

Food for Thought

November 2008

Mentoring from below

Food for Thought is our way of sharing interesting concepts on corporate leadership and management with others who might find it useful. The thoughts offered are intended to be controversial and thought provoking. They always follow our motto of helping develop logical leadership.

LogiStyle offered a scholarship at a recent Human Resources conference to promote innovative thinking in creating intentional corporate cultures. Credit for this month's topic goes to Toni Jaffe, the winner of that scholarship. We have taken liberty to elaborate on her basic idea, which is to promote mentoring from below. Toni suggests that in addition to the traditional practice of experienced stalwarts in a company mentoring the young upstarts, we should promote the idea of the vibrant and progressive new-generation mentoring the stuck-in-the-mud older generation. (Rest assured, Toni put it far more politely.)

For example, how many CEOs and senior level executives use modern technology beyond basic office automation, email, voice mail and possibly text messaging? Isn't there an opportunity for senior executives to establish direct interactions with their large staff through internal blogs? Do you see many of them use the pull technology of RSS feeds to stay up to date with their markets, customers and the like? Would they be familiar with modern forms of community interaction, as modeled by Flickr, Prosper, Pandora or others that might change the model of commerce in the future? And, if some of this does not mean much to you, Toni might well rest her case.

Toni suggests that senior executives should adopt a young upstart in their company as their technology mentor, while also returning the favor with significant business mentoring going the other way. Both parties could benefit from this unusual two-way mentoring from below. The purpose is not just to educate the executives on newer technologies. The partnership between a seasoned executive and a progressive upstart will give rise to business ideas that are poised for the future and yet shaped by the

experiences of the past.

Finally, taking the medicine we dispense, we have established a blog, <http://logistyle.blogspot.com> where you will find our Food for Thought ideas, allowing you an opportunity to continue the conversation. We encourage you to visit the blog and join in.

We have received many responses to our Food for Thought mailings, asking if you can freely share and forward these thoughts. Indeed you can. All we ask is that a clear attribution to LogiStyle and our contact information are included. For the interested reader, we have archived some of our recent Food for Thought mailings at our website, and can be viewed at [LogiStyle: Food for Thought Archive](#). As always, we welcome your comments. We hope your business is doing well. If we can be of any assistance please feel free to call – even, if just to chat.

Best Regards,

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