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Leadership: Principle 1 – Tell the Truth

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In Work as in Life, I Live by Four Simple Principles.

These principles keep me on course and facilitate every business and social interaction I have. They free me to be creative and productive. They enable me to see and take advantage of opportunities. They are the first thing I share with my management team in every company I manage and form the basis of our working relationship. When the team follows these practical principles, the flow of communication is smooth; productivity and morale are high.

These four simple principles are the most powerful, readily adoptable tool I've used in my career and in my life. I want to share them with you over the course of the next month. Check back every Friday to learn more about each guiding principle.

1. Tell the Truth All the Time

It's less confusing. You don't have to remember what you said and to whom. And you won't trip over conflicting remarks. This one is very basic and also very hard to do at times. Oftentimes, we say what we think others want to hear to keep them happy. When the truth comes out later, everyone is unhappy. More importantly, there is less time to fix whatever you were afraid to say in the first place.

Telling the truth all the time keeps your mind clear of the clutter and reduces the stress of having to remember the various versions of the "truth." Whatever problem you're trying to avoid will be resolved much sooner if you tell the truth and deal with it immediately. Letting the skeletons multiply in the closet only makes things worse.

The reach of technology today means that sooner or later, whether it is deleted computer files or missed financial payments, the truth will come out. Deal with the issue when it appears and you'll not only sleep better, but you'll learn more quickly and ensure that you keep moving forward.

Marilyn Tam, Guest Blogger View more posts by SCORE's Guest Bloggers

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