

Twenty ineffective (unrecognized) habits of successful leaders

The following are transactional communication patterns (flaws) that we humans often let become unnoticeable habits (to us) that create challenges and roadblocks in our interactions with others:

1. Promoting my value

- **Adding too much value:** The overwhelming desire to add our two cents to every discussion.
- **Claiming credit that we do not deserve:** The most annoying way to overestimate our contributions to any success.
- **Passing judgment:** The need to rate others and impose our standards on them.
- **Starting with “No,” “But,” or “However”:** The overuse of these negative qualifiers which secretly say to everyone, “I’m right, You’re wrong.”
- **Making destructive comments:** the needless sarcasms and cutting remarks that we think make us sound sharp and witty.

2. Overusing emotions

- **Speaking when angry:** Using emotional volatility as a management tool.
- **Negativity: “Let me explain why that won’t work”:** The need to share our negative thoughts even when we were not asked.
- **Clinging to the past:** The need to deflect blame away from ourselves and onto events and people from our past; a subset to blaming everyone else.
- **Making excuses:** The need to reposition our annoying behavior as a permanent fixture so people excuse us for it.
- **Playing favorites:** Failing to see that we are treating someone unfairly.

3. Empowering the Ego

- **An excessive need to be “me”:** Exalting our faults as virtues simply because they’re who we are.
- **Passing the buck:** The need to blame everyone but ourselves.
- **Refusing to express regret:** The inability to take responsibility for our actions, admit we’re wrong, or recognize how our actions affect others.
- **Winning too much:** the need to win at all costs and in all situations- when it matters, when it doesn’t, and when it’s totally beside the point.
- **Telling the world how smart you are:** The need to show people we’re smarter than they think we are.

4. Upholding Boundaries

- **Withholding information:** The refusal to share information with others to maintain an advantage over them.
- **Failing to give proper recognition:** The inability to praise and reward.
- **Not listening:** The most passive-aggressive form of disrespect for colleagues.
- **Failing to express gratitude:** The most basic form of bad manners.
- **Punishing the messenger:** The misguided need to attack the innocent who are usually only trying to help.

This list was adjusted from Marshall Goldsmith’s book “What got you here won’t get you there.” Pg 40