

The
Wisdom
of
Teams

with Donald Van de Mark
a film by Success Television

The Wisdom of *Teams*

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Welcome to

The Wisdom of *Teams*

with Donald Van de Mark

Thank you for your interest in The Wisdom of *Teams*.

In this video, I share insights and lessons on teams that I've learned from interviewing some of the best business leaders of our time. I hope sharing these lessons will help all of us to work better together to make the wise choices and actions to succeed personally and professionally.

The Wisdom of *Teams* enables us to see how our commitment to each other and our organization builds energy and a team spirit. When we broaden our ranks to include different perspectives, we strengthen our team to “take the hill”. We widen our options to innovate, solve problems and produce the results that lead to success. All the while, we are not doing this alone but with our team. The burden and the rewards are shared.

Problems will arise, maybe with a product launch, or sales may not come in as expected or personality conflicts arise. These are “the hills” or “battles” many teams face. But, when we connect with our team and join together to find solutions, we experience the joy that only a collection of people, a team, can experience. Now we have the wisdom to figure out what we can all do to overcome these inevitable challenges.

It is my sincere hope that you take on one or more of these team stories and make it your own.

Sincerely,

Donald

Donald Van de Mark

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Key Concept 1: Commitment (Dennis Conner)

From the video:

Donald: “Conner’s onboard leadership is not about bullying.”

Conner: “Because our sport has a lot of mental (thinking) involved. Sometimes people think better when they’re not excited and when they have the right mental level of anxiety. So you can yell and scream at a guy and it might make his performance worst because he’s already trying his best and now you make him nervous.”



Donald: “Conner doesn’t want to motivate anyone. He expects each and every member of his crew to be SELF motivated.”

Conner: “If they have the attitude in the beginning, you don’t have to put the spurs in them and that’s where staffing comes into play and the commitment to the commitment.”

Donald: “Staffing, staffing, staffing”

Conner: “No. Attitude, Attitude, Attitude”

Donald: “From this story, I learned when a group is functioning well, whether it is a work group, a chorus or orchestra, a religious or a school voluntary group, the group dynamics and sense of connection and acceptance can bring out the very best in us. Conner believes you shouldn’t yell and scream; it will just make the team nervous and anxious. He expects each team member to be self motivated. He says it all begins with a person’s attitude.

He says it’s the commitment to the commitment.”

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Program insight:

Commitment to *anything* -- a team, a goal, a cause, a project or a company comes in large part from self-motivation. Striving for personal goals is a critical thread that binds and commits us. These goals can be external motivators such as money and status. They can also be deep, internal goals such as contributing to the welfare of others. Either way, when we're connected emotionally by our own passion and interests, our commitment is what makes us go that extra mile in effort and excel.

Sometimes our commitment is what's crucial to getting us to not only work harder but in a more creative and more cooperative way – getting us out of our “comfort zone.” We might have to be more communicative or persuasive of other team members in order to reach consensus; we might need to become more organized or more disciplined in our use of time; sometimes it means taking more personal responsibility for our performance, or, we might need to show how much we care about our teammates to achieve the results we want.

For team leaders, creating a great team often comes down to hiring the right people who fit with the mix of the team and believe in the mission. It's like baking a cake. Unless you have the right ingredients, you simply can't bake a delicious cake. As Dennis Conner says, “If they have the attitude in the beginning, you don't have to put the spurs in them and that's where staffing comes into play and the commitment to the commitment.”

Facilitator Question:

- Given what Conner said about commitment, how have you experienced it with your own team?

Possible Responses:

- When we got a project done on time
- We stretched to achieve our sales goal for the quarter
- We pitched in and covered for a colleague who was sick
- We made a difference in our community

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Facilitator Question:

- What motivates you to put in the extra effort beyond extra pay?

Possible Responses:

- I see my imprint on a project
- I'm proud my results helped my team to win
- I am helping people
- I am helping a cause

Activities

Activity 1: Define Commitment

Bring your team together and ask them to come up with words that define “commitment”. One member might say, “focus”; another, “loyalty.” Solicit these responses and write them on a white board as they are said so everyone can see them. Then, ask the team to select the most important concepts and formulate a team commitment statement. This could include their commitment to one another and their role in the company.

Then suggest that the team put this into action and, as a first step, create a screen saver with the commitment statement on it. It will serve as a daily, reinforcing mantra for each team member.

