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a MESSAGE from SYLVIA

How Responsible Are YOU . . . Really?

Most (or all) of us see ourselves as highly responsible professionals. You probably do too. In a lot of ways, that may be accurate. Over the years, however, I've come to realize that every manager has at least a couple of "responsibility leaks". Because they're painful, the ego balks. But pretending they don't exist is just another leak. You must face your leaks before you can plug them.

Throughout my own lengthy career I encountered managers who repeatedly blamed mediocre or poor results on a "weak staff" and external circumstances. While occasionally factors outside their control played a role, these people chose to focus on everyone and everything besides themselves. They resisted



taking any responsibility for the letdowns and failures. Thus, nothing changed.

If you want better results at work, look at yourself first. It's likely that one of your personal responsibility leaks is either creating or feeding the problem. Responsibility, you know, is about reliability, accountability, and trust. Where are you falling short? My feature article below provides ten possible leaks for you to consider.

Sylvia

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FEATURE ARTICLE

10 Responsibility Leaks in Managers

Responsibility leaks are often subtle. They may not be obvious. They may not be big. But they matter, because they punch holes in your integrity, sabotage work flow and productivity, and corrupt relationships. They waste money, complicate existing problems, and fuel unacceptable situations and behaviors. They get in the way of immediate and long term success. They can even make you sick.

Take a look at the following list of ten ways YOU may be leaking responsibility right now: Which ones resonate most?

1. Opting for “easy” instead of “right”.

Clients frequently tell me that they don't want to rock a particular boat. That the status quo, while it's not serving, is less painful than upsetting the applecart. They fear potential negative repercussions: a vindictive Board member, a demotivated employee, a dissatisfied boss, a lost sale. Are you letting your fear justify your unwillingness to take the right action?

2. Choosing not to learn a new, necessary skill

Recently someone told me she's been terminated from multiple jobs

throughout her career because she doesn't deal well with conflict. When I asked her when she's going to create a different future, she said that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. What a show stopper! Her refusal to learn conflict resolution skills undoubtedly is going to cost her the next job too.

3. Ignoring bad behavior and/or poor job performance

You aren't being responsible when you let things slide: your star employee's anger problem, your customer service rep's rudeness, your team leader's failure to keep you in the loop. Turning your head and ignoring these issues makes them worse. You are being paid to confront them.

4. Fudging about time or whereabouts

It seems odd to see this leak in print, doesn't it? Today, we take this version of cheating for granted. We've made it almost acceptable to extend lunch breaks, run personal errands after client meetings, engage with personal social media between projects, and leave the office early for no legitimate reason. This is a leak that makes us squirm.

5. Spending funds on activities that don't support organizational goals

Do you find yourself approving the expenditure of company funds for your favorite employee's latest and greatest "cool" idea? It's fine if that idea supports the organization's mission and goals and everybody else is on board, but too often this isn't the case. Too often that otherwise worthy idea isn't aligned with the bigger picture, but we go along with it.

6. Giving praise that wasn't earned

I've had clients tell me that they've lavished undeserved praise on difficult employees to keep the peace, to uplift folks after they fall, to help themselves feel more secure in shaky relationships. If you're doing this, you are disingenuous. Praise has meaning only when it is given sincerely and authentically. You aren't serving people well by telling them they've done a great job when they didn't. You also weaken your professional image.

7. Keeping secrets to feel powerful

There is little that aggravates employees more than a manager who keeps important, relevant information close to the chest. Transparency is

key to establishing and nurturing high functioning, healthy relationships with your staff. It's also essential to facilitating work flow and ensuring timely, credible results. What are you withholding that could be shared, explained, and discussed?

8. Tolerating ongoing messy relationships

You may put up with complicated, troubled relationships because you fear confrontation. Perhaps you're afraid of confrontation because you associate it with nasty attack. The truth is that confrontation can be candidly conversational. It doesn't have to be ugly. Handled well, it shows you care enough about these relationships to take steps to repair and strengthen them.

