

Welcome to the twenty-fourth edition of Jennifer Selby Long's *Traveling Light*. Are you blessed with the talent and opportunity to lead? *Traveling Light* will skyrocket your impact and lighten the load in your life. It's based on the work of executive coach and management consultant Jennifer Selby Long. Copyright 2008 Jennifer Selby Long. All rights reserved.

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Are you Worried About Motivating Top Employees During a Down Economy?

If you're not worried, maybe you should be. In a down economy, the core and bottom performers hunker down, fearful of leaving familiar territory, but your top 20% are still getting calls from recruiters and lucrative offers from competitors or even from other recession-resistant industries trolling for talent.

So what motivates key talent during a tough economy? It comes down to five things every leader and business owner can do. You should be doing all five on an ongoing basis, but particularly now.

1. *Does each top performer and high potential leader know that, in fact, he or she is considered a top performer and/or high potential leader?* In many companies, there are no formal programs to identify and develop high potential talent, so how can they know they are high potential if no one tells them? I can't count the number of times I have had confidential conversations with high potential leaders and have nearly fallen out of my chair when I realized that *they had no idea* that their boss saw them as high potential. Some people overestimate their talent, but others underestimate it. Never assume they just "know."
2. *Are you ensuring a good mix of stretch assignments, formal development (training, coaching, etc.), and exposure to key decision-makers across the business?* High performers and high potentials give a lot and they ask a lot in return. They appreciate an employer who invests time and money in their growth and they leave those who don't. Ninety-seven percent of coaches are hired by individuals. I am routinely contacted by go-getters who want to get ahead and are willing to invest their own money because their employers won't invest in them. It will come as no surprise that, to a person, these highly motivated initiative-takers have already decided to leave their current employer to find one that will take their ambitions seriously and support their growth with actions, not just words.
3. *Do you recognize their work?* If your company is too large for you to personally recognize each star employee's work, what are you doing to ensure that your managers recognize excellent work and never commit the ultimate sin of taking credit for their subordinates' work? No leader has ever said to me, "I take credit for my subordinates' work." It's the subordinates who tell me it's happening. But take extra care here, because even the overuse of the word "we" can be a form of theft, as in, "we compiled this data" when, in fact, you personally had nothing to do with the outstanding compilation; you're just the presenter of it.
4. *Does everyone know his or her impact on the business?* This applies to everyone, and doing it ensures that you give your top people the alignment they need in order

to run the business smoothly. What are you doing to ensure that your team -- and everyone on their teams -- understands the company's vision, purpose, direction, and goals? What is your team doing to ensure that every employee understands his or her impact on the business? It's not enough that the senior leaders get it. Everyone needs to get it and be personally connected to it in order to feel motivated through good times and bad. This needs to be an agenda item on a regular basis, not just once, and you need to hold your people accountable for doing it.

5. *Are you scrupulously fair?* It's great to give extra attention and exciting assignments to your high performers and high potentials. That's actually fair, since you're getting more from them than from the core. Fairness here doesn't mean treating every single person exactly the same. It means objectivity.

For example, if your relatives work in the business, do you unfailingly hold them to the same standards as everyone else, or does there seem to be a disproportionate share of relatives on your high-potential list?

Do you scan your high potential and high performer lists for diversity? In this day and age, overrepresentation of any one group is a red flag that you may be failing to attract the best talent from the total population of qualified talent. Those high potentials and high performers who are not part of the dominant group will head to more welcome environments in which they are not always the odd one out.

Do you have someone inside or outside the business who will call you on it if you unwittingly show inappropriate favoritism toward a friend whose performance is just average?

Note that these tips are not costly to implement, which is also an advantage in a down economy!

News

We had a little excitement here at Selby Group HG last week. Some Princeton students somehow got access to our private, exclusive on-line Selby Group instruction page for taking the MBTI® and FIRO-B® -- and went nuts forwarding the link to each other and taking the instruments without my permission and without paying me.

Real, live white collar crime, right here in my own company! O.k., minor white collar crime, but it was still exciting for this avid reader of mystery novels.

To end the crime spree, I changed the login and password, at which point one of them emailed me explaining that the login and password didn't work and asking what she should use instead! I replied that there is a cost associated with taking the instruments, that I had no idea how these students came across the private instruction page reserved for the exclusive use of my clients, and that I was wondering where on earth she got it.

I didn't hear back from her. Gee, what a surprise.

To their credit, Consulting Psychologists Press promptly refilled my queue of instruments at no charge, and the customer service representative laughed that there was perhaps

an upside to this quirky little caper -- maybe now that the students know their Psychological Types, they'll have better self-awareness and go on to make the world a better place. At the very least, perhaps they'll turn their backs on crime forever!

If you are a consultant or executive coach living in the San Francisco Bay Area, and you have at least an intermediate knowledge of psychological type, go straight to www.baapt.org and sign up for one of the few remaining seats at John Beebe's workshop in San Mateo on October 11. I mean it. He speaks in the Bay Area no more than once a year and usually less. He has few recordings. This is your chance to learn from a Jungian master.

Dr. Beebe is a psychiatrist and former president of the C.G. Jung Institute of San Francisco. He was the first American co-editor of the London-based Journal of Analytical Psychology and is the author of Integrity in Depth.

His breakthrough eight-function model assigns archetypal energy to each of the Jungian functions, which enables you and your clients to recognize and begin to develop their non-preferred functions. This is essential to understanding and supporting your clients through mid-life and it is considered by many to be the leading edge development in working with Psychological Type.

Do you live in the Portland area? If so, mark your calendar for the morning of October 11. I'll be speaking on the impact of your psychological Type and gender on your financial attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

I became interested in the subject after noticing different patterns between my male and female clients, even when they had achieved equal levels of financial and career success. I went in search of studies that explained why, but there weren't any, so I did one myself.

What I learned was so important that I share it whenever and wherever I can.

For more information, please visit <http://www.portlandapt.org/>.

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