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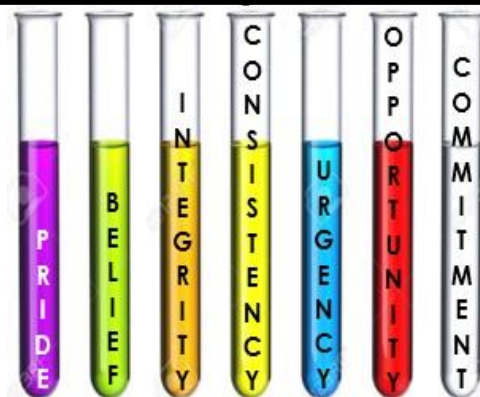
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AS THE NEW FISCAL YEAR DAWNS, IT OCCURS TO ME THAT WE SHOULD HAVE FISCAL YEAR RESOLUTIONS AS MUCH (IF NOT MORE) THAN CALENDAR YEAR RESOLUTIONS. I GUESS WE'D ALL LIKE TO HAVE BETTER YEARS NEXT YEAR THAN LAST? IN MY MONTHLY JOURNEY AROUND THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, I SHARED SOME TIPS WITH MY PARTNERS ABOUT THIS. HERE IS A STYLISED VERSION OF THE TIPS I OFFERED BASED ON RECOGNISING AND MAXIMISING THE INGREDIENTS FOR EXCELLENCE WHICH APPEAR TO THE RIGHT. JUST REMEMBER THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A CHEF AND A COOK ISN'T THE RECIPE. IT'S THE METHOD. THAT'S WHERE THE TIPS COME IN.



PRIDE & BELIEF are necessary ingredients for creating value which is what selling or influencing anything or anyone, is about. If you had identical knowledge to everyone else, your point of difference is only possible by how proud you are of your profession, your brands and yourself. External issues can diminish your belief which will diminish your pride. Industry circumstances, an unhappy workplace, pressure, customers, routine and maintaining a work life balance will test anyone's stamina. So, how are you doing?

INTEGRITY & CONSISTENCY rely on each other. Having integrity is better because people with no integrity can be honest sometimes. Integrity means you'll always be. It insures your reputation. Consistency ensures you're regarded as reliable. When they work together, you'll be remembered for the right reasons and recognised or rewarded over time. You'll be trusted and you will lead even if you don't have a title. You'll lead because of the example you set and this will gain you respect. Respect fortifies your pride when external issues challenge it.

URGENCY is acting expediently and has an effect of things like following up & through. Creating urgency in the hearts and minds of customers causes the perception of opportunity and can bring decisions forward or cause budgets to increase. People who act urgently get things done sooner and attach priority to issues like responsibility & creating value. Leaders who act urgently run effective teams who respond better to delegation because they tend to emulate the example the leader is setting.

OPPORTUNITY is a great thing to have on your radar all the time. Always seek it. The best way is to be enthusiastic or adopt a can-do attitude. It's infectious. It infects your customers and your work mates. It adds value to your day because it adds value to what you say and how you behave. Circumstances beyond your control can erode your ability to spot opportunity when you may be acting purely to survive. Sometimes opportunity knocks and sometimes it doesn't. Just make sure that you have a 'welcome mat' at the door. If it doesn't, build a door!

COMMITMENT is insurance against being a servant instead of a service pro. The pressure of getting the numbers can challenge our will to obtain commitment prior to us needing to making it. Gross retention is your KPI for assessing this. Many pros use gross as a means to bargain. The more you need to haggle or negotiate, the less commitment you've achieved. Commitment is best when it's mutual and equal. Your consultation skills will make that happen. Being committed is a great way to exhibit your character and grow your reputation.

THOUGHTS & TIPS

- Ownership can be a bit of a test but if you can hold yourself to account, others won't need to. Especially bosses who are themselves accountable. That's what self-starters do and it's the habit that people who show initiative display. Initiative is simply about commencement.
- You probably would like to have a better year next year than this last one. The 7 qualities listed are the ingredients and pretty much all you need to be regarded as outstanding. Standing out requires it. Better this now than regret later. So, order them in if you're low on stock.
- Don't be discouraged by circumstances beyond your control. Know that you're never alone and recognise that difficult circumstances are opportunities to shine. Have faith in yourself and understand that you could have been born as a rat catcher in Mumbai. Or a soldier in Kyiv.
- If you're ambitious, always bear in mind two questions: (1) who else in your life benefits when you succeed? and (2) what's in it for you? It's not about being selfish, it's about being motivated to continue so that everyone in your circle of influence benefits over time.
- Invest in learning - **always**. It keeps you relevant and it keeps you humble. Are you a driven person? If so, humility is essential because when you're driven and humble, others will tend to help you. Tyrant boss? You're managing - not leading. And probably not being followed
- Never compromise your happiness or integrity for a quick win or momentary pleasure. Remember that the candle that burns twice as bright, burns half as long. And it does a lot of damage to its surroundings.
- The best kind of urgency is created when it's seen as important. So be urgent without panic. Moderate the speed of your delivery and approach important things with clarity of purpose and without judgement if it involves staff, colleagues or family and especially if it involves conflict. Remember that **empathy** gives any opponent nothing to resist. Understand the difference between a **threat** and a **weakness**. Threats are potential weaknesses and weaknesses were once threats that nobody noticed until it was too late.
- Your work/life balance is vital to your outcomes. Take a pitstop occasionally. Don't run out of fuel. If you do, you'll need to assign time to repair that should've been spent on growth.
- NEVER compromise your standards to tolerate standards that are lower than yours. Compromise means **sacrifice** and once it's been made, it's tough to go back or reclaim lost ground. It's impossible to reclaim lost time.
- If you understand what culture is and the role it plays, ask yourself what you actually contribute to it. Dismiss bitterness, envy, anger or the need to get even. Anger especially is just the price you pay for someone else's mistakes. It's a cliché but it's true that "the best revenge is to be successful." Be **observant** rather than judgmental when things go pear shaped, otherwise, you'll be collateral damage to the problem and someone else will need to solve it.
- Finally, ask yourself these three questions as we embark on the New Year:
 1. What do I need to **start** doing?
 2. What do I need to **stop** doing?
 3. What do I need to **keep** doing?

BE THE BENCHMARK