Activity 2: Connection to the Commitment

This activity addresses how the team members respect and treat each other. Ask each team member to answer the following questions on his/her own. Then have a group discussion addressing the following questions. (The idea is to get everyone to share and listen and create awareness of what's needed for the team. You can guide them to make formal requests of each other):

- What do you as a team member need from others?
- What are you willing to contribute?
- What single shared principle would propel the group forward?
- What relationship skill is missing that is causing the team to disconnect?
- What relationship skills are present that make the team feel connected?
- What do you want to accomplish with the team?

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Donald's Take:

Conner taught me that a great team begins with the attitude of each person you hire.

Let me share a story with you. I worked at a start up internet company years ago. It meant long hours, frustration, and not having the support that you find in a big company. When I hired people who were committed to the mission of our little company, I found that they had the right attitude, the right stuff. They were creative, full of energy and wanted to overcome challenges when they came up. They needed very little managing; just clarity on where we were headed and a reminder of our commitment.

However, the people, who were not as committed, got frustrated quickly. They complained and they were often the under-performers on the team.

What Conner taught me: you can't create commitment for someone. Each of us has to decide that for ourselves. When we're committed to something, we find we have the right attitude and then almost anything is possible.

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Key Concept 2: Energizing the Team (Jack Welch)

From the video:

Donald: “Jack Welch led GE for nearly 20 years. He is considered to be one of the best businessmen of the 20th century. His philosophy: take care of the best performing managers and fire the bottom 10%. That strategy was repeated down the line at GE to include all workers.

Many people thought Welch was too tough. But, he compares running a business to running a baseball team and differentiating between each person’s performance.



Welch: “How can you have differentiation between the top 20 and the middle 70 and throw out the bottom 10 and have team work? Teams do that every day! A 20 game winner, a 50 home run hitter, they get more money than the other players on the team and the bottom 10 get traded or thrown out. And, yet, they’re still a team. That’s what business is.

I think business is a lot about spirit. When I think of spirit, I think of energy. I think of excitement. I think of exciting others. I think what’s worst then a manager who sits and manages people? I mean this is all about exciting people. This is all about making it more fun.”

Donald: “But the world used to think, and some still do, that formality is what makes big business, it is part of the process. It’s what works.

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Welch: “Formality is the killer of business. Informality is what makes a company work. Informality is a key value in a company, when everyone can speak out when everyone has voice, when there isn’t, when the quality of an idea is not measured by the level in the organization box, but only by the quality of the idea. This isn’t just about first name stuff. This is about being able to try things, to wing things.

This is about a being able to celebrate. Companies have a tough time celebrating. I mean every little victory, a ratings win at CNBC, get a keg; have a party. Do something!

This is where you spend your life! Have a ball at it! Why would you want to come to a place as a stuffed shirt and hang around a corporation? It’s dumb unless you had a ball at it.”

Program insight:

Team spirit is about the excitement and pride we feel within a group that is accomplishing great things. As Welch points out, it’s about fostering an atmosphere where each member has a voice so that all ideas are heard. And, he says, creating team energy occurs when we celebrate our wins spontaneously -- together.

As a team, you stand for something, whether you like it or not. A team gets labeled for being excellent, committed, responsive, etc. The labels stick based on how your team is showing up to others in the organization. If you’re in production, how are you working with the sales team that just sold a big order – an order that’s come two weeks early?! Will your production team be thought of as “resistant,” “remarkable”, “unresponsive” or “unequaled?”

If you’re in marketing or sales and you work with creative people, are you encouraging ideas and communication? Or, are you known as the “suit,” that only cares about cost control and deadlines at the expense of breakthrough ideas and innovation?

Exciting your team can make the difference between an organization that is fired up and highly competitive and one that is preoccupied with its internal personnel problems. For the very small business, having the wrong person in a job can be so distracting that it may seriously jeopardize that business’s existence.

It takes courage and clarity to set the bar for excellence as Welch described. That means tapping into the passion and commitment of high performers. Retaining good team members and getting rid of the under performers makes it clear what and who is valued. When excellence is acknowledged and rewarded, team members will strive to win. Your team will achieve its goals, and your team members will celebrate and continue the circle of creating energy and more team spirit.

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Facilitator Question:

- What gives your team energy?

