

Hello, this is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thanks for participating in our blog. We would like to have the benefit of your comments, in fact, I have a specific question at the end that I'd like to ask and please click on our social media. We appreciate that. Thank you.

So, this week I want to talk about an article from Inc. magazine. It's Google's. This was, let's see, Inc. magazine, June of 2019 and it says actually Google's 10 Tips for Best Bosses. We reduced it to five because some of them seemed self-evident or just obvious. So, we kind of picked the top five.

So, you know, we've all had in our careers a combination of good bosses and bad bosses. Maybe now you're the boss and I expect that's the case for most of our listeners. But we've all had experiences with bad bosses. My first boss out of college was just awful, just not a people person whatsoever. I can't even tell you some of the silly things he did in meetings, but we've all had those experiences and we've all determined that we don't want to be that way. We want to be good bosses, we want to be leaders and mentors and coaches and inspirations for the people on our team. So, we want to talk about five particular things that you can do to be a good boss. Okay?

The first one is have a clear vision and strategy for your enterprise. And then the second piece of this, like number 1A is you've got to communicate it. I remember reading a book about one of the leaders of a megachurch, I think it was in Texas, and he talked about that, you know, the vision for the church was something they talked about all the time. They talked about it until they thought people were just practically nauseated by hearing it again and again and again, because vision is an ephemeral thing and you've got to talk about it.

You've got to make it a topic of your meetings and your conversations with your people so that it stays uppermost in their minds. Otherwise, it's just one of those nice things in a plaque on the wall. So, have a clear vision, have a clear strategy in writing. In writing is the only way to do it. And then talk about it all the time. Review it, reflect on it. Ask how everything is going according to the vision and strategy, etc., etc. Okay?

The second thing is communicate. My former partner and father-in-law, Tom Campbell, said that too much communication is just about right, so this kind of correlates nicely with the first one. You've got to communicate with your people and the key to being a good communicator, and this is where so many of our clients fall down, you've got to be a good listener. People think good communication is I send a clear message to you, but the key part of being a good communicator is listening and receiving information and actually hearing what other people are trying to tell you about the company, your customers, your opportunities, etc., etc.

Lots of ink has been spilled over the years about open book management and if you're a fan of the great game of business, then by gosh they've taken open book management to a degree that I can barely even imagine, but you don't have to be that. That transparency is a wonderful thing but handing your people the company income statement or balance sheet isn't going to mean anything to them. They don't know how to interpret it. They don't know what it means. They don't know how to read it.

What you'd rather do, I think is talk about transparency in goal achievement. Our goal at the beginning of the month or the year or the quarter was X, how are we doing in achieving that goal and if we're ahead of schedule, that's wonderful. Why is that? And if we're behind schedule, how are we going to catch up? But that kind of transparency where your team is so important. And again, the key to being a good communicator is listening to what your people are telling you.

The third tip is good managers, this goes without saying, avoid micromanagement. You know, if you're micromanaging, if you feel the need to micromanage, that means you don't trust your people to do the things that you hired them to do. And if you feel the need to micromanage and there's an absence of trust, guess what? You have hired the wrong people. Their lack of competence isn't their fault. Their lack of competence is your fault because you hired the wrong people, or you promoted the wrong people, or you didn't give them clear expectations, or you don't set a good example for them in the way you go about your job, etc., etc.

So, if you have bad people, they're not getting the job done, they need micromanaging, that, you feel like you're babysitting all the time. Guess what? You hired poorly. And that's on you, brothers and sisters. You can do better. And you need to go back and think about your entire hiring process. We've talked about the book *Who* before. It is the best thing I've ever read about hiring. It makes it elementary and simple and we'll just take so much drama out of your life. If you have A players, you're going to be successful. If you have B and C players, you're going to struggle. Okay?

The next tip, number four is good bosses create a team environment. And to have a team environment where collaboration actually works, then you've got to have psychological safety. We've talked about psychological safety before. It just simply means that if an employee makes a mistake, you're not going to come down on them or others in the organization are not going to come down on them like a ton of bricks. They are free to express ideas, ask questions, offer inputs, and know that you're going to listen to them. They're going to be evaluated and potentially even incorporated into things that you're doing. So, you've got a team environment where people can participate. It's interactive and the overall team is more important than any one individual on the team.

Can you imagine, you're watching the sports cast on the weekend and some store athlete comes out and says, "Oh, well we didn't make the playoffs this year, but I averaged X points per game," or "I scored X touchdowns," or something like that. You would think that athlete is the most ignorant person on earth. So, by the same token, good bosses create teams where team results and team outcomes are more important than individual outcomes.

And finally, the fifth tip for being a good boss is coaching. Good coaches celebrate wins. Again, the team more important than the individuals, but they also use losses or setbacks or mistakes as teachable moments where people can learn. And let's face it, it's easier to learn from our mistakes, subject of a future blog perhaps, easier to learn from our mistakes than it is from our successes. Because success is by definition, well, it's hard to define. That's what I'm trying to say.

Okay. So those are our five tips from Google for being a great boss. And hopefully you can incorporate them. Now, what I'd like to hear from you in the comments is I'd like to hear some examples of both bad bosses that you've had in the past, or maybe currently, and also good bosses. When you had a great boss or a great leader, what did that man or woman do that you found inspirational and exciting about working with them?

So, let's hear it from you, folks. Good bosses, bad bosses. Let's have some examples and we'll see you next week on the blog. Thank you.