



Dear Friend,

Welcome to *EA Insights*, the monthly newsletter of Executive Advantage, LLC. In each edition, you will find brief articles showcasing best practices in leadership, management, process improvement, professional and personal growth, and other areas critical to your success and that of your organization. Thank you for your readership.

Enjoy your newsletter!

Sincerely,
June Melvin Mickens
Executive Advantage, LLC

The 12 Qualities of True Business Professionals

Professionalism is a word embraced by many, but in all honesty demonstrated by far fewer individuals. Its Latin origins come from the word *profess* which means, "to avow before." So the question is who are these individuals that believe themselves to be true professionals avowing before? Possibly the answer may be found within the word *professional*.



1. **P = Positively proactive.** Professionals demonstrate behaviors that are positive and proactive instead of negative and reactive.
2. **R = Respect.** Through the ethic and value of respect, professionals are known and trusted within and without their respective organizations.
3. **O = Opportunities to help others.** Those who avow before understand they have a responsibility to help others, whether it is to help them grow self-leadership skills or provide some expert advice.
4. **F = Follow-up.** No one likes to wait for un-returned phone calls or emails. Professionals make it a habit to follow up on everything and accept responsibility when they fail to engage in that behavior.
5. **E = Empathy.** Professionals know how to be empathetic. This characteristic is a one of the signs of high emotional intelligence and a predictor for leadership success.
6. **S = Self-confident.** When individuals are self confident, they do not have to put others down at their own expense. These individuals have a high sense of balanced self-esteem and role awareness.
7. **S = Sustainable.** Professionals are truly sustainable in that they can continue forward when times become difficult. Their ethics and beliefs keep them focused.
8. **I = Integrity.** Integrity is putting your values into action; doing the right thing when no one else is looking, without a focus on personal gain or benefit; and accepting a potential personal cost.
9. **O = Optimize all interactions.** This is critical because professionals do not negate the value of people. They look to see how one interaction can benefit someone else, even before looking for benefit himself or herself.
10. **N = Nimble.** Being flexible and open to change allows these individuals to be quick on their feet and nimble to the opportunities that they encounter on a daily basis.
11. **A = Awareness.** Having a high level of awareness of themselves, the marketplace, the community, and even the world helps these individuals continually stay on top of things.
12. **L = Leadership.** Last, but not least, professionals demonstrate exceptional leadership skills and even more importantly self-leadership skill. For, if you cannot lead yourself, you cannot lead others.

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Quotes

"Time is free, but it's priceless. You can't own it, but you can use it. You can't keep it, but you can spend it. Once you've lost it, you can never get it back."
~ Harvey Mackey

"Winning isn't everything, but wanting to win is."
~ Vincent Thomas
""Vince"" Lombardi

"Success consists of going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm."
~ Winston Churchill



Roadblocks to Success

Here are some career mind-barriers found especially among new entrants to the workforce, from **News from Kaplan**, a fact sheet published by Simon & Schuster.

Waiting to be discovered. Instead of making contacts, such people think they will be magically rewarded with fame and riches.

Leadership Coaching Tip: Take a few moments to revisit this list and determine if there are any areas to be further developed. Remember the origin of the word *professional* -- to avow before. Are your actions in alignment with your beliefs?

Adapted with permission. Author: Leanne Hoagland-Smith, Advanced Systems

Addressing 'Un-engaged' Employees

In spite of current economic conditions, there are still employees in the workforce these days that are not "actively engaged" at the company. In other words, they don't display passion or enthusiasm about their jobs, and as a result, their production (as well as their overall contribution to the company) suffers. At times like these, the last thing that companies need is lost productivity.



While some companies may have already laid off many of their under-performing or "un-engaged" employees, some might remain. This could be for a number of different reasons, and perhaps a combination thereof. Some of these reasons are listed below:

The employee was highly productive in the past.

The employee was responsible for the creation of a product and/or service that brought the company considerable revenue.

The employee has been with the company for a long time.

The employee is on a team integral to the creation of future revenue.

Regardless of the reason or reasons that the person is still with the company, his or her engagement (i.e., production) is important.

As a result, the fact that the employee is un-engaged is a reason for concern and should be addressed as soon as possible. After all, if the company is depending upon this individual for future success, he should be re-engaged in an expedient fashion.

The following are suggestions for doing just that, and they all involve sitting down with the employee and speaking with him on a one-on-one basis:

Inquire - Ask him if there's something he needs in order to do his job better, whether that's more efficiently or more effectively. Give him the benefit of the doubt; if he does indicate that there's something he needs, offer to provide it.

Advise - Suggest additional training to the employee, especially in those areas in which he appears to be lagging or those that would benefit the company the most.

Challenge - Spell out, in no uncertain terms, that the employee is being counted on, especially in these daunting times, to help the company not only survive, but also thrive.

The ultimate goal, of course, is to help the employee reach his previous high levels of performance and productivity. That's why communication is so vital to the entire process. Miscommunication is at the heart of many, if not most, problems in the workplace. Ensuring that no miscommunication exists is the first step toward "re-engaging" the employee.

The next step is the setting of clear expectations for the person. He must know what is expected of him, and he must express his understanding of these expectations to you. By taking the steps above, you're both communicating with the employee and setting clear expectations for future performance, increasing the chances that you'll be able to re-engage him and enhance his contributions to the company.

If you have any questions about this article, or about how we can help you with your current performance, leadership, strategic, or hiring needs, send an email to inquiries@execadvantagellc.com.

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Impostor belief. Some people feel they're not really qualified to do the kind of work their employers want them to do. They're afraid of being exposed as incompetent.

I shouldn't get paid for what I do. It's easy for me. This belief usually crops up among people who are talented and love their work.

Fear of failure. New workforce entrants often fear they won't be hired or will end up penniless.

Fear of success. Some people are afraid of doing well because they can't imagine being recognized as an expert in their fields. They may even think that fame and fortune will hurt them in some way. They may think that family and friends will like them better if they stay "small."

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Web Site of the Month



Indeed is a search engine for jobs - with a radically different approach to job search. In one simple search, Indeed gives job seekers free access to millions of employment opportunities from thousands of websites. Indeed.com includes all the job listings from major job boards, newspapers, associations, and company career pages.

Check it out at www.indeed.com

About Executive Advantage

At Executive Advantage, we are committed to providing results-based business and management consulting, leadership development, and coaching support. We partner with organizations and professionals to manage strategic change, innovation, process improvement and cost reduction, performance, cultural transitions, and goal achievement. We use proven processes, and we tailor our approach to meet the specific needs of each client.

To learn more about Executive Advantage, contact us at inquiries@execadvantagellc.com.