Possible Responses:

- Creating a great product or service
- Freedom to speak up
- Winning in the marketplace
- Making more money!
- Working together to innovate and solve problems
- Working with top performers

Facilitator Question:

- What would your team be known for?

Possible Responses:

- Reliable
- Having fun
- Creative
- Making a difference in the world

Activities

Activity 1: Clear and Build Energy:

“Ouch” time. This is a very short 15-20 minute session that will boost the energy of your team. This could be done on a regular basis to let off steam and build personal responsibility. You can do this activity only or with some of the other activities.

Ask team members to come to the meeting with their top best/worst things that happened during the week/month. Then, have them stand in pairs. (If there’s an odd member, you can be that person’s partner.). Divide the pairs into “A’s” and “B’s. Have the “A’s” raise their hands. Then, have the “B’s raise their hands. Tell them that when one side is talking the other side just listens. That’s very important.

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Now, have partner A “clear” and talk for 3 minutes about the bad things that happened that week or month. You might want to give examples: a deadline was moved up, a budget cutback occurred so there are fewer resources. Partner B is listening. Start the clock.

Then, reverse the process. Have partner B clear for three minutes. The “A’s” just listen.

Now, ask the “A’s” to say what good things happened or breakthroughs/lessons occurred during the past week or month. Give them 3 minutes. Now, ask the “B’s” to do the same thing.

You will see the energy increase in the room. Then, ask the team to sit and share their thoughts and how they’re feeling and what came up for them. You can end the meeting here or, go into any of the other activities.

Activity 2: Create Team Spirit

Have the team make a list of actions that they’ve experienced that resulted in excellence and achieving their goals. They may list: “improved workflow”, “created a new product”, “introduced a successful new service” or “helped the community meet its fundraising targets.”

Ask them what values or characteristics they used that helped them reach those goals. Examples would be “proactive communication to get clarity on the goal”, “better cross-functional communication with weekly conf. calls”, “meeting regularly”. List the comments for everyone to see.

Then ask what they think their company values? Make a list. Circle the values that intersect. (This also gives you a chance to state what some of the company’s values are as well. This will help get the ideas flowing.)

From the circled values or the values most popular with the team, have the team come up with a team slogan.

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Activity 3: Incremental progress one project at a time

Have the team rate on a scale of 1-5, their satisfaction with their process in completing a recent project. Have team members share their ratings and perceptions. Have each member suggest one thing that could improve the product and process next time.

Activity 4: Stand in a future success

Speak about a vision or accomplishment in the future, as if it has already happened. Pick a time frame: 6 months, end of year, 2 years from now. What was present in the team? What did it take to get it done? What would be the effect on the team, organization and the company?

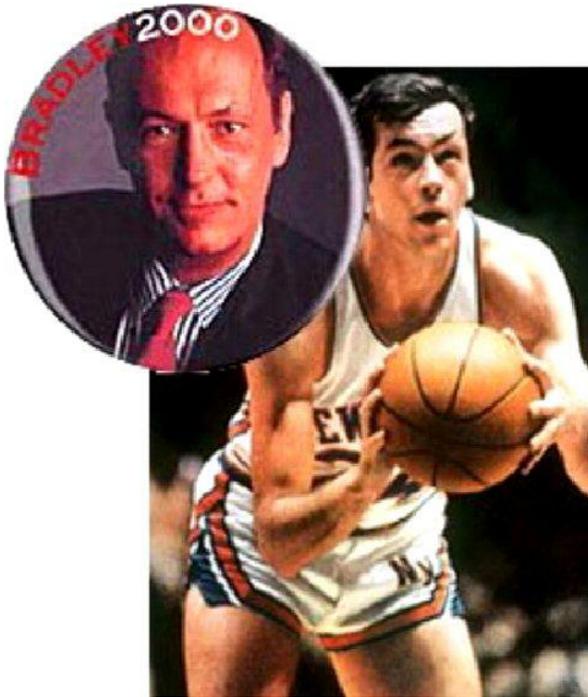
Donald's Take:

What I learned from Jack Welch is that if you reward your high performers, you set an example for excellence at your whole company. He calls it, "setting the bar" or establishing the rules of the game. Your team sees what and who is valued and rewarded as well as what and who isn't.

Also, welcoming ideas, regardless of where they come from in the organization, is the lifeblood of innovation at a company. If you look back over history or more recently in your own organization, you'll see how many new products and ideas came from unexpected sources. Finally, celebrating our wins is a great way to cement relationships, create energy and have fun.

