

2 Are you two people?

How many of us live our lives as though we are not one person but two? Maybe there's one for work and another one for home. Maybe one when we are in front of strangers and another in front of friends.

When you are with your boss, do you do behave in a way that is entirely consistent with the way you would behave when you are at home. Do you talk about your feelings and your instincts or do you modify your language to talk only about facts and figures?

The awakening

I have been a consultant for many years – too many to own up to! Twenty-two years ago I stepped out of my job. This was for two emotional reasons and one business one. The emotional reasons were that my second son had just died and I was leaving my third husband. My business reason was more complex. I had been a trainer for many years and this involved considerable management training. As a company we were very successful at it – I learnt a lot about training from my third husband who was an excellent trainer. He did have a few good points too! However, one of the things that always concerned me was that no matter how great individuals who had attended said the training was; with frequent comments such as ‘best programme I have ever been on’, once they got back to the workplace the greater proportion of what they had learned seemed to be forgotten before they had begun to put it into practice.

This seemed to me to be unacceptable and I decided that I wanted to get out of the business. It was at this point that my son died and soon after that I left my husband – I stepped away from not just my job but the life that I had lived for the last 50 years! The next year was a difficult one and I did many things to explore what I wanted to do with my life and to give me time to heal. I qualified in massage, sports massage, aromatherapy, reflexology, became a Reiki healer, an AuraSoma therapist and qualified in hypnotherapy with NLP. It was a busy year! However, I also went on some personal development workshops ranging from Tony Robbins’ Date with Destiny, Stuart Wilde, Landmark Education, Jose Silver Mind Control and various others ranging from the very intense to the seriously wild and wacky. The thing that began to fascinate me was this. There were countless business people on these programmes and I used to ask them how they used what they were learning here in their work lives. The response was nearly always, “We don’t. This is for us not for work. This would be far too ‘touchy-feels’ to use in the workplace, this is just for us”. This challenged me because it meant we were deliberately choosing to be two people – the home person and the work person. I then began to question whether this was part of the problem that so much training didn’t stick and was it possible to link the two halves together. Take personal development into the business world in a truly pragmatic way that would be acceptable.

Head or heart?

I think that it was at this point that I began to recognise what might be happening. When people go on most management training programmes we are appealing to peoples' heads. We are getting them to think about the best ways to lead, to inspire, to motivate and giving them all sorts of models that make this easier to understand. Consequently when they leave, all that they have learned makes sense. It seems obvious what it is that they need to be doing. However, once they get back to the work place life takes over. The urgent has built up while they have been away and has to be dealt with. Consequently when they get the first opportunity to look back at all the good things they have learnt a considerable amount has disappeared. Why? Because their heart is not engaged, it has stayed at head level. It is as though we have a separation of the two and we need to be able to ask the question 'what sort of leader do I want to *be*?' Not just the question 'what do I need to *do* to be a good leader?'

This became my turning point. My whole life and approach changed. I now only run programmes that impact the whole person so that everything that we learn can be applied equally – at home or at work. This is where the Living Leader Programme came from and has been well and truly tested with over 45,000 people across many parts of the world having participated!!

Here's an Idea for You...

Ask yourself "Do I behave the same way at work as I do at home?" "Do I deliberately create a different image when I am out in public than I am inside?" Then ask yourself why you need to do this. Which is the person that you are comfortable with and which is the person you want to be? It may be that you would like to include elements of both. Now ask yourself what is stopping you from becoming one person. Identify the strengths from each side and plan how you can take those strengths into both situations.

Defining Ideas...

You cannot expect the world to change until you change yourself

Robert Muller

How Did It Go?

Q. Ouch! This was like a sock between the eyes. No question but that I am two people. My male colleagues often describe me as a 'woman with balls'! Are you sure that showing a softer side at work doesn't get people taking you for a ride, especially as a woman in a man's world?

A. What you are saying here is something I come across often and I would suggest that the exact opposite is true. There are some excellent books around that may re-enforce this. Perhaps Maverick by Ricardo Semler is worth a look. Being a great leader is not about telling them what to do, it is about inspiring them to find the way to do it for themselves and this, I would suggest, takes more caring than telling.

Q. I try to be one person but am aware that I can be two. I sometimes get them confused. I come home and start ordering my wife and children around as though they are my employees! How can I become one without changing my style so completely that my staff and colleagues look at me as though I have lost the plot?

A. The first thing to recognise is that you have no control over how they think, so let go of that. Consciously choose what sort of leader, as a boss and as a husband and father, you really want to be and then write down the values and behaviours that this sort of leader would demonstrate. Share with them the sort of leader you really want to be and what that entails in terms of the behaviours you wish to demonstrate then ask them if they would like to help you become that person as an example to them. Now go for it, and ask people for feedback to see how well you are on track.