

Being a Heart-centered Leader

By Ann Gatty, Ph.D.



The requirements for organizational leadership continue to evolve and the humanness of leadership is gaining more recognition. There is a growing need for a heart-centered leader. Such leaders display a natural authenticity and humility and is willing to make themselves readily available to their employees. The heart-centered leader listens to their concerns, offers an opportunity for them to seek advice, and provides encouragement. These same leaders model a non-judgmental attitude that makes them approachable.

As a leader in your organization, do you know how to keep your workforce engaged and happy? I think that it is important to engage in conversations with your employees so that you know more about their values, likes and dislikes. Ask for honest feedback about how they view their relationships with management. This type of relationship building is likely to curb the rise of employee disengagement and keep them from walking out the door. People like to know that they matter, and they will provide better job performance in return.

As you already know, employees are directly responsible for the success of any company. People are most content when they have the opportunity to learn and grow and know that management supports their striving for improvement. Employees want to be treated with dignity and to have some influence over their future. They want to feel appreciated for their contributions.

Let's take a lesson from my Great Dane therapy dog, Beretta. In our book, [*Leadership Unleashed: A Great Dane's Wisdom for the Business World*](#), we talk about the importance of being a heart-centered leader. When Beretta visits a new location for one of our workshops, he takes his time and gets the lay of the land. He uses his canine senses to detect the mood of those he encounters. With every trip he makes to hospitals and workplaces, he models respect to everyone, regardless of their position in the organization. To him, there is no difference between a member of the management team and the college interns.

When respect and compassion are an intrinsic part of the workplace, employee performance improves. When a heart-centered leader makes fellow workers feel valued and appreciated for their contributions, there will be a significant and positive impact that permeates the entire organization.

In working with Beretta, I witness this first-hand as respect and compassion are central to this gentle Great Dane's work. His display of canine empathy brings comfort to those in distress and camaraderie for those needing a friendly boost. Organizations can become tense in an instant, and stress levels rise. But, having a calm presence when the storms roll through helps keep elevated emotions in check. Nothing diffuses this tension better than quiet, emotional support, and using canine instincts to sense other's moods and emotions can be useful examples for any leader.



Many strategies for becoming a heart-center leader are included in the chapters of [*Leadership Unleashed: A Great Dane's Wisdom for the Business World*](#). Applying these examples can transform your organization! Let us know how you are doing with these ideas by dropping us a line at StrategicPeopleSolutions.com, where we build businesses to work brilliantly.

About the Author

Dr. Ann Gatty is a business development strategist. She helps her clients clarify the vision for their businesses, boost their leadership capabilities and add quality talent to help the clients reach their goals. Through a collaborative mentoring process, she and her clients create workable strategic business plans and success initiatives, while improving their workplace processes. Dr. Gatty is a frequent writer and contributor www.AllBusiness.com, www.MarketingInsiders.com, and www.WomenOnBusiness.com. Her interactive speaking engagements assist participants in discovering new-found talents and skills that they can immediately apply in the workplace. Join her [Facebook Group, Strategic Thinking Summit Elites](#) for strategies you can implement to grow your business success and enjoy camaraderie with others entrepreneur members.