

10 Ways To Help Others That Will Lead You To Success

By: John Hall; May 26, 2013

Helping others should be a natural extension of every business leader's responsibilities. Unfortunately, it doesn't come as easy as you would think. As leaders, we often get too caught up in operations or our own problems to give people the help they need. However, in the last year, I've realized that most of my best clients, partners and relationships have come from me helping someone. Here are 10 thoughts that can remind you to help others.

1. Sharing knowledge

One of the easiest ways to help others is to simply share your knowledge. You don't have to be in front of a classroom to teach. Every day there is an opportunity to educate someone about your area of expertise. The key is to keep educating yourself so you can stay ahead of the curve.

2. Finding out what's valuable to them

The number one rule of helping people should be to find out what's actually valuable to someone. You may spend time and effort helping someone with something that they didn't even want help with. Make an effort to ask them where they need help, and keep that in mind when you see an opportunity.

3. Sharing your resources

Think about the resources you've invested in and be mindful of whether they can help someone else. Maybe a developer on your team has some extra time and one of your contacts needed some help on a quick job. Or, maybe you have Cardinals season tickets and there's a game that you won't be able to attend. Keep those under- or unused resources in the back of your mind and try to connect them to people who can use them.

4. Making them aware of an opportunity

It's important to keep an eye out for opportunities. It could be good press, a potential partner, or a general business opportunity. Once you see an opportunity, think about who could benefit from knowing about it. One of the ways I like to help my employees is to help their friends, relatives or significant others if they're looking for a job. A lot of times I can use my business connections to find a potential good fit.

5. Giving them transparent feedback

Transparent feedback can be tough because some people don't take constructive criticism well. There is a difference between telling someone that they suck and giving them good examples of how they can improve. Some people won't take it well but, in the long run, you will help the people that you want to work with and improve the efficiency and success of your company as well.

6. Being a brand advocate

I was at a conference the other day and an American Airlines employee was going on and on about how she loved her Modifly watch. She truly wanted to help the company because she loved the product and wanted to see them succeed. Think about the products and services that you love, and don't be shy about letting people know about them.

7. Giving introductions

There's a lot of big talk out there. Someone knows somebody who is a great contact or client, but they never actually make the introduction. Rather than making and breaking promises, make an effort to actually send out several intros each week. However, don't let your credibility take a hit: make sure the people you're advocating are legit.

8. Volunteering your time

Time is valuable and most people understand that. When you take time out of your day to help a friend, they remember it. I try and do a guest webinar every couple of weeks for contacts so they know I'm willing to take time out of my day to share my experience with the community. Even if it's not something as public as a webinar or podcast, set aside some time to help a contact. It could be as simple as helping them move to a new home.

9. Recognizing them

There are a variety of ways to give someone recognition. You can include them in an article that you've written or mention them in a speech or presentation. An easy way to recognize someone is to nominate them for an award. There are countless awards out there that could really help out your network. It will mean a lot to the nominee that you thought of them and wanted to recognize them. On a smaller scale, you can have internal recognition within your company. We have an award called "the belt" that looks like a WWF belt. Each week the current winner chooses the next winner. It's an easy way to make an employee feel good about the solid work they've done for your company.

10. Giving gifts

Gifts can be tricky because you don't want to "buy" peoples' favor. You want to get them a gift that makes sense and will help them. When Hurricane Sandy hit, we sent care packages with items that survivors could use as they recovered from the devastation. People tend to remember who helped them when they were in need, so it's important to make an extra effort during these times.

Helping others isn't always easy. It can sometimes derail your schedule and cost you time, money and other resources. It can even be interpreted the wrong way. However, keep these tips in mind for some easy ways to show your connections that they truly matter to you.

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