

I thought the approach Dick Nettel took in order to find out what his colleagues were experiencing was astounding. He actually spent time with people and listened to them. He also conveyed to the team that he was with the company because he wanted to be. People who want to be in a place and want to do their job will tend to resonate enthusiasm, excitement, confidence, and the spark the interest and curiosity of others. I also appreciated that he spent time every day with the team. Claire Owen demonstrated that she cared about the company, the team, and customers. She set standards and expectations that were expected to be upheld by each individual. Once expectations are established and goals have been set, it becomes clear to the team how they must conduct themselves, and how they must run a successful business. Recognition is important to everyone. People need to know they are being recognized for what they do. The weekly meetings, town hall meetings, and celebrating members of the team are all great and creative ideas to keep the ball rolling. Keeping the team informed is essential in keeping the team consistently focused on the same goals. From the five practices of exemplary leadership, I believe challenge the process is the foundation; without it, the team gets in a rut, which degrades the delivery of quality processes and customer service. The concept of model the way is also cardinal, if the leader doesn't walk the talk, the rest of the team won't either. Inspire a shared vision is key to effective enthusiastic teams that are striving to move forward. By allowing others to act, we enable them to do what they do best, which promotes feelings of empowerment. Leadership must encourage the heart. Everyone should definitely have heart in what they are doing in life, otherwise, the team is just going through the motions therefore becoming apathetic. Honesty is detrimental, it definitely adds credibility to all that we do and what we are trying to accomplish. One must be able to trust leaders that they are following.

The article, "Securing the Right to Learn", was insightful as well as appalling. Leadership, attitude, and fortitude are definitely lacking. Each and every person in our society should all be afforded an equal educational opportunity. I believe we lack the leadership in education because these people are being kept out of the loop. They are not being provided the tools they need to make informed decisions about their future. I believe, for most people, they pursue what they know. If they do not receive the basic information, they will not even have a clue that it exists. How are people able to move ahead when they don't even have the basics? I am just amazed that anyone in our society thinks this situation is acceptable, even for a minute.

I don't believe that placing people in prison cells and beating them down for the rest of their lives is the venue that is to be followed by our society. We should not be placing people in facilities and housing them because of mistakes or moments of poor choices. The justice system is definitely out of control as evidenced by the number of prisoners in the United States outnumbering other societies. I believe many people are in prison for reasons that education and leadership could alleviate. When I think of prisoners paying for crimes committed, I think of those who have murdered, raped, and embezzled. Prevention should outweigh punishment.

An excellent and brilliant concept is made in the chapter, "Search for Opportunities", in that, with the customer being the center of all that you do, a great company can be built. Once the team opens their minds and hearts to what is possible, anything and everything becomes possible. Once we listen to the customer, the person who is actually experiencing the service or the product, we as a leadership group, can see clearly what is needed and what has to be accomplished to move in a positive and forward direction. I absolutely agree with the statement that, "sometimes you just have to go against the grain and do what you think is right because you believe so strongly in a philosophy and a long-term way of doing business" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). How many times have we been there, done that. We know what needs to be done but fear of some kind shuts us down. We could have been bold and taken the risk. We end up living in a world of "I should've", instead of a world of innovation and progressive leadership. I believe strongly that the work of leaders is change. We must consistently strive to make things better, to innovate each other, to grow and improve what we have in the present, to make it a future worth looking to. I believe that leadership involves looking into the future for opportunities and challenges on a steady and progressive pace. With passion, encouragement, enthusiasm, determination and the desire to make something happen, we as a leadership group, will not only move mountains but build them. My favorite excerpt from this chapter is, "It's about living life on purpose" (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). I believe this is the spirit behind all of us and the key to effective leadership; clarifying values, setting the example, and envisioning the future. This is a powerful and transforming statement. This is exactly what it is all about. It is the foundation of what keeps all of us supporting and motivating each other to keep moving forward (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

So many people spend their time and money at casinos. I often wonder what reasoning was behind it all. I believe it is much like leadership in the aspect that you must experiment with the games and take a risk in order to win. Most of the time you won't be a winner, but when you do hit the jackpot, what a rush! There is a sense of empowerment to go do it all over again. Leadership feels much like gambling. We have to experiment and take risks. We will learn from our triumphs, encounter wins and be empowered to keep moving forward because we can envision what the future holds for us as we strive for excellence. As leaders we must look at challenges, not problems. Collectively, we must break old mind-sets and place a positive spin on every aspect to continue to motivate and empower ourselves and colleagues. The focus must be concentrated on the team and close attention paid to each individual so that the team operates as one entity. All members must feel significant and valued in order to support one another in fostering change (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

In the paper, "Leadership Enhancement and the Role of the Community", written by Federico J. Rodriquez, Ph.D., an excellent observation and valid point is made, in that by including the entire soldiers world of people, we as a community will assist in the development of the individual which will contribute to the soldier's future and in the future of our society. Beginning with basic core competencies the individual gradually becomes confident in personal growth and strives to reach their potential. By approaching education in a holistic manner which includes family, civilians, fellow soldiers whether active duty or retired mentors, and the educational community, we as a people will develop and empower positive and effective leadership. Support and a solid belief system will continuously motivate the individual to keep moving forward. This not only benefits the individual, it benefits others, in that the individual is encouraged and commissioned to do the same for future generations of leaders. I agree that we must support these future leaders in every aspect of their lives in order to present opportunities that are approachable and obtainable (Rodriquez, 2003).

#### References

Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2007). *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rodriquez, P. F. (2003). *Leadership Enhancement and the Role of the Community*. Ft. Riley.