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Certified Speaking Professional

Donald Cooper is respected by clients in over 40 industries as both a “thought leader” and a passionate visionary in the areas of marketing, service and business excellence.

Drawing from his real life experience as a world-class manufacturer, award-winning retailer and business speaker, he has helped thousands of businesses throughout the world to add more real value to their customers’ lives...and more dollars to their bottom lines.

To subscribe to Donald’s thought-provoking, **free, monthly Management E-Newsletter**, email us at newsletter@donaldcooper.com.

Donald’s website, www.donaldcooper.com also offers free articles and business tools.

Are you an effective leader, even when you’re not there?

The difference between leading a parade and leading a business is that, to lead a parade, you must be right there, up front waving the big stick. If you leave, the parade falls apart at the next intersection. But, if you're good, to lead a business, you don't have to be there all the time.

Last week I had the great pleasure of interviewing a business owner as part of my "homework" for a speech in Vegas next month. It was clear that Albert really gets the leadership thing. He told me that his job is, first, to be absolutely clear about how things are to be done in the business and then to reinforce that clarity in everything he does, every day, so that when he's not there, the staff simply have to ask themselves, whatever comes up, "*What would Albert do?*" ...and then do it. How simple is that?

Sadly, the problem in many businesses is that the clarity isn't there. There is no clear and compelling customer promise. There are no clear standards of performance, appearance and behaviour...and values change with the wind.

How is it in your business? Does everyone know for absolutely sure what you commit to deliver, what you commit to become and how you commit to behave along the way? Is there a shared commitment to excellence? Does everyone, as a group, know why you do what you do? Do they know why their particular role is important in the overall picture...and do they understand the impact on customers and the organization if they screw up?

Effective leaders create that high level of clarity. In fact, it's their first and most important job. Only then can they get away from micro-managing, do other things to grow the business...and have a life.

For more information on how Donald Cooper can help you rethink, refocus and reinvent your business to create compelling customer value and long-term profitability, call us in Toronto, Canada at 1-(416) 252-3704 or email us at sharen@donaldcooper.com.