Why Effective and Influential Leaders Focus on Direct Communication

Opinions expressed by *Entrepreneur* contributors are their own.

With a vast amount of productivity tutorials, gurus and tactics, many businesses are constantly looking to be more effective by optimizing their internal processes. It is widely known that for a company to run more smoothly and effectively, there needs to be a continuous adaption of flexibility, speed and cooperation. Another thing that should be an area of focus is the removal of friction. If you look at all the leading startups, brands and their products, you can see that the more friction they remove, the better their product or service becomes, and the more it is adopted by the market at scale.

Removing friction does not only happen in SaaS products or on the customer service side. It also happens with the company's leadership and employees. In this article, I will share several ideas that I think people should pay attention to, even if they sound weird or unconventional at first.

Related: The Top Overlooked Communication Skill of Great Leaders

How to utilize secretaries and assistants the right way

We have all seen and encountered one of the most resonated "status symbols" of businesspeople: the secretary. How many times have you heard the following phrases?

- “Let me get my secretary on that.”
- “You can schedule a call with me directly with my assistant.”
- “Please email my assistants, and they will take care of that.”
- “I am super busy. Please check with my assistant.”

I bet you have heard these phrases many, many times. I want to share with you my personal opinion on this. Listen, I work with many leading entrepreneurs and investors, and the thing that stands out when I analyze the super effective ones is that they never use these sentences. They never remove themselves from the conversation. They might have assistants who help them with certain things, but that usually happens behind the scenes. Effective leaders are usually exceptional communicators, and they know how important every moment of interaction is.

Let me give you some examples. One of my dear friends is tech influencer Hillel Fuld; when people talk about him, they often mention his incredible productivity and time management skills. They do not understand how he is able to meet up with so many people and respond so quickly to messages and emails, all while making sure to use the “Inbox Zero” approach. People might think he has an array of assistants following him around. But no. He does every single moment of communication by himself, and he loves it that way. He knows that it gives him an edge.

Another example is Salesforce‘s CEO, Marc Benioff. If you read articles about him, you understand that this man is a communication machine. Journalists constantly admire his fast replies to inquiries, as well as the constant availability of direct communication with him. This has led him to become one of the most dominant business thought leaders.

The mistake that a lot of entrepreneurs make is that they decide to hand over direct communication to their assistants. They are so worried about time management that they forget to think about the other side – the other person who is interacting with them. By letting their assistant take over the conversation, they might be more efficient with time, but they forget that in business, being *effective* and *influential* is much more important than being *efficient*.

Related: Become a Better Leader by Improving Your Communication Skills

The demo, the salesman, and the one who wants a solution

Some companies try to automate their demo process. Instead of attaching a specific salesman to every inbound demo request, they try to automate and streamline the process by sending over a 30-minute demo video and three or four jargon-filled PDFs to the prospect. Sorry, but this is ridiculous.

Think about it, these companies spend so much money on marketing, and when they start getting leads (you know, actual people who are interested in their product), they decide to just hand it over to an automated process? How do they think the prospect feels? What supplier do you think he will choose? The one who attached a "bulldog-like" salesman, or the one who has sent out a 30-minute recording? Optimizing a company's time management is very important, but it should never come at the cost of the buyer's experience. Once again, being *effective* is more important than being *efficient*.

Related: 4 Simple Ways to Communicate Better With Your Customers

In this article, I gave two examples of ways to remove friction in your business. Obviously, there is so much more to

be said about the topic. But I believe you have absorbed the essentials. In order to be able to remove friction, you need to think about it in an unconventional way. A lot of times, people think that they remove friction by automating. While that is true in a lot of cases, there are points of contact that do not need to be automated. Always strive for effectiveness. Strive to see what actually moves the needle of your business onward and upwards. Focus on the customer, provide them with a continuously optimized experience, and they will become raving fans.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/429163