



Performance Matters

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Newsletter

100% Responsibility Let Your Voice Be Heard

*You are not only responsible for what you say,
but also for what you do not say."*

■ Martin Luther

Every time people skirt their responsibilities, they lose their strength and their voice. When they don't stand accountable for something they did, they are not claiming their rightful power or ability. In this changing world, people are becoming more and more quiet, afraid to stand up for what they believe and hesitant to stand accountable for their words and actions. In short, people are losing their voices and without those voices individuals and organizations will not develop and flourish.

Inside this Issue:

Transforming Conversations
Rate Your Confidence
Never Stop Questioning
Favorite Quotes
Leadership

Robin Wilson is the founder of Reach and Achieve Associates, a performance and development coaching, training and mentoring firm that specializes in helping companies access, coach and retain key talent. The programs are designed to develop, support and maximize the people resource of an organization.



Robin has facilitated presentations with groups of 150 or more, and has been a guest speaker for several well-known organizations, including the New York State Conference of Mayors, The Governor's Office of Employee Relations, and the New York State Society of Medical Assistants Annual Convention.

She co-authored the book *Maximize Your Mind; Peak Your Potential* available on her web site and her article "Ethics in Sales" was published in the HRDQ Press.

Robin was one of the recipients for the Up and Coming Businesswomen Award of 2006

For a complete listing of products and services visit our web sites at:

www.ReachandAchieve.com and
www.PerformanceLeadershipTools.com

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What Stops Us From Using Our Voice?

In their book, *How The Way We Talk Can Change The Way We Work*, by Robert Kegan and Lisa Lascow, they speak about competing commitments. We have hidden goals that often conflict with our stated intentions. Many of these commitments are not conscious on our part, but they do influence our actions. Let's say that I am committed to the success of a particular project, and at the same time equally committed to being accepted by members of my team. If I am in a situation where I have to choose between speaking out about the project and taking responsibility for my actions or being accepted by others on the team, the intention that is stronger in me will win out. We all have these competing commitments and they impact us every day. When we start to identify areas where our behavior does not match our stated intention, we can begin to identify some of our competing commitments and choose where to focus our attention and actions.

Another reason people don't speak out and act is because of sheer information overload. Statistics point out that we listen at 500 wpm and speak at 150 wpm. On any given day, we are bombarded with information and stimulation. What happens as a result of the information overload is a degree of shut-down. We end up not really focusing on anything; we just do our best to absorb the information and react to the crises of the moment. What is missing in this is the ability to identify and act on what is most important. There is a hidden *force* to respond to the pressures of the moment, and due to the volume, we are unable to adequately respond. It is only through being able to consciously choose what is most important that we can fully act and use our voice. If our attention is diluted, our voice and actions will lack strength and effectiveness.

Continued on Next Column

How Do We Develop Our Voice?

The first step in developing our voice and speaking out is self-knowledge. It is through *understanding* what is most important, knowing what holds us back and what our strengths and weaknesses are, that ultimately gives us the power to act. Without sufficient awareness, our voice and our actions lack clarity and we become victims of our thoughts and emotions. Through self-understanding, we gain awareness. The sheet between the conscious and the unconscious becomes thinner, which allows us to speak from a point of clarity and intention.

Once we gain a better understanding of ourselves, we can make conscious choices and our actions will reflect those choices. We can get out of automatic pilot and respond rather than react to the pressures of the moment. Responsibility and accountability are easier if we sift through our competing commitments and line up to what is most important.

As we move more and more into a global economy, the pressure will intensify for people to rise to the challenges. As a society, we must not only challenge ourselves to speak out, but challenge *our peers* as well. Let us all rise to the challenge and speak and act on what's most important!

"A person cannot make hard decisions, hold unpopular positions or stand tall for what he believes unless he knows who he is and feels comfortable."

-- Jack Welch

Rate Your Confidence Level

Self-confidence is essential to speaking out and standing responsible for our actions and is a critical ingredient for individual and organizational success. In order to increase our self-esteem we need to understand what impacts confidence. There are 3 primary sources to a healthy self-image: Achievements and Accomplishments, Valuing Ourselves and Others, and Acting on our Beliefs. These 3 components could be viewed as energy buckets. When one or all of the sources are full the performance level will be high. Vice-versa, if one or more of the components is down, performance will be low. Self-Confidence gives us energy to meet the demands we face and without that energy our performance will be impacted. Some of the results of increased self-confidence include trusting, expressive, open, willing to take risk, dedicated, and committed. People with confidence are not afraid to express themselves and put themselves out there. People with low confidence can be defensive, fearful, overly sensitive, avoid risk, non-committal, increased victim behavior and low personal responsibility.

Rate your own self-confidence in each of the three areas here:

<http://www.reachandachieve.com/self-esteem-form.htm>

The Self-Confidence Inventory is designed to help you identify the areas to concentrate on that will increase your overall self-image.

Never stop Questioning....

What is one thing you would like to change in your organization?

How can you exercise your authority, knowledge and influence to make this change?

How much of this is within your control and influence?

How much of this is outside your control and influence?

Are you ready, willing and able to take action on this change?

Favorite Quotes

“The worst of deceptions is self deception.”

-- Plato

Using the power of decision gives you the capacity to get past any excuse to change any and every part of your life in an instant.

-- Anthony Robbins

The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems.

-- Mahatma Gandhi

Leadership:

True leadership is much more than a position. It is a way of life. Take a look at the word “**l-e-a-d-e-r**” below.

L = Live and lead by example. Be a positive role model for others in all that you do in your career and at home. Leadership encompasses all roles and areas of life; it requires *self-development*, knowing your strengths and weaknesses and *learning* by the experiences that life offers us. Leading by example means taking *responsibility* for your mistakes and not being afraid to admit them.

E = Empathize. *Understand others* and value their contributions. So often we are quick to judge others without really seeing or *appreciating* what is being said or done. Empathy involves putting yourself in their shoes and seeing things through their eyes. Stephen Covey says, “Seek first to understand and then to be understood.” In this society, we tend to want to rush in and “fix” things with our advice and knowledge. Yet, we can only fix after we truly understand the situation.

A = Act in a positive manner. Negative emotions can prevent leaders from realizing their full potential. Optimistic leaders with their can-do attitudes make obstacles appear surmountable and barriers seem removable. Colin Powell says that *optimism is a force-multiplier*. When you display a *positive attitude* and reflect it in your *daily actions*, you’ll inspire others to act in a similar fashion. Thus, the force of enthusiasm helps expedite the work to be done.

D = Decide. Make important *decisions* while *valuing* the input of *others*. People tend to vacillate between making decisions very quickly without gathering important information and taking more time than necessary. This vacillation causes delays. Try to *align time* with the *value* of the *decisions* to be made.

E = Empower. Empower others to do their best by *showing confidence* in their abilities and giving positive feedback. Many of us are quick to judge and find fault with others. We are more likely to see the negative and respond to that, than to “accentuate the positive.” Take the time *daily* to compliment and value others. Empowerment *recognizes* and *develops* the efforts of others.

R = Relate. Concentrate on *building strong relationships*, ones that withstand the test of time. Building those relationships means spending time with important people in your life. Avoid putting tasks first and relationships second. Reverse that trend. Put *people first* and tasks second. Jim Rohn says, “*One of the greatest gifts you can give someone is the gift of attention.*”