

My Underlying Beliefs in Helping Leaders Improve

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Over the past month, my articles have encouraged you to examine your values and other underlying beliefs. I've followed my own advice. Here are some underlying beliefs, many of which I have thought to share with leaders who want to grow. I will now share all of them with my current and future clients!

You **can** improve. In fact, my purpose in serving you is to encourage and support conscious effort to change in ways **YOU** desire (improvement = positive **change**). However, to avoid frustration, you must realize that you **cannot** force change on another human being (not your boss or direct reports, not your spouse or your kids, not customers or suppliers, not colleagues, not your friends, etc.). You **can** and **do**, however, **influence** all those named above and more. Your behaviors create an **environment** that influences all who observe and engage with you.

Working to be **your best** is desirable and healthy. However, striving to be **the best** can be discouraging and counterproductive. Comparing against others results in either pride or feelings of inadequacy, neither of which supports continuous improvement. Working to improve your processes, culture, and results allows you to remain genuine and elicits respect and appreciation from your colleagues.

If you keep doing what you've been doing, you'll likely **not** achieve improved results in the future. You have to do something **different** (better) to realize **better** outcomes.

Finding what to do differently comes heavily from **reflection**. Two basic yet powerful questions allow you to learn from the immediate past and plan for the future. "**What did we do well?**" gives you insight as to what procedures you should repeat. "**What could we do better next time?**" allows you to consider new possibilities for facing a similar situation in the future.

You (and everyone around you) **routinely make choices**. As an example, you can choose to **overlook the information** I and others share with you, or you can choose to **examine it, practice it, and become skilled at it**.

Before major improvement is possible, you have to consciously decide to be open to new learning. That means being willing to considering information about you, your team, and the world that may be in conflict with your current perspectives. That sounds easy, but your natural response is to defend your current perspectives

Increased awareness is a huge contributor to productive change. My purpose in virtually all that we do together is to increase your awareness of **your perspectives and your behaviors** and how they influence the attitudes and behaviors of others.

Increased awareness often comes from unexpected **paradigm shifts**. These new insights can and do occur frequently. However, if you do not recognize their existence **and** catch their significance when they occur, they are easily overlooked. Thus, I ask my clients to always be on the lookout for paradigm shifts, and I encourage them to share their new perspectives with me, exploring their meaning and potential application.

A little voice in your head is constantly speaking to you. It's telling you what you **must do** and what you **can't do**. It's telling you what **you should be** and what **you can't be**. Most of the time, **you don't even know that voice is there**. I make you **aware** of that voice inside your head. Rather than just let it speak to you as it always has, you can **start now** to pay attention to what it's telling you. You can **change** what that little voice says to you. You can catch that little voice lying to you, and you can correct that little voice. You can direct that voice to start reinforcing what you **are becoming** rather than focusing on what you **have been**.

If you so choose, you can become **more trustworthy** and **more collaborative**. You can **create an environment** where others **want to** collaborate with you, because they trust you. They know you are **competent**, you genuinely **intend** to help, and you **follow-through** when you promise them something!

Based on space limitations, I'll stop there. Hopefully, today's article will serve as an example for you as you examine your own values and underlying beliefs. I hope that you will see the benefit of allocating time to conduct a similar analysis, so that you can be more open with those you influence!