

Leadership Essentials for a Healthy In-house Culture

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Questions and Discussions Drive Healthy Working Environments and Make GREAT Leaders



Being smart doesn't necessarily make a person a great leader. At least, that's the way Rich Baer sees it.

Baer, who is General Counsel and Chief Administrative Officer of Qwest, Communications, recently - and poignantly- wrote a [post for his blog, Reliance on Counsel](#), in which he points out the obvious: **People in a position of authority are perceived to be smarter and, therefore, are less likely to be questioned or even asked for clarity when their direction is unclear.**

This is, as Baer writes, "one of the key perils of leadership..."

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"Somehow, as a leader, you need to create an environment where questions are welcomed. It must be one that is respectful, so that people feel they can raise issues without getting their head lopped off (which is a challenge due to the pressure and time constraints under which in-house attorneys typically operate)," writes Baer.

Simply put: **You're not as smart as you think you are.** And, if you really are smarter than the rest of the people in the room - don't let them know it. While being smart will give you confidence, it may also generate an air about you that may be, well, haughty.

Disagree without being disagreeable. Encourage those around you to mix it up. Develop healthy dialogues. Ponder questions. These are the KEYS to a healthy in-house culture.

And, thank you to Rich Baer for pointing this out.

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