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## Corporate Leadership: Forget the Golden Rule

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Before companies can improve, they first must learn. They need to look beyond the rhetoric and philosophy, and focus on fundamentals. Organizations have jumped on the bandwagon for inventing learning organizations, yet despite the positive signs, the answers are still questionable. New ideas need to be created if learning occurs in an organization.

There are several top leaders who are no good at managing because they have rarely failed, and they have never learned from a failure. Often times when their learning strategies go wrong, they become defensive, screen out criticism, and lay the blame on anyone but themselves. In short, their ability to learn shuts down precisely at the moment they need it the most.

How we think is critical: We all prefer to approach problems differently. Some may use intuition whereas others may do so analytically. We all tend to have one or two preferred habits of thought that influence our decisions. An analytical approach is left brained, and an intuitive approach is right brained. Right-brained people typically look at the big picture; whereas left brained people are more detailed.

We can learn to expand our repertoire of behavior to act outside our preferred styles. This is difficult; like writing with the opposite hand. The first step is to understand your own style.

If you want an innovative company, you need to hire and promote people that make you uncomfortable. The biggest problem in understanding people who are unlike you is your own ego.

In a cognitive environment, a message sent is not necessarily a message received. Some people respond well to facts, figures, analogy, pictures, charts, graphs, lectures, presentations etc. Information must be delivered in the preferred method of the recipient if it is to be received at all.

Organizations need to create whole brained teams (left and right). Anyone can disagree about anything with anyone; but no one can disagree without a reason. Listen objectively. No one style is better than another.

The best leadership in corporate America will constantly push people in organizations to work harder out of people's comfort zones. Globalization provides a new arena or theatre in which all beliefs become aware of other beliefs and struggle to find out who they are.

Forget the Golden Rule...and make your own that works.

***The obligation of accepting power and leadership is to be a good human being. It is not surprising we should look to religious models for ways of thinking about the right use of power. Our best religious leaders have flourished through the ages in part because they understood how to exercise accountability and activism in service to their followers. Great leaders know they are vulnerable and will dialog about the process. Spirituality is the process of living out a set of deeply held personal values, of honoring forces or a presence greater than ourselves.***

***-Block 1996***

