



Strive to be character-driven

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COLUMNIST

DEAR CHIEF: Work can be quite comical at times. Staff meetings tend to become massive argument sessions between the managers who are emotionally charged about anything and everything. I do my best to avoid these managers throughout the day but sometimes it’s impossible. Some day when I move up the leadership ladder, I hope I never let my emotions get the better of me. Any tips for me to have better character than the managers I work for?

AMUSED KNOWLEDGE WORKER



DEAR AMUSED KNOWLEDGE WORKER: I’ve seen my share of emotion-driven managers. It was like watching two immature people stooping to all-time lows, not caring one bit about their reputations. They’d swear and bully each other in front of peers and subordinates, and sometimes even high-level leaders. And I was just like you: I avoided these managers throughout the day out of concern they would blow their tops over the slightest things.

I learned over the years that people don’t respond very well to emotion-driven managers and that there was a much greater preference and admiration

for those who were character-driven. That’s when I knew I needed to develop and maintain good character in order to gain the cooperation and respect of my subordinates.

I turned to John Maxwell to learn more about becoming a character-driven leader. In his book, *Developing the Leader Within You*, he points out the obvious differences between character-driven people and emotion-driven people. Here’s what he described of each:

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Do right, then feel good.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Feel good, then do right.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Are commitment driven.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Are convenience driven.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Make principle-based decisions.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Make popular-based decisions.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Control attitude with action.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Control action with attitude.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Believe it, then see it.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

See it, then believe it.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Create momentum.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Wait for momentum.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Ask, “What are my responsibilities?”

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Ask, “What are my rights?”

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Continue when problems arise.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Quit when problems arise.

CHARACTER-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Are steady.

EMOTION-DRIVEN PEOPLE

Are moody.

As you can see, character-driven people make better leaders than emotion-driven people. And, someone with good character is often more praised and appreciated than someone with outstanding talent. Most talents are considered to be gifts, where good character is not something given to us. We have to build it piece by piece with our thoughts, choices, courage, and determination.

When it’s your turn to step up to the plate to lead, be a leader with character.



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