

What to “Stop Doing”

“We spend a lot of time teaching leaders what to do. We don’t spend enough time teaching leaders what to stop. Half the leaders I have met don’t need to learn what to do. They need to learn what to stop” ... Peter Drucker

The funny thing about stopping some behaviour, it gets no attention, but it can be as crucial as everything else we do, combined. Here is a “To Stop List” to help deal with challenges in interpersonal behaviour, often leadership behaviour.

To Stop List

1. **Winning too much:** The need to win at all costs and in all situations – when it matters, when it doesn’t, and when it’s totally beside the point.
2. **Adding too much value:** The overwhelming desire to add our two cents to every discussion.
3. **Passing Judgment:** The need to rate others and impose our standards on them.
4. **Making Destructive Comments:** The needless sarcasm and cutting remarks that we think make us sound sharp and witty.
5. **Starting with “No”, “But”, or “However”:** The overuse of these negative qualifiers which secretly say to everyone, “I’m right; You’re wrong.”
6. **Telling the world how smart we are:** The need to show people we’re smarter than they think we are.
7. **Speaking when angry:** Using emotional volatility as a management tool.
8. **Negativity, or “Let me explain why that won’t work”:** The need to share our negative thoughts even when we are not asked.
9. **Withholding information:** The refusal to share information in order to maintain an advantage over others.
10. **Failing to give proper recognition:** The inability to praise and reward.
11. **Claiming credit that we don’t deserve:** The most annoying way to overestimate our contribution to any success.
12. **Making excuses:** The need to reposition our annoying behaviour as a permanent fixture so people excuse us for it.
13. **Clinging to the past:** The need to deflect blame away from ourselves and onto events and people from our past; a subset of blaming everyone else.
14. **Playing favourites:** Failing to see that we are treating someone unfairly.

15. **Refusing to express regret:** The inability to take responsibility for our actions, admit we're wrong, or recognize how our actions affect others.
16. **Not listening:** The most passive-aggressive form of disrespect for colleagues.
17. **Failing to express gratitude:** The basic form of bad manners.
18. **Punishing the messenger:** The misguided need to attack the innocent who are usually trying to help us.
19. **Passing the buck:** The need to blame everyone but ourselves.
20. **An excessive need to be "me":** Exalting our faults as virtues simply because they're who we are.

Correcting these faults is the best way to enlist people as our allies - which in the long run is a much more promising success strategy than defending behaviour that alienates people, These faults are simple to correct. The fix is in the skill set of every human being.

Your people skills often make the difference in how high you go.... A little *Executive Coaching* ... for you or any of your management team?

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