

"Being a part of success is more important than being personally indispensable." »Pat Riley

Technically Fair



A clip this week of LeBron James hanging on the rim for 9 seconds (seriously) had me shaking my head.

It's nothing personal. I just have a pet peeve with different sets of rules for different people.

It also got me reflecting on a couple of soapbox topics of mine. Over the years, I have had the great opportunity of working with hundreds of bank managers at all levels of their org charts.

One of the things I continue to review and refine in my mind is the "elevator speech" I would give to new managers if I had just a few seconds to offer them advice.

These days, I've shaved it down to a roughly 2-second speech on sales and a 2-second speech on managing teams.

My 2-second sales speech remains, "Make a friend. Earn a customer." If you

A Plane Example of Kindness



I laughed with a fellow passenger this week that we might have witnessed an early Christmas miracle on our airplane.

Our evening flight from Chicago to Houston departed about 30 minutes late.

We then sat on the tarmac for another half-hour because that's what you do at O'Hare.

Packed in the cattle car section of a sold-out flight, the general mood in that metal tube was not festive.

Folks asked flight attendants questions about possibly missing their connecting flights, and the attendants politely lied to them about how their next flights would try to wait for them. (Okay, sure.)

After a rather turbulent flight, we landed almost an hour later than scheduled.

focus on the first part of the statement, you'll do most of what you need to create the second part of the statement.

Making friends isn't about focusing attention on you. It's about paying attention to others.

Making the effort to ask folks about themselves and then actually listening and responding to what they tell you is a path to new friends and new customers.

The 2-second management speech is "Work hard. Be fair."

I realize that's not the primary thing many new managers are thinking about.

They want to be motivating. They want to be respected.

Sure, the working hard part seems obvious. But, "being fair" doesn't sound quite as aspirational.

I suggest that a focus on modeling a strong work ethic and being fair with all who work with and for you is a foundation for achieving those loftier ambitions.

One of the best compliments I've ever heard given to a manager was from a waiter who told me that he respected my friend (his manager) because he was always fair. He never played favorites or had a different set of rules for some.

Yes, I could have given my elevator speeches twice during the time LeBron hanged on that rim without getting a technical foul.

Seriously, it was 9 seconds. Like...9 full seconds. (OK, I'm done.)

A long taxi to the gate ensued (of course), and people were anxious and waiting for that magic "ding" sound that signals you can begin your escape...uh...deplaning.

Right before the "ding", an attendant gave the obligatory speech they often give.

"There are some passengers with very close connecting flights. If any of you have time, we'd appreciate it if you stayed out of the aisles and allowed them to deplane first."

I've heard versions of that speech hundreds of times before in similar situations.

It never works. Seriously, nobody cares.

This time, however, the attendant paused before the "ding" and said, "If you have it in your heart, please help these folks get to where they're trying to get tonight."

On this night, appealing to people's hearts seemed to do the trick.

A few of us began making eye contact and looking behind for others who needed to hurry.

Folks directed traffic and stepped aside as passengers grabbed bags and rushed through the aisles.

Many wished them, "Good luck!"

After the last connecting flier deplaned, something even more interesting happened.

Folks began identifying bags in the overhead bins above their heads and

“Having favorites” and “playing favorites” aren’t the same thing.

We may connect with some folks more than others. We’re only human.

Great managers, however, are diligent in making sure everyone is held to the same standards of conduct, given the same courtesies, and treated equitably.

Strive to be that kind of leader each day.

passing them, passenger to passenger, to their owners several rows ahead.

I don’t know that I’ve heard “Thank you” so many times on a plane. It was the most efficient and friendly deplaning I can remember.

Once the example of being patient, friendly, and helpful was established, folks seemed happy to follow that lead.

I joked with the fellow next to me that maybe there is hope for humanity, after all.

What goodwill example can you set for others to follow today?

"Never let a win get to your head, or a loss to your heart."

» Chuck D



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