

Turbo Leadership Systems

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

Issue 911

Blasting Ahead

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TURBO
LEADERSHIP SYSTEMS

Risk is required to get out of the mire

Kevin, Engineering Manager at Silver Eagle Manufacturing a company that develops innovative transportation accessory equipment based in Portland, told Session 4B of the Leadership Development Lab™:

March 2010, I was walking through our manufacturing shop with my boss, Mark Kingery. We were both commenting on how dirty our shop had become. Dust seemed to cover everything. I turned to my boss, 'It feels like it's raining sand every time I walk past this old sandblasting booth.' He said, 'I'm afraid if a fly lands on the old booth, it's going to fall right over.' My boss turned to me and said, 'We need to do something about this.'



"Our blast booth was falling apart and inefficient. The booth doors literally needed a forklift to open them. A front-end loader was needed to scoop up and recycle the sand blasting materials. We had some new contract awards that required lots of aluminum TIG (tungsten inert gas) welding. To properly weld aluminum, the environment needs to be exceptionally clean, you need a dust, dirt, and grime-free environment.



"I was a young engineer (my boss's words), and I wanted to step up. I immediately said I would work on getting quotes for a new booth. When the quotes started coming in, I was shocked at the cost and how limited the "off-the-shelf" booths were. I decided to see if I could design my own booth. I wanted to overcome all the faults of our current booth, include a hoist system, that would fit our coating racks, improved lighting for more accurate work, and an auger under the floor to collect the blast media to automatically recycle it.

"A few weeks had gone by, my boss asked, "How are the quotes looking?" I handed him my stack of quotes, with my proposed design, including the cost breakdown, at the bottom of the stack. He was so impressed, we started immediately fabricating our custom designed blast booth. I was awarded Employee of the Month in April 2010.

"The lesson I learned from this experience is to step up, step out, believe in myself, and take action.

"The action I call you to take is to take the calculated risks required to be of maximum support to your team. Step up. Step out.

"The benefit you will gain is you will be counted among those who make a positive difference. You will earn the respect of others around you."

Everyone wants to get ahead, and the slow plotting reliable team member is valued and appreciated. If you want to blast ahead, you must take the risk of rejection, the risk of being wrong, maybe even being laughed at. All invention requires the accompanying risk of being wrong. Don't let your fears hold you back. It's a dirty shame that so many experience lives of "quiet desperation" because they're afraid to speak up for their invention, their idea.

*Stop talking behind people's back -
you can't take it back.*



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