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Key Concept 3: Competition: Individual vs. Team (Bill Bradley)



From the video:

Donald: “Performance is not just about you alone. I learned this lesson from Senator Bill Bradley. You may remember Bill Bradley from when he ran for President or, from when he represented New Jersey, as a US Senator. Senator Bradley, however, got this start and notoriety from being a star NBA basketball player. He has a very clear idea of the importance of team.

Bill Bradley: “You can say that you can define your success by how many points you score but that’s not how you define success. I don’t think. And, I’ve found that the athletes, the basketball players, who define their success by their individual statistics, ultimately become

dissatisfied. And, the real tragedy is that many of them who define themselves in terms of their individual statistics only realize when it’s too late that the most important thing was for the team to win.

And, for the team to win with you being a contributing member, that’s a competition. It’s a game. There are rules. There’s a time period and, at the end, they determine who’s ahead and who’s behind so you have a very specific area to pour your competitiveness into. And, I think that’s different from simply being nothing but a competitive person.”

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Program insight:

Success is built on teamwork, not individual performance alone. There are virtually no success stories that are achieved alone. Success is achieved by your organization, not just by individuals within it. You can have the greatest salesperson or manager in the world, but if his or her division or company as a whole fails, you've all lost the game.

Understanding and thriving within your company, joining forces with those of like mind and spirit and clearly knowing your costs and deadlines, as well as upholding the highest ethical standards are all needed to win and win consistently. What Bradley is articulating is that you might have one star talent who is really smart and makes the sale. But without other team members to fulfill on the promise to satisfy customers or clients, then all you have is a competitive person in a failing group. In any group endeavor, many hands touch the process that becomes a "success" or a "win," and all are important to that win.

Just as the collective skill set of a team is necessary to win, it can also compensate for individual deficiencies or momentary weaknesses. This makes the team stronger and flexible to withstand transition and change. When authority rests with the team, it can agree upon core values and ground rules. The team can also serve as a safeguard preventing rogue behavior or potential ethics violations.

Some rules of the team can be as simple as setting up the frequency of meetings to more serious issues such as establishing the operating principles of the team to insure respect and integrity:

- Frequency of meetings and setting agendas
- Meeting protocols: meeting on time, how follow up is handled.
- Principles: ID how to handle conflict, respect, confidentiality
- Ethics and integrity ground rules: more than one set of eyes signs off on a project
- Decision making guidelines: majority or consensus
- Communication: how to communicate outside the group

While teams are usually very clear about their goals, they're often not clear about the values of various team members. Therein lies the rub or where conflict can occur. Members can feel disrespected or devalued. Assumptions are too often made on superficial signals, such as skin color, age, whether someone is married or single. Each of us carries a set of ideas on how the world works based on our personal psychological history, DNA, location and culture.

Individuals in a well functioning team will continuously explore and respect each other's values. Knowing and aligning those values around the goals of the team helps the team evolve, adapt to change and win.

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Activities

Activity 1: Create a Team Vision

- Team clearing: Teams can have an inner dialogue or “negative self talk” that does not serve them. Have them list these negative beliefs.
- Repositioning: Have them rephrase these negatives in the positive with action items. Example of negative self talk: “We never succeed.” Reposition: “There are times when we haven’t succeeded, but success is around the corner if we stick to our deadlines.”
- Create a team tagline that is empowering. Some examples: “We always succeed no matter what obstacle is thrown our way.” “We’re the lean, mean, do it team .”

Activity 2: Understand Cultural Differences and Values

- Each team member shares a favorite proverb such as “the early bird gets the worm” or, “don’t judge a book by its cover”. Depending on the members of the team, the proverbs could come from other countries or cultures. This is a great way to create understanding and value of different people.

The team members explain why they like the proverb they chose and what the underlying value is behind it. This informs the team of what various members’ value and also allows the team to discuss how it is beneficial to the functioning of the team as a whole. Once the values are identified, it allows the team to provide feedback for certain behavior.

- Discuss how these values affect the team:

Possible Examples:

- “Don’t judge a book by its cover” could mean that anyone’s idea is worth hearing, regardless of their position in the organization. Moral of the proverb: Listen to all ideas.
 - “The appetite comes during a meal” might imply that as a team works on a project, they are energized along the way as they see what is created. Moral of the proverb: Taking action versus procrastinating creates energy.
 - “You miss 100% of the shots you never take” could possibly mean success doesn’t come without taking risks. Moral of the proverb: Take educated risks to win.
- Create a new proverb for the team: Example: “A team that listens is innovative and worth being on.”

