



PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

2.27 A “TRANSFORMING” ATTITUDE

The process of transforming never stops; it requires the persistence to continuously learn and to renew ourselves spiritually, both at work and in our personal lives.

A few years ago, Francisco Roberto Canada, a director and partner of the Argentine publishing company Errepar S.A., realised that his company was “losing its spirit.” He had long held a spiritual view of life and led his company from that basis:

To me, spirituality is the search for true happiness. And I have come to realise that happiness in life is to do all the work for God, to take part in God's creation, and to leave the fruits of my actions, my products, to God. As a leader, I make an effort that our companies all do good business, do good work, and make good products in the way of God.

But something was missing... though it wasn't the lack of a noble purpose, for he, his partners and his staff were highly inspired by their work:

One of our activities is publishing spiritual, cultural, and educational books. We look upon this activity as a possibility of helping to make a better world. We are working to include the principles of human values, which are so central in our spiritual paths, in the books we are publishing for primary and secondary schools – not only into books about societal affairs, but also in books about mathematics, biology or history.

As we examined Francisco Canada's history as a business leader, through ups and downs, we saw that he embodied the ability to bring forth the spirit of creativity, to stay open to continuous learning, and to energise people into action by tapping into what is most meaningful. In other words, he was an example of the *transforming* aspect of a SPIRITED person at work (the “T” in our acronym).

How did he exemplify this transforming quality? First, he and the other two owners set out to implement a set of spiritual principles for operating the company and uplifting each person in their work:

We held weekly meetings with the sales managers, product managers, systems managers, and all the staff, where we discussed how to apply the teachings and principles of spiritual leadership, both at work and in our daily life. We focused on principles based on human values of truth, right action, love, peace and non-violence - not on religion. The employees accepted this in a wonderful way.

The meetings focused on transforming how each staff person made decisions in accord with those human values:

Sometimes the managers have to make decisions that are so subtle that they say: 'Well, there is a thin red line between what is a good decision and what is not, between what is right to do and what is wrong to do.' We try to make people aware of what has to be done in those situations.

But as years passed, the business grew, the meetings stopped, and the transforming spirit grew dim:

When we, the three owners, worked directly with everybody, there was a certain family spirit in the company. When we began growing as a business, and changed the organisational structure by installing general managers for each of the companies, the spirit of the overall organisation suffered. The weekly meetings stopped during the time when the company went through hard times for a period of roughly three years.

That was when Francisco and his partners realised their mistake. They needed to reinvigorate the transforming, creative attitude of all the company managers and staff:

Recently we have taken up the weekly meetings again with the managers, with the middle management, and with the employees. People who have been with us for 25 years feel that the whole organisation is going to revive the old family spirit.

Francisco has learned that the process of transforming never stops. It requires the persistence to continuously learn and renew ourselves spiritually, both at work and in our personal lives:

Our goal is to make people aware of their inner potentials, to help bring out these potentials, and to always strive for excellence. Excellence is the way that God made the world. I also think this should be the purpose of business in general.

So, ask yourself: *Where in my work could I apply a spiritually transforming attitude to bring about a new level of energy and creativity?*

This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Book 2 – Work as a Spiritual Practice*. To download the full book of articles, as well as additional book chapters, articles, workbooks, and research on the subject of “spirituality and human values for leadership and work”, visit our website: www.globaldharma.org