emerging leaders. The goal is twofold: to let promising people know their contributions are valued and to increase their chances of success if they're promoted to management.

So, what does it take to be considered an emerging leader? What are these people doing that sets them apart, not just in the eyes of their bosses, but also their peers?

It's more than just being a workhorse or a "company person." It's really about influence; doing the kinds of things that cause people to feel better about the work when you're on the team, and to choose to follow you when you offer suggestions or direction.

You may not want to be a manager, and that's just fine.

But if you want to be a leader, a true person of influence, whether or not you're in charge, here are four actions that get you there:

Offer solutions – with skin in the game.

Workplaces contain plenty of people who can describe problems. In detail. To anyone who will listen. They're apt to include the words "somebody oughtta" in their complaints. Sadly, even though they may be right about the problems, their approach leaves them looking like whiners instead of winners.

By contrast, influential employees identify problems, take them to people in power, offer practical,

thoughtful solutions, note their own role in whatever mess needs mending, and offer to take part in the repair work they suggest. Telling your bosses that all's not well can be risky when done wrong, but rewarding when you prove yourself to be the "loyal opposition."

Think strategically – and keep learning.

If you're seen as operating from a small silo while ignoring the organization's big picture, you won't be taken seriously. There's nothing wrong with looking out for yourself or your team, but if you don't also recognize the organization's strategic goals, don't pay attention to the business climate, and don't align your ambitions with the company's, you're less likely to be seen as a leader.

At the same time, if you're not interested in learning new skills as your business evolves or keeping updated on industry developments, your colleagues won't count on you to do more than stagnate in the status quo while others lead change.

Share resources and information, but don't be a doormat.

Research by Wharton's Adam Grant says that "givers" – people who automatically look for ways to help others – tend to do well at work, unless they are so self-sacrificing that they're taken advantage of and fail to effectively manage their own time and workload. But when they get the balance right, they rock. Here's how he described it in an

interview with Fast Company about his book, "Give and Take":

Leaders with a "taker" mentality often see others as a threat and avoid sharing their knowledge and expertise. "Giver" leaders indulge none of these fears and choose to be extremely generous with their time, expertise, and helping others succeed.

Extensive research reveals that people who give their time and knowledge to help colleagues and subordinates this way end up earning more promotions and raises. And when givers put a group's interest ahead of themselves, they build much deeper relationships, and often become highly valued within their own organization.

Shift your emotional intelligence into high gear.

Influential employees are calm in the storm and resilient when things get tough. They read situations and people well, communicate with empathy and collaborate with ease. They don't generate needless conflict and respond constructively when conflict is inevitable. These are hallmarks of emotional intelligence, which research shows is not only key to leadership success, but can be upgraded, if you choose to work at it.

In my newsroom, I liked to say that my goal was to hire "grownups of any age" – low drama, low maintenance, but high on talent, integrity and responsibility. When that's your reputation, you become a person of influence, regardless of your title.

You simply lead from wherever you are.

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Industry updates

The banking industry is always changing, here are some brief updates for you:

- The CFPB recently extended by five years a temporary exception in its remittance rule that allows sending institutions to estimate fees charged by the receiving institution. Read more at http://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201408_cfpb_final-rule_intl-money-transfer-small-entity.pdf; and
- The Federal Reserve has proposed repealing Regulation AA, which includes the credit practices rule, as required by the Dodd-Frank Act. In conjunction with this proposal, the federal financial agencies issued guidance reminding bankers that the repeal of those rules does not mean the prohibited practices are now permissible. Read the guidelines at <http://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/press/bcreg/bcreg20140822a2.pdf>.

Introducing your social committee

In July, it was announced an Emerging Leaders social committee would be created. The purpose of the committee is to provide more opportunities for members to network, build relationships and have fun closer to home as it isn't always possible to attend events in Oklahoma City and Tulsa.