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Activity 3: Express Gratitude (quick 5 minute exercise)

Express gratitude to team members. Turn to a team member on your right and thank him/her for something s/he has done in the past month. Then, have the members on the right turn to the members on the left and have them express their gratitude. (Make sure members who have sat near each other don't do so the following month).

Donald's Take:

For me, the lesson here is: if the team wins, I win. If the team wins, you win. That's really what matters.

Now, as a reporter, this lesson shows up often. I can think I've saved the day with an exclusive interview or maybe breaking a story, but I could not do that alone. If the cameraman isn't there, I can't capture the emotion of the story or the pictures. Without a producer or an editor, the story might not come across as clearly or have nearly as great an impact.

Amateur athletes really get this concept. They connect with each other, they have fun and they revel in the team's win. This is very different from what you see in professional sports where the focus is about one very expensive player very often, instead of about the team.

At the end of the day, your win and contribution is possible because of the combined efforts of your team. Their win is your win.

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Key Concept 4: Consistency & Change (Steve Case)

From the video:

Donald: “This lesson is about smoothing out the emotional bumps in the journey of your team.

In the early 1990s, AOL founder Steve Case sat in the driver’s seat as his internet company raced to success. AOL experienced fast growth when people embraced the

Internet as a tool to communicate and to be entertained.

Then, the speed bumps: problems materialized; technological failures; disappointed customers and the Internet stock market crash of 2000 shortly after AOL merged with Time Warner.

When I interviewed Steve Case, he said the important role of a leader is to manage how the team reacts through these cycles; when they’re riding high and when it’s bad.

Steve Case: “There are very few examples of things that were just sort of a rocket ship one way up. It’s much more up and down. I think the ability to manage those ups and downs, as a leader of a company, actually be a shock absorber for those ups and downs. When people are down, almost giving up, reminding them why it’s important to stay the course and why this journey is so interesting. And when they’re up, and maybe everything’s going well and they think they’re the smartest people in the world, reminding them that maybe they’re lucky too.”

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Program Insight:

Everything is changing, always. Change and challenges come from every direction: the government, mergers, young people, competition from an upstart, cheaper labor from overseas, shifting consumer tastes or technology, to name just a few! How will your team react? Will they be flexible and forward thinking? Will they rise to the challenge? Will they improvise and innovate? Will they embrace the inevitable? Or, will they resist the twists and turns in any road, and even complain that, “Things have changed!”?

The key is to strengthen ourselves and our teams so that when the tough times come like a recession or a layoff, we can weather them. Being on guard against our own assumptions as well as welcoming diverse ideas will help our team spot opportunities about the changing marketplace. Also, knowing or “growing” our own character and who we want to be in the face of change, can tremendously help our team. For instance, your group could be faced with a greater workload as a result of a layoff or merger. You could complain and waste time and energy or you could choose to work with the team to finish the project.

One way to build team cohesiveness and strength is through connection and passion. When people feel connected and identify with their team and their company’s vision, that passion can be channeled into determination to carry them through the most challenging times.

A key insight from Steve Case about “smoothing the bumps” in the road is a lesson in managing our emotions as individuals and as a team. We can do this by staying focused and clear about the difference between when we’re riding a wave up or down because of the team’s effort, and when our ride is due to forces beyond the team’s control. We can also identify and listen to those on the team who have a better sense of the forces at play in our current situation. And we can all learn to refocus our attention on longer term goals and higher personal and professional standards.

The key is to realize that change is always coming. Once you and your team understand this truth, then you will gain a certain calm in the face of even the toughest challenges. The best leaders know that great victories are often followed by setbacks. Why? Because circumstances change. They also know that defeat can be fleeting. Why? Because everything is changing, always. When your team recognizes this fundamental truth of life and competition, you can develop a realism and resilience that keeps you vigilant in victory and hopeful in defeat.

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Facilitator Question:

- What are the key responsibilities of the team?

Possible Responses:

- Getting the project, task done on time and within budget
- Communicating to management and asking for help when a delay is out of the team's control
- Quality control

Facilitator Question:

- What is beyond your control as a team?

