

What's Different About Leading Today? Truth.

"An unpleasant truth is better than a pleasing falsehood. Being lulled with pleasant falsehoods is verbal drugging. Eventually it destroys." - a Proverb

Early in his career, American actor Robin Williams starred in a weekly comedy series called "Mork and Mindy". The story line was simple - Mork was an extra terrestrial who conveniently looked like a regular human being; but because he was unable to lie, was not only easily identifiable, he was constantly finding himself in amusing and difficult situations.

Lying has become somewhat of an art form. Lies are often so subtle, so deftly woven into acceptable truths we can fail to recognise reality. Telling the truth has become easy to resist and awkward to employ - yet business leaders are being challenged as never before to be forthcoming and transparent with their dealings and decisions. Staff and customers are demanding more truth.

The "danger" of being a leader is knowing people are following you and you're responsible to and for them. Since leaders of customer contact centres manage so much direct contact and dialogue with staff and customers, the potential for seeing the benefits from truth are huge - as is the tragedy of deceit.

We all enjoy a good "send-up" but sense when someone is speaking falsely, hiding true feelings, making purposeful omissions, telling out-and-out lies, lying by innuendo or ambiguity - and we don't like it!

We know what truth is supposed to be, but until recently we were becoming numb to it by advertising that exaggerates product capabilities and benefits, politicians padding travel and expense statements, employers who deny there'll be more redundancies.

Truth in leadership begins in the heart. Here are six questions* to help you identify your "leadership truth":

1. Do you believe people are trustworthy?
2. Do you believe people seek responsibility and accountability?
3. Do you believe people seek meaning in their work?
4. Do you believe people naturally want to learn?
5. Do you believe people don't resist change but resist being changed?
6. Do you believe people prefer work to being idle?

Your answers to these affect everything you do as a leader and can reveal the quality of your potential contribution, especially in a contact centre where dialogue with staff and customers; and opportunities to benefit are multiplied exponentially over other operational areas.

[Read about the author, Darlene D. Richard, at www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm](http://www.CallCentreINTEGRITY.com/articles.htm)