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The "Different Perspectives" Newsletter

It can be fun to step back and look at the world from a different angle. Here, we step back and look at commonly used words in business and life, ask a provocative question, and see what others are doing differently by applying a different lens on life. I hope you enjoy "Different Perspectives" and that you begin to step back when needed and observing what else is possible.

Special Note - For the next three newsletters, I want to dig into some words that I have always reflected on when it comes to hiring staff. In Patrick Lencioni's book, ["The Ideal Team Player"](#), he states that when building Ideal Teams, you want team members who are Humble, Hungry, and Smart. We will dig into these words in the next three newsletters.

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Word Choices

Humble /huhm-buhl/, adj, verb. Def - Not proud or arrogant, courteously respectful. To lower in condition, importance, dignity. To make meek.

What an interesting word...Humble. By looking at the definitions from Dictionary.com, Humble, or being Humble, can have a wide range of interpretations and definitions. Some reasonable, some negative. Your mom may have told you to "be humble, don't brag. No one likes a bragger!" My mom sure did. Think how that can affect someone's future or mindset around value?

If we look at one extreme interpretation of someone who is humble, you might think of someone so "humble" that they are like the last definition - meek, quiet, or they feel that they are in a lower condition of importance. That person might be quiet and won't volunteer much and if that person is surrounded by extroverts, they may quietly quit

because they feel overwhelmed. On the other hand, if we go to the other extreme of being humble, such as lacking humility, that type of personality might come across as egotistical, a "know-it-all", and may not have any filters. Certainly, neither of these types would be an ideal team player.

I think the right balance of being humble is where someone knows what they know and knows what they don't know and is not afraid to admit that or seek growth opportunities. They are confident but not arrogant. They are willing to admit mistakes. They might take the lead on somethings when they are confident in what they know and can do. They would take praise when it is deserved and award it to someone who deserves it if it was placed on the wrong person. Mistakes wouldn't rattle them, nor break down their confidence. They might see it as a opportunity, not a failure. This was always an Ideal Team Player to me. A growth-mindset.

Question of the Week

1. What does being Humble mean to you?
 2. How important is being Humble in your workplace?
 3. What does being Humble look like at your workplace?
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Lessons from the Camino

I can certainly relate to the definition of "knowing what you know and what you don't know" because this really hit me hard in Spain while on the Camino de Santiago. I am certainly not fluent in Spanish. I would call my ability to speak Spanish functional at best. When you are confronted with a local who only speaks Spanish and there is no one around to help, you quickly have to figure out how to communicate. I had to be humble. I had to ask them to speak slowly. I had to be comfortable to ask them to repeat what they said. I had to feel comfortable to use a Google translate or similar app or device. I had to say, "I'm sorry. I don't understand." That was certainly uncomfortable to say the least.

The funny (sort of) thing about humility in this scenario could be observed when a pilgrim had minimal humility encountered the same scene where there was a language barrier. These (American) pilgrims were the ones that insisted that the local Spaniard speak in English and got frustrated when they didn't or couldn't. They talked louder in

English, thinking that the person would understand that better than the same sentence just uttered in a normal tone of voice. They would grow frustrated and be very difficult to deal with at the lack of communication. They were the typical "American tourist." You know what I am talking about.

The Interview Process and Being Humble

This is something new that I am adding to the newsletter. My focus for this section, which will appear in the next few newsletters, is to offer experiences, advice, or thoughts on how to show up in an interview or how to conduct an interview to reveal the potential level of humbleness in someone. These are based on experience and not on research or science. Take this for what it is worth, which may be something or it might be nothing.

When interviewing candidates, I have seen candidates try to be confident and answer a question that I could tell they didn't know the answer for. They often droned on and on with an answer and often entered into circular responses that repeated their point. They stumbled on words. They fidgeted. I could tell they didn't know the answer and were not humble enough to say, "I don't know the answer to that question, but here is how I would respond to this scenario." Or, if they practiced humility, they might ask more clarifying questions to find a good answer in their head to communicate with me. For the candidates, I perceived the "I don't know" as an honest answer, one that showed humility and the response of "here is what I would do in that scenario" reveals some critical thinking, ability to assess the situation and respond appropriately, and some thoughtfulness.

For interviewers, some questions I loved to ask were, "If we were to be sitting down here on your 1-year anniversary and you were to tell me you were leaving, what would be the reason you would share for your imminent departure?" This question revealed a lot to me - what is important to them, what do they focus on, what would help them grow, and how much honesty do they have. The flip side of the question I followed up on was "If we were sitting here 1 year from now and you were excelling at what you were doing, what would I be saying to you about your performance?" This question forces them to think about what they think they need to do in their role to do a good job and also what they could foresee themselves doing to grow into the company."

Take the thoughts for what they are worth and craft some interview questions for yourself if you are interviewing people and assessing them for their level of

humbleness. If you are going into an interview, think about how you will answer a question if you have no experience with the question, or how you would answer a questions that you don't know the answer to. Just food for thought.



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