Article: The Culture of Disruption

A community college asked me to provide clarity and process to a sales organization in a local business. A program designer was also invited by the college to potentially build an internet solution for the prospect company. While meeting with the executive team this young man was sporting a wireless earpiece for his phone that was blinking away in his ear. Although I had never met him before, I decided that the kind thing to do would be to speak to him after the meeting to make him aware that his decision to keep the phone in his ear was a distraction and that he might have been perceived as disrespectful to the prospective client. Weeks later while working with this company I overheard a negative reference to this person. Evidently he had become a company joke! His part of the project was rejected. Could it be that he created his own reality?

A coaching client shared with me his concern over his family not respecting him. In one of our coaching sessions I asked: When you're at home, are you *really* home? His answer was no. Both he and his family knew that even though he was not physically at work; he was still working on the business. He then admitted that his family no doubt felt that they were not as important to him as his business was. We began working on creating greater awareness of what he truly valued and then changing his behavior to try to save his marriage.

A Culture of Disruption is Self-Defeating

In movie theaters and live performances, people are tweeting, texting and allowing their phones and other devices to distract them and cause a disruption for the patrons. Just because we have the technology and ability to be constantly connected, doesn't mean we always have to be plugged in. A client of mine shared with me his disbelief and frustration that while on a sales call in Europe he witnessed the distributor he was with, answer his phone while a customer meeting was in progress. The effect was that the conversation was thrown off track.

What's wrong with a person coming into an ongoing meeting to ask a question or share an unrelated story? To answer that question, let's personalize this by having you ask yourselves the following questions: Is what I have to say so important that others should stop what they are doing and listen to me? When was the last time that what I had to say was so urgent, that unless my question was answered or issue was addressed or idea was heard, that the company would close its doors?

Practice does **not** make perfect. The reality is that sometimes we are practicing the wrong things. As an example, when a person is receiving their performance review and their manager is trying to coach and help this person the last thing they need is for someone to come into the room and disrupt the flow of the conversation. What if the person was upset? How embarrassing that would be.

Does the culture of disruption and distraction exist in your company? If it does you may have observed that this practice has had more negative outcomes than positive and is therefore self-defeating. As it turns out, our lack of respect for others diminishes our endorsement in their eyes. Do you really want someone to think that *you* believe it's always about you?

Relationships are built upon a foundation of trust and respect. Both have to be earned and maintained. If you see someone in a meeting, be respectful and come back at a more convenient time. The next time you are in theater, or at home with your family do not let your behavior speak negatively about you.

Connection to Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

A high level of *empathy,* an *inter*personal component of EQ, should enable a person to understand that that what they say and do may cause people to become distracted and become a catalyst for frustration. *Social Skills* also come into play contributing to the building up or deterioration of relationships.

About Jason Kleid: Jason is focused on optimizing performance and getting results. Underscoring this philosophy is a belief that it is always the individuals in any organization, where the greatest potential for improvement and possibility of change resides. It is the mind or one's thinking where new ideas broaden understanding and cause things to happen. However, it is the heart, the inner person, where transformation occurs.