Possible Responses:

- A recession. A rebound. Macro-economic forces
- Cheaper products from overseas
- Government regulations
- Climate change

Facilitator Question:

- Can you think of a time when the team's attitude and persistence was the key to getting through a tough time?

Possible Responses:

- We created new products with a much smaller team
- We were creative in how we approached our production and found a better alternative

Activities

Activity 1: The Challenge of Change/ Navigate the Process of Change:

This can be done after a layoff, before a merger or any change that will affect the team.

- Communicate clearly why the change is needed.
- Have the team identify the gains and losses as a group facing the change.
- Have the team identify a new vision for the group with the change. Focus on how the team will function within the new reality.
- Involve the team in the planning and implementation of change and use their suggestions.
- Have team members ID controllable factors and specific actions they can take. Make sure to follow up so they feel heard and their ideas are validated.

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Donald's Take:

There's something very calming about Case's philosophy. Staying grounded and focused on the goal helps your team stay on mission. It also shields them from needless distractions. Achieving progress each day in what you can control and ignoring what you can't control. That fuels your team's win. And, you know what happens there? One win begets another.

Momentum builds towards more and more wins.

Preview

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Key Concept 5: Joy of Invention (Ben & Jerry)



From the video:

Donald: “Well, this next story sums up a lot of the ingredients that go into making a great team; serious stuff like good product management, clear strategic vision, equitable division of responsibility and, ultimately, listening to the opinion of your colleague.”

Jerry Greenfield: “Another busy executive call.” (laughter)

Donald: “Jerry Greenfield and Ben Cohen are two mis-guided

hippies. They never wanted, nor expected to be, business leaders. They met in the 7th grade and bonded as the slowest kids in gym class. When they grew up, Ben tried pottery but no one would buy his pots. And Jerry tried medicine but he couldn't get into medical school. Since they both loved food and couldn't raise enough money for a bagel shop, they opened an ice cream parlor.

Jerry made the ice cream though Ben would test all the new flavors precisely because Ben has no sense of smell.”

Ben Cohen: “I was supposed to be able to tell what flavor it was with my eyes closed and, uh, usually I could never tell and I'd say you've got to add more flavor.”

Jerry Greenfield:”It was very challenging. (laughter.) But, I mean it was the secret to the success of the ice cream. I mean I just remember making all these batches of ice-cream and I'd give it to Ben and he'd say, 'Oh, it's really good, the texture is good, I love it but I can't tell what flavor it is. You've got to put in more.' And, at the point that Ben could tell what flavor it is, you knew that you had a very well flavored ice cream.”

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Donald: “That meant an ice cream with lots of nuts and candies in it. Now, this could have been very frustrating. You can see where the blame could easily have surfaced. What if the customers thought others got a better deal? Well, it was just a risk they had to take.”

Jerry Greenfield: “He kept making me put in these bigger and bigger pieces of chunks.”

Ben Cohen: “Jerry always wanted to make them smaller so that there would be better chunk distribution in each scoop or in each pint and I insisted that it was critical (laughter) that the chunks be really, really huge and he said, ‘but, Ben, somebody might take a spoonful and they won’t get a chunk at all.’ I said, ‘that’s ok. That’s a sacrifice you have to make that’s worth it for the big chunk they’ll get in the next one.’”

Program Insight:

The story of the team of Ben Cohen & Jerry Greenfield has so many lessons to it. First and foremost, it’s about looking at an obstacle or failure as an opportunity. There were several points in their lives that Ben & Jerry could have thrown in the towel. They wanted other careers. They wanted a bagel store. They hated big business. They even launched an ice cream empire in Vermont -- one of the coldest states in the Union! Ben’s so called “weakness” was that he had virtually no sense of smell. Instead of letting that stop them or, worse, creating conflict between them, they laughed and used his deficiency to make a superior product; ice-cream full of chunks and original, strong flavors.

Another important lesson from Ben & Jerry is the concept of caring for one another, their workers and the community while having fun. That connection and friendship made them better able to listen to each other and tackle obstacles and create opportunities together. They broadened their concept of “friendship” to include their staff and the whole state of Vermont. When they went public, original shareholders had to legally reside in the Green Mountain state. The Ben & Jerry’s brand became known for supporting social causes and the environment. And, in the process they created brand identity, loyalty and a thriving business. In 2000, they sold the company to Unilever for over \$300 million.

