

From the Top

Q1 is about gone. That goose is cooked... it's done. That means, sports fans, that we're 25% though 2013. **25%**. That should either energize you into action, or scare the hell out of you. Budgets are put to bed, goals are set, and we're a quarter of the way to completion.

Or at least we should be. If we're not, something is amiss. Your process is broken if, on a calendar year, you aren't locked and loaded and in a dead run (sorry for mixing metaphors—I get excited about this stuff).



If it's *your* issue, get past it and "git r' done"... if it's a leadership issue, change it, fix it, or get rid of it. It's acting as an effective anchor to an otherwise steaming vessel.

If I can help with the coaching, leadership development, compensation planning, or strategy parts of your now-high-speed efforts, you know how to reach me.

New and Improved website! One more time, in case you missed it last month... Like a bad infomercial (But wait...there's more!), I'm hawking my new website; go see it here: triangleperformance.com. Don't forget to refresh your browser if you've visited the website before.

The website is a new look, a cleaner presentation of what I can do to help, and I'll be updating with articles and related content multiple times *each week*, since this website replaces my blog as well. *Check back often.* **If you**

would like me to address a specific topic or content, email and tell me. I'll see what I can do (your chances are good; surprisingly, I have opinions on most everything--that's a shocker).

Triangle Performance LLC's 2013 **Survey of Senior Leadership** is complete! You can download the Executive Summary here: <http://goo.gl/rbWCF>.

In the News!

proteuslife

My article, **Non-Negotiable Laws of Leadership**, was picked up by Australia's Proteus Life. Seems these rules for leading apply to the folks down under as well... download to view (<http://triangleperformance.com/publications/>). G'day, Mate!

IN THIS ISSUE

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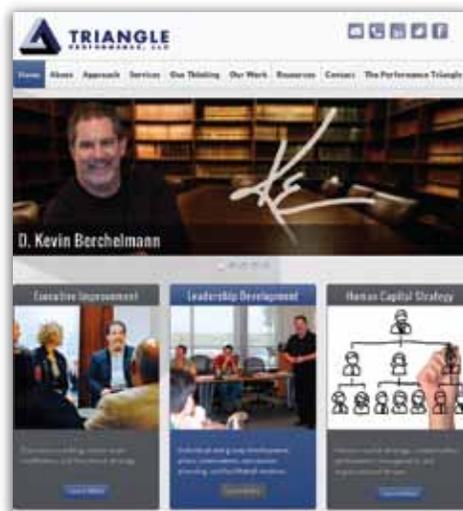
» Q1 is about gone

STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP

» Speed up to Slow Down

MUSINGS

» How to NOT be a Jerk





CEO People Management, CEO Online's information website, republished my article Incentive Compensation During Challenging Times--Boom or Bust? (ceopeoplemanagement.wordpress.com/2012/08/06/incentive-compensation-during-challenging-times-boom-or-bust)



My Houston Business Journal feature covering my firm (and a large, multi-year client) for an article on team-centric executive development. (<http://triangleperformance.com/publications/>)

On Stage...! This month's video: It's *Performance Management*, not *Performance Punishment* (<http://triangleperformance.com/videos/kevin-berchermann-its-performance-management-not-performance-punishment>)

Who are you, really?? Take a complimentary assessment. Go to my assessments page (<http://triangleperformance.com/assessments/>); then click on the link to take and receive a **complimentary Personality Assessment**.

He speaks... (apparently I have a message that resonates with some... who knew??)

I recently spoke to a group of manufacturing managers on the **Principles of Effective Leadership**. Audience was great, lots of learning and interaction, and some surprising comments when asked to identify the traits of "the worst leader they had ever worked for." Fun stuff, good lessons.

I also spoke to a corporate executive group (senior staff) on **Setting and Managing Performance Expectations**. Sounds easy... lots of places to trip. Really good session.



You can't get there without a plan--HR Planning meets business success (<https://annual.shrm.org/sessionplanner/session/4121>). I'm scheduled to present this as a preconference afternoon workshop at SHRM 2013 in Chicago on June 15.

I continue to present on various topic, one in particular:

Leadership is Easy... until it isn't.

Successful leadership in challenging times...

(www.triangleperformance.com/kevinspeaks/leading_is_easy.pdf).

If you'd prefer another topic for your event, let me know (and give me enough time to make something up to impress you--you won't be disappointed).

If you have a corporate, trade, or association event, I'd certainly enjoy speaking to your group. You can see more information regarding topics and details on my website (<http://triangleperformance.com/kevinspeaks/index.html>).

Further, feel free to download and read a few articles that may be relevant:

Leadership and Retention: Keeping Top Performers

(<http://humancapitalresource.net/kevin-berchermann/leadership-and-retention-keeping-top-performers>),

The Goal is Success...NOT Perfection

(<http://executiveimprovement.com/kevin-berchermann/the-goal-is-successnot-perfection>), and

Self-Confidence: Birthright or "Good Learning??"

(<http://humancapitalresource.net/kevin-berchermann/self-confidence-birthright-or-good-learning>)

Are you social? Like me on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TrianglePerformance>), follow me on Twitter (@TriangleKB), or connect with me on LinkedIn (<http://www.linkedin.com/in/berchermann>).

If you'd like to know how I can assist you, your organization, or a colleague of yours, please fill out this form (<http://triangleperformance.com/contact/>) and I'll send you some specific information, articles, engagement results, and so forth.

