

Leadership to Remember

By Dr. Renée N. Hale

Each of us can remember at least one person who has demonstrated leadership in an unforgettable way in our lives—whether it was a leader who inspired us to greater levels of success, or a leader who may have seemed determined to crush our very spirit. That’s the way it goes: we remember the extremes in life. Good and bad, righteous and evil, leaders interact every day with followers by demonstrating character, skill, and spirit. When you are on the receiving end of leadership, you’ll remember something! If you’re the leader, be careful! Pay attention to your character coming through, your skills being up to date, and the spirit you express.

Character is about how one behaves, and behavior stems from values. What are your values? Can you name them? If you haven’t thought about your values lately, just ask colleagues what they see in you. Their comments may reveal common perceptions of your behavior. Think about what you would like to be remembered for: how do words best describe you? With these ideas in mind, you can intentionally determine your actions and responses to represent yourself accurately.

Keep your leadership and industry skills up to date. Set the example by pursuing continuing education. Attention to personal capacity not only serves you well, but it encourages colleagues to keep reaching for their personal best. You and your organization are prepared more effectively for the future when you and your colleagues are committed to continuing skill improvement. This promotes excellence—a characteristic anyone would be pleased to possess and leave as a legacy.

What about spirit? Sometimes we use the phrase “the spirit of a place” or “the spirit of an organization.” This is the overall impression we perceive. Intangible “spirit” exudes through the people who make up the organization, and leaders set the tone for everyone. Know your faith or life values and live them consistently. Your “spirit,” for good or ill, is unavoidably front and center.

Memorable leaders make impressions on us—good or bad—through character, skills and spirit. Will your leadership instill the memory you intend?

Dr. Renée N. Hale is founder and president of WellSpirit Consulting Group, Inc.—engaging organizations around the world to get well, stay well, and create positive futures. Visit www.wellspiritconsulting.com. © 2010 Renée N. Hale