Facilitator Question:

- Think of a time when the team faced huge obstacles and was able to overcome them. What behavior was present among the team?

Possible Responses:

- We listened to each other’s ideas because no single person had the answer
- We knew we were stronger together than apart.

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Facilitator Question:

- List the prices we pay for judgments that stop creativity.

Possible Responses:

- We lose our competitiveness
- Team members stop speaking up and caring
- We don't have as much energy or fun.

Activities

Activity 1: Accommodating Different Styles

Tight time schedules and rushing to finish a project can lead to squashing creativity, creative problem solving or missing the best ideas. Creative team members can feel steam-rolled by members bent on meeting a deadline.

- Have team members identify their personality and work style preferences and explore areas of potential conflict with others. Using questionnaires can help team members understand each other's styles.
Ask them to bring this to your class (or take a few minutes to have them write the following):
 - List your three top preferences for working within a team.
 - List why this is good for the team
 - List why this might be irritating for you and the team if it's overdone.
- Have the team discuss its priorities and preferred way of working so that all members feel heard and are aware of each other's preferences.

Activity 2: Realize the price of judgments

Conduct a brainstorming session around a problem or opportunity. The idea is just to open up the space for creativity without judgment, to get the wheels turning. You don't have to reach a final conclusion. Just push the team to come up with their best ideas. Do not allow judgments; whether that shows up as team members rolling their eyes or verbal comments.

- Throw out the concept of fining people with play money for any judgments. This will make each individual of the team conscious of how often they judge others.
- Be sure to write the creative ideas on a whiteboard as fast as they come.

Donald's Take:

The lesson I learned from Ben & Jerry is at the end of the day, it's about having fun along the way. Enjoying who you work with and that laughing brings people together to accomplish great things.

About Donald Van de Mark

Donald Van de Mark has interviewed hundreds of leaders in business and politics, including: Jack Welch, Starbucks' Howard Schultz, Intel's Andy Grove, Charles Schwab, Bill Bradley, Body Shop Founder Anita Roddick, best-selling authors such as Stephen Covey, Andrew Weil, Deepak Chopra and many more.



Donald co-founded baby boomer website, MyPrimeTime. While overseeing editorial content, Donald wrote and anchored two television series, "Great Entrepreneurs" and "Great Leaders," both of which appeared on PBS. Prior to MyPrimeTime, he served as the anchor of "Moneyweek" on CNN, "Street Sweep", "Biz Buzz", and "Entrepreneurs Only" on the CNNfn TV network. In addition to anchoring the latter three shows, Van de Mark played a key role in creating them as well as "The Media Show" and "Washington Unwrapped." During his time as a correspondent on "The Moneyline Newshour", Van de Mark broke the 1998 story about the near collapse of the Long Term Capital Management hedge fund.

Before arriving at CNN in August 1995, Van de Mark was director of corporate communications for QVC, serving as deputy to chairman and CEO Barry Diller during the period that QVC attempted takeovers of Paramount Communications and CBS. Prior to his time at QVC, Van de Mark spent nearly 10 years as a business and political news reporter in Washington, D.C., where he was the first National Correspondent at CNBC covering five Group of Seven economic summits and was nominated for a Cable Ace Award for a three-part series on China.

Donald's greatest passion and life purpose is to share his stories and lessons from great leaders. He is currently writing a book based on his twenty years of interviewing and profiling the best and brightest leaders to illustrate traits that define a great person as well as a great leader.

Donald was raised in Toronto and New England and holds a B.A. in political science from Tufts University. He currently lives in Sonoma, California.

About Success Television

Success Television is a media company that provides video and in-person trainings, speakers and tele-seminars on leadership, motivation, team building, effective communication skills and managing change. Our video trainings and speaker profiles are at www.SuccessTelevision.biz. Viewers can visit our sister website, www.SuccessTelevision.com, and ask questions and read articles from experts on Career, Leadership, Wellness, Relationship and Wisdom.

We work with best-selling authors, life experts, speakers and organizations who want to share their knowledge and wisdom. We also work with successful people, including top name CEO's, entrepreneurs and life coaches.

Our mission is to help you succeed. "Success" for you could mean achieving more balance between work and family; energizing your workforce or building a strong team ready to face change. "Success" could also mean developing your own leadership skills to spur innovation, increase emotional intelligence and work life relationships as well as strengthen your ability to serve your community and schools.

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