



EmpowerChangeNow Newsletter

Life Transformations— empowering change

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Life Transformations was

founded in 2002 by Joanne Aaronson. Joanne's mission is to foster empowerment in the individual to achieve his/her ideal life including relationships, career, and financial situation. Or for the executive, to achieve Enlightened Leadership to empower their best organization possible. The [Empower Change Now Newsletter](#) was started in 2007 to support this mission by sharing information about the underlying paradigm shift necessary to empower change in the individual for unlimited possibilities.



Welcome!

As an Enlightened Leader, understanding your own power and how to use it to empower yourself and those around you is critical to success. This month I emphasize articles regarding these qualities and how they can help you move from power struggles and aggravation to powerful performance. Apply these capabilities in your life for both personal and professional success!

I welcome your comments or experiences with this material.

**Always in light,
Joanne Aaronson, PMP, Ct Reiki, Ct EIIS**

The Power Struggle at Work

SITUATION: It was just before a holiday weekend and we were all feeling good in preparation to leave for an extra day off when a co-worker decided to make an announcement. Before this moment, I hadn't recognized him as a leader of the group, yet he was barking orders as if he'd suddenly taken over as team lead. Just to provide a bit of background, this person had stayed out late the night before and was noticeably tired all day. At about 4 PM before a holiday weekend, he starts telling the rest of the group that we have to impose ourselves on our government customers. I took exception since my prior instructions were to advise and never to try to control my "customer". This led to a somewhat restrained but annoying debate. I could feel his attitude go south and his temper flair. In addition, I felt his attitude was rather condescending. I went home about an hour later upset from the interchange as I suspected he did also. I would call this a power struggle for sure. He wanted me to comply with a request that seemed more like an unreasonable demand to me that could conceivably jeopardize my job. When I tried to explain my compromise position, he wouldn't listen.

Upon returning to work the following week, I decided to drop the whole thing, chalking it up to his tiredness; however at this point he was still holding a grudge. In fact, his behavior was what I'd call "off" for close to two weeks before he finally settled down. During this time, I acted as I normally did with him and with the other team members. One day he just started to interact with me again and all was fine. I just let the whole thing go. I did have the opportunity to tell him that I took his concerns to my customers and they agreed with me. As contractors, we can only push so hard; we have to respect who we work for and how they want to do business.

CONCLUSION: Learn to recognize a power struggle and don't over react. Sometimes people just need time to settle down and be able to hear you. Respect who you work for and be flexible. We have to balance our teams and our customers from all perspectives.

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Managing Appropriately

As leaders of teams, organizations or individuals, we must be cognizant of certain factors when we manage. We must be aware of the situation and manage appropriately. I recently volunteered for several hours at a charity fair taking the position at the front desk. My job was to welcome people, schedule sessions with holistic providers and provide tickets for purchase of items for sale. For a project manager, it was a straight forward set of duties which I quickly mastered. However, there were several people who were on the organization's board and had specific instructions for me.



Initially, I accepted them cheerfully since I had no real stake in the outcome, but gradually, they became controlling and intimidating. Of course, this is a very simple example but one that probably mirrors what goes on in the lives of these individuals at other times – so I'll relate the story.

There were two sheets of paper for each holistic practitioner with twenty minute time slots marked. As people registered and paid for their sessions, I hand wrote their names on two sheets, one that would be kept at the front and one for the practitioner to know their schedule. That made sense to me. Just about when the sheets were half way filled in one of the board members realized a couple of the time slots had been left off. Rather than just write them in at the bottom of the page, she went to the Show laptop and printed off all new sheets and began to copy over all the names! While she had the sheets, attempting to make them perfect, I couldn't sign new people in! I finally told her, "I think this is bit much for a charity program". (What I meant was that what we had was fit for purpose). I could see she wasn't happy but returned the sheets of the two practitioners with the most session signups so that I could continue with the sign in process.

As if that wasn't enough, she decided the sheets had to be in alphabetical order by name of holistic provider. This is after I've been doing this job for close to two hours the way it had been. My system was working just fine for me, which is what I told her. I had the two most requested people on the top so that I didn't have to page through lots of sheets in alphabetical order to find them! This is definitely a case of over control or micromanagement. I can only assume that when she lost control in the first instance she tried to force control in another.

Enlightened Leaders: 1- Know how to adjust to the situation; 2 - Read people so that they don't over manage; 3 -Allow people to empower themselves.

Remember:

- Know what game you're playing
- Manage accordingly
- Be fair to all

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Want to know more?

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Balance Your Life Corner

Last month I talked about the benefits of a Mediterranean diet and how it promotes a healthy heart; particularly the addition of garlic. Here's the recipe I promised:

(This is my version of a southern French delectable recipe. It's easy to prepare and includes lots of garlic and French bread to soak up the juice.)

One package of fresh mussels

Several cloves of garlic chopped; stir fry in 2 tbsp of olive oil

Mix in one can of chopped tomatoes

1 tbsp. lemon juice; season with Herbes de Provence if you have them or other mixed herbs

3 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley and steam mussels in the juice for a few minutes until they open. Eat with the French bread. Enjoy!

Managing Your Managers

We all have been in the situation where our manager has asked us to do something that's not in line with our own plan or with what we thought best for our projects; in other words, we want to go one way and he/she wants to go another way. Well, they are the boss? True, but they can still be managed. Sometimes it's a manner of explaining it in different terms, providing additional information or looking at the situation from their (executive level) perspective. Have we put the issue in the right terms that "they" care about or are we being too technical?

What does management expect? Often, higher level executives take the bigger view which may not agree with what's best for our (just one) project and we may have to accept that. In other cases, it may be that we have to explain it so that they understand how our project fits into the bigger strategic view. The more that a project manager uses programmatic to explain their project doing inclusive briefings, addressing concerns, risks and the associated mitigations with an appropriate plan the more that management will understand the path that YOU want to take and WHY the team has chosen a particular technical solution. It's all in the way that the solution is framed. Recently, I had a situation where the system performed poorly and caused a lot of problems for the organization. During the next upgrade, I suggested to the project manager to have the team do a formal test plan complete with assumptions, risks, mitigations and expected outcome. They balked at first wondering why they should go to so much trouble for a routine situation. The reason is that management was concerned that the upgrade, although routine to the team, would again cause problems. They didn't listen and didn't do the test plan, until they had problems with management acceptance of their approach. Then, finally, they put together a test plan. It did help. In the end, their approach was accepted.

Understand how management thinks in order to manager your managers.