9. Withholding your feelings about situations and circumstances

Expressing your feelings in reasonable ways is healthy for both you and the folks around you. A robotic demeanor isn't natural. Tell your employee who constantly interrupts that his habit annoys you and leads you to believe that he doesn't value others' opinions. Holding back not only fuels your frustration but also sends a message that interrupting is okay.

10. Compromising your health

Working with clients, I hear this one all the time. People tell me how, in essence, they gradually destroy their physical and emotional health by sleeping four hours a night, skipping meals, overdosing on caffeine, forfeiting play, and running sixteen hour days—every day. They confess that they do this to keep their jobs, qualify for promotions, or impress the boss. No matter what the demands, you have a responsibility to yourself. “Dying” for the job is a form of crazy behavior.

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What Clients Say

Sometimes it's easy for a manager to become complacent about making behavioral changes for a variety of reasons: past experiences, time constraints, and a reluctance to confront. Working with Sylvia over a period of months, I have been able to identify issues that I've let

languish as a result of these excuses. Sylvia's coaching has given me accountability to both myself and my organization to address head on concerns that I knew—and know—were/are negatively impacting morale as well as the company bottom line.

-- Jennifer Oswald, Vice President, Momentum, Inc.

Offers and Opportunities

15 Minutes With Sylvia

Email Sylvia directly at Sylvia@launchinglives.biz to claim your FREE 15 minute phone slot dedicated to plugging your individual responsibility leak. You must send this email no later than midnight EDT on September 13, 2013 in order to benefit from this special offer. Do it now! Plugging your leak can eliminate or minimize plaguing problems. Fifteen minutes on the phone with Sylvia can relieve stress and make a practical difference in your work world.

RESOURCES

PLUGS for RESPONSIBILITY LEAKS

Want to know how to plug up your personal responsibility leaks? [Click here](#) for some solid ideas to get you started.

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TIP

The Price of Responsibility Leaks

Identify your primary responsibility leak, then ask yourself the following questions:

- What is this particular leak costing me?

- What is this leak's impact upon my staff, colleagues, and boss?
- How is this leak interfering with work flow?
- How is this leak affecting my departmental/ organizational bottom line?

Once you are clear about the personal, relational, and business costs of your leak, identify one action you can take today to begin the process of plugging that leak.

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Where in the World is SYLVIA?

On September 10, 2013 Sylvia conducted a one hour free teleseminar entitled: "Career Disappointments: 7 Steps to Turning Them Around". Persons from across the country participated in this audio event. By the way, recordings are always made available. Be sure to register for future teleseminars even if you cannot be on a particular call the day it takes place.



Join Sylvia on these social networks!

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About This Ezine

This Ezine is 1) to provide readers with valuable FREE content which contributes to both personal and professional growth and 2) to invite them to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

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Launching Lives Ezine is dedicated, above all, to "building people ... building businesses." ©2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

About SYLVIA

Sylvia Hepler, Owner and President of Launching Lives, LLC, specializes in career development for both corporate and nonprofit executives and managers. Based in South Central PA, she specifically supports clients as they upgrade their current job performance, seek a promotion, or plan/navigate a career transition. What makes her services unique is that Sylvia helps people to cope with change, loss, and grief as they work on developing their careers. Her professional background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, nonprofit community health program start-up, program evaluation, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A certified executive coach through The Rescue Institute in Colorado and a participant in extensive continuing education opportunities with several executive coaches of national notoriety, Sylvia offers individual and group coaching, assessments, teleseminars, workshops, keynote speeches, and retreats. She has also created products that augment her coaching services. For more information contact:

[Launching Lives Website](#)

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Reach Sylvia by phone at 717-761-5457

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Launching Lives SERVICES

Launching Lives, LLC is a full service career development company for executives located in South Central PA. Utilizing a holistic approach to service provision, Launching Lives focuses on supporting clients as they create the platinum level career they desire by upgrading their job performance, seeking a promotion, or planning/navigating a career transition

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I

look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching is the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

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