As always, I hope this finds you well, personally and professionally; please give me a call if I can ever help in any way, and **feel free to forward this to anyone you feel may be interested.** (Really!) *I appreciate your referrals.*

Warm Regards,



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Strategy & Leadership

Speed up to Slow Down

-- *Let me explain my "slow down" plan...*

In the movie "American President," Michael Douglas plays Andrew Shepherd, the President of the United States, who happens to be single due to the unexpected death of his wife just before the election. Sydney Ellen Wade, played by Annette Bening, is the lobbyist who, to no surprise, has "caught the President's eye." Truth be known, Bening would catch *my* eye too, but I digress (and hope Traci doesn't read this newsletter).

Anyway, Wade is a bit taken aback by President Shepherd's overtures, so the President, looking long term (strategy) versus short term (tactical), suggests a "slow down plan," whereby they would slow the speed at which their relationship was progressing so the longer-term relationship could succeed. Strategic thinking 101.

Now, the scene was funny (contrary to my contrived description here), but I think it has application in our world (no, not Bening, guys, the "slow down plan").

Often, we try and move leadership too fast, when a "slow-down plan" would better serve us. For example:

1. Online training. It moves fast, sounds good, appears cost-conscious, and only involves the learner and a computer. The reality, however, is that online learning is only effective for specific, routine, technical skill-building, and foundational knowledge-based education. It can also be effective for reinforcement of previously learned skills, but it's a lousy alternative for building situational, relationship skills (leadership, communications, conflict, etc.).

Slow down, do it right.

2. Performance Management. Online appraisal systems seem to be the panacea of the moment. Perhaps if we did them correctly (annual appraisals should be merely the documentation/formalization of a year-long dialog), then they could work. As the primary system for *managing* performance--not just *memorializing*--they are woefully inadequate. Online may mean fast, maybe even efficient; it doesn't mean effective.

Slow down, do it right.

3. Communications. I like email. I like text messaging. Both are convenient mediums for simply sending simple information. They are lousy vehicles for nuance, terrible for creating relationships, and totally are totally inadequate when trying to develop leadership trust. Use them for their purpose, ignore them when "personal" matters.

Slow down, do it right.

Look, I'm not railing against technology. I'm no Luddite, and clearly we should use all available resources to succeed. What I'm saying is we need to realize that our goal isn't speed for speed's sake, nor is it a "check" next to a corporate "to-do." Our goal should be successfully creating change--in behaviors, actions, and engagement, of those we lead.

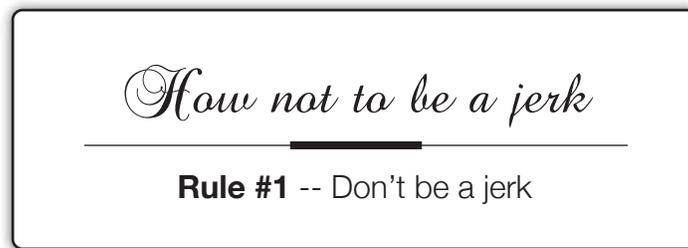
So, I say again--slow down, do it right.

Musings

How to NOT be a Jerk

-- Rule #1: Don't be a jerk...

A friend and colleague, Dave Liddell of Skye Business Solutions (<http://www.skye-solutions.com>), sent me an email recently. It was meant to be funny (and was!), as it proclaimed in fancy, framed script:



It really can be that simple. I say can be, since one person's jerk is another person's *high-standards leader*. We won't argue that point here--let's just assume we want to reduce the overall *jerk-ness* of our organization, How do we do it?

It's easier than you think...

First, **be approachable**. Open-door doesn't have to mean *revolving* door, but if people are afraid to cross your moat (even if the fear is largely unfounded), you need to do something about that. As a leader, you never, ever, want people reticent to share with you. Bad news doesn't stop just because you put up a big wall, water and crocodiles... you just stop *receiving* it yourself.

As a senior leader, are you better served knowing what's going on in your scope of accountability, or not? Answer, and *act accordingly*.

Next, **give regular feedback**. If you're a jerk, you're probably saying to yourself, "But wait a minute, Kevin--that's why they think I'm a jerk!" Listen up, grasshopper...

Giving regular feedback isn't just a butt-chewing (even if deserved), nor is it just a performance critique (ibid). Managing by *exception* is the easy way out. Giving infrequent, negative feedback doesn't endear your input to someone--it makes them dread any communications from you. Is that really what you want?

Give feedback, regularly and frequently, on all sorts of things, issues, accomplishments and challenges. If useable feedback becomes the norm, you'll be surprised at how willing people can be to receive even the *negative* feedback.

It's all in the delivery.

Finally, just **be nice**. Those who know me know I'm not one of those soft, fluffy types. My leadership facilitation doesn't include kooshie balls and plastic gummy figurines. But you'll find if you just "act nice" with employees, good things will happen (and you may just enjoy your day a bit more, too).

In the movie "Roadhouse" (I'm old, I like movies, so shoot me...), Patrick Swayze plays Dalton, a "Cooler"--sort of a bouncer's bouncer--in a rough bar. When asked by some of his underling bouncer staff about what they should do when trouble erupts, he tells them simply to "be nice."

"Be *nice* until it's time to *not* be nice." That's good advice, be it a bar or a corporate department.

I have this client (my typical story-starter), and I'm facilitating some of their teams, simply to help them realize the added benefits of working really well together toward common goals. This team's leader is a senior manager, and he mentioned to me that one of his frontline leaders wasn't all that enthused about attending our sessions.

In fact, this leader told him that he *"don't need no Dr. Phil telling me to make nice with my employees."*

My simple question to that frontline leader (never mind the dubious-but-cool reference to Dr. Phil) would be: I'm not sure about that... **do you??**

Thanks again, Don.

But that's just me...