Similar to how the OBA board of directors is set up, each of the six groups in Oklahoma based on geography will be represented by three members on the committee. Your representatives are:

Group One:

- Andrea Head, Bank of the Wichitas in Snyder
- Trent Willis, Sooner State Bank in Tuttle

Group Two:

- Amy Anderson, F&M Bank in Crescent
- Laura Hayes, Central National Bank of Enid in Woodward
- Taylor Skouby, Bank of Kremlin in Kremlin

Group Four:

- Hayley Ladd, First Fidelity Bank in Moore
- Jerold Phillips, Citizens Bank & Trust Co. in Ardmore
- Randi Sue Sewell, FirstBank in Atoka

Group Five:

- Theresa Asbury, BKD in Oklahoma City
- Jesse Cowan, Valliance Bank in Oklahoma City
- Keegan Grooms, First Liberty Bank in Oklahoma City

Group Six:

- Elizabeth Berry, American Heritage Bank in Tulsa
- Austin Elsey, SpiritBank in Tulsa
- Peter McAdams, American Bank & Trust Co. in Tulsa

Due to a lack of applications submitted, there are still three positions to be filled for group three and one position to be filled for group one. Contact Kristin (kristin@oba.com) if you are interested in serving on the social committee.

Make sure to contact your representatives if there is something you'd like to see happen in your area.



Matt Clouse

When asked to share a favorite memory or humorous story, Matt Clouse, president at Valliance Bank in Norman, was able to quickly share his. Next time you see him, make sure to ask him about his experience with bait money as an intern.

There are many other reasons to get to know Matt considering his extensive community involvement with the

chamber, Urban League and Rotary Club.

Away from work, he enjoys hunting and golfing but his number one interest is his family: his wife Anne and there two daughters, Mackenzie, 6, and Marli, 3.

Each month in this section we'll highlight a member of Emerging Leaders. Would you like to be spotlighted? Do you know someone that should be spotlighted? Let us know at kristin@oba.com.

New survey reveals some network no-no's

By Katie Bascuas

Do you have trouble asking your contacts for a favor or keeping in touch with your network? These are just two of the common networking mistakes identified in a new survey. One career coach shares advice for combating these mistakes.

Networking can help make or break a career, or at least take it to the next level. But are you networking the right way?

A new survey from staffing services company OfficeTeam reveals some of the worst mistakes people make when trying to tap their networks. According to the surveyed senior managers, the worst misstep is not asking for help when you need it.

"People may not ask those in their networks for help because they're embarrassed or think they can succeed on their own," Robert Hosking, executive director of OfficeTeam, said in a statement. "But whether you're looking to land a new job or build your visibility, every connection counts."

Other mistakes noted by survey respondents included:

- not keeping in touch with contacts
- not thanking people for their help
- not providing help when others need it
- burning bridges with past employers

"We are socialized, many of us, to not want to ask other people for favors, and that's why it's important to have a strategy around networking," said Carol Vernon, a certified

executive coach and principal of Communication Matters. "If you have strategically built a network where you have been generous and authentic, you've shared information, you've looked for opportunities for other people, it's not quite as hard to ask for a favor."

Having a strategy is also important in avoiding other networking blunders, such as failing to keep in touch with your contacts.

"Staying in touch is a challenge for a lot of us," Vernon said. "We all are different people, and some of us might welcome the opportunity to connect for a coffee or connect after a conference session, but for other people, that may not be the best way of doing it. So when you create a strategy, you need to figure out what's going to be your best way to stay in contact with people."

That might be sharing your resources, such as a magazine article you read, and sending it via email, Twitter, or even in the mail. Your strategy may also involve a mix of communication methods—social media, phone calls, in-person communication, whatever works for you and your communication style and schedule, Vernon said.

"We live in a very busy world," she said. "So the reality is we can't do all of it, but we can create a strategy around what we can do."

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Emerging Leaders notes

- Save the date for the October luncheons. Oklahoma City will be on Oct. 15 and Tulsa will be on Oct. 21. Registrations will be available in the next few weeks; and
- Year one is wrapping up in October. Take a moment to send us feedback to use in planning for year two.

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