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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Could You Use More Commitment at Work?

By Darcy Eikenberg

Let's be honest. When we talk about needing to create more commitment at work, we're usually referring to gaining more commitment from **other people**. This request shows up all the time, in everyday ways like this:

- "I wish he'd show up to meetings on time."
- "If she'd only read her email, she'd be in the loop and stop complaining."
- "No one in my office ever says thank you, even when I kill myself to get the work done."
- "Why won't that group put aside their individual agendas and work like a team?"

In fact, in our companies today, we're using countless tools to increase commitment of others, including finding ways to use pay, benefits and recognition differently. But while we have more tools than ever to help us increase commitment (and elevate its doppelganger, engagement), let me ask you this:

IS COMMITMENT INCREASING IN YOUR COMPANY?

If your answer is no, you're not alone. I have a secret for you. You're looking in the wrong place. You're looking at everyone else.

The truth is that in order to increase commitment from others, you first have to increase it in yourself. Yes, I hear you. You're busy. You can't take on anything else. You're working as hard as you can.

But what if you could feel better at work, be less stressed, be more productive, and feel more like your work mattered? What commitments would you make to get those results? Here are four you can try right now, without any fancy training, tools, or taking loads of time.

THE COMMITMENT TO LISTEN

You're smart. You have great ideas. But are you talking more than you're listening?

Refresh your commitment to shut up, shut up, shut up. Create the space and respect to listen—and really hear—the other

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voices around you. People are more committed to people who actually hear them. Listen up.

THE COMMITMENT TO TEACH

You're smart. You have great ideas. How much of that are you *teaching*, versus *telling*?

Teaching means remembering to share the entire context of an issue, not just the solution steps. Too many times we think we've "taught" when we've told, "just do x, y and z." But if the students don't fully understand how you got there—the "why," your assumptions, your experiences and results, etc.—they'll never absorb the lesson on their own.

THE COMMITMENT TO BE PRESENT

You're smart. You have great ideas ... *blab blab ... oh, sorry, be back in a moment, just got a text. ...*

You've chosen to be where you are (yes, even the meeting that you think is a waste of time—that's a choice). So really be there. Don't waste your lifetime zoning through the moment or being distracted by the siren call of the tiny screen in your pocket. Be committed to be mentally and emotionally available, and you'll get more out of every situation you're in. And people will give that commitment back to you.

THE COMMITMENT TO CARE

Whether you've used it at work lately, I know you have a heart, Tin Man. Even if you're frustrated, discouraged, and have a foot out the door, **challenge yourself to find something or someone to give a darn about.**

Maybe it's a colleague, a client or a process that's broken. Maybe it's your local professional association, or community group. Maybe it's someone who just needs more of what you have to give.

If you want more commitment from others, try starting with the most important person in your work life. And that's you. ■



Darcy Eikenberg, PCC, is an executive coach and speaker on leadership and career success. She's the author of *Bring Your Superpowers to Work*, and regularly shares free tools at RedCapeRevolution.com. Reach her at Darcy@RedCapeRevolution.com.