

## **Live&Work-Wise**

Nothing fancy; just a fast, free, fun read to inspire hope & improve skills to cope.  
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**In this Summer 2017 issue** (#3 of 4 annual issues):

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**A special shout-out to everyone who works in schools and with kids** as you gear up for another new school year. You have such a special opportunity to make a real difference to so many people; you have my appreciation and respect, and I wish you every success in the important work you do in the year ahead !!!

1. Thoughts to help you **Live&Work-Wise: Race, Diversity, & Equity - - how do you handle this in your team and workplace?**

Given the recent events in Charlottesville and subsequent national reaction, and because I focus on helping people improve their communication and relationships skills, I feel compelled to focus this article on the topic of race, equity & diversity, and ways to handle this topic in our teams and workplaces. What happened recently was another of many incidents that continue to strike the racial nerve in our country. Like any controversial subject, many people want to talk about it or try to do something, yet don't know what to do or say, or how ... I submit this is part of the problem – we are not talking about it, and in many ways our silence is also our complicity.

To be successful in today's workplace and world, one needs to be good at dealing with race and diversity among many "differences" when relating with others. So communication is key! Don't avoid the race and diversity conversation – use these situations as an opportunity to ask some important and reflective questions about yourself, your team, and your workplace. I believe that as you do have these discussions with others you'll be able to hear clearly an overwhelming support for making sure your services are provided in an equitable manner to everyone, and that you be responsive to a diversifying community. This helps keep things in perspective, expectations clear, and more of a readiness to respond if there is an issue or concern. For example, can you imagine what could happen if we had workplace conversations around any of these or other related questions:

\* How are you doing personally in terms of treating others equitably, regardless of race, color or creed? Are you aware of your own biases and prejudices, even subtle as they may be?

\*\* Do you address equity and diversity in your organization's mission statement or any other statement of guiding principles? If not, should you? And even if you do have a statement, are people aware of it, and know what it means? Is any staff training

needed?

\*\*\* Is your community changing and becoming more diverse, and if so is your staff changing too? Do you see other changes in the children or people you serve, such as language, culture, religion, age, gender, illness or disability, etc.?

\*\*\*\* How do you allow employees and customers to let you know how they really feel about how your organization treats people? If someone has a concern or question about race, equity or diversity in your workplace, who do they talk to, and how are complaints handled?

Be honest with yourself, and intentional with your work team about what you need to do next to improve how you address race, equity and diversity in your workplace. And look also for opportunities to celebrate your successes along the way about how you provide equitable treatment to everyone involved in and served by your organization!

## **2. A thought to help you *Work-Wise: While planning your back-to-school workshops -- offer a Parent Workshop too!***

Because most of my readers work in the field of education or with children through other programs, hopefully you will soon be (if not already) working with your staff and colleagues to prepare yourself for another successful new school year! And because the parents are still the child's first and most important teachers, I wonder how your plans are coming to help them succeed with their children in the year ahead? Their kids change so much from year to year, yet parents don't always know intuitively what new things to anticipate regarding their child's growth and development. Just consider the possibilities of how much more your students could succeed if their parents also got a "back-to-school" in-service to help them in the year ahead?

If this idea sparks your interest, I'd love to talk with you about the different ways I could help you provide this important program to your parents. They can range from:

\* I can share a presentation about many ways parents can help grow their parenting skills as their children get older, and strategies to help their kids succeed in school. This would be a one-time presentation, open to any and all parents of students in your schools.

\*\* If you're willing, after my general presentation about the parents role in helping their kids succeed in school, I like to coordinate with someone on your staff about how to share specific details about resources and opportunities available to the parents in your school(s) that are age and developmentally appropriate. This would require a little extra time to communicate and coordinate the program prior to the presentation, and their time during the presentation.

\*\*\* And if you desire to do this extensively, we can also discuss how to set this up for any or all of these groups --Pre-K, Primary, Intermediate, Junior High/Middle, and High School parent groups (or any variation); we'd also want to include staff who can share specific info about curriculum and what's developmentally appropriate for these different age and grade levels if possible, again requiring some additional time for planning and presenting.

I still have dates open in Sept. and October, which is a great time if you haven't already done so to make sure your parents are engaged and informed and ready to help make it a good year for the students. So contact me right now if this is of any interest so we can answer each others' questions and see if and how this will work for you!

### 3. Another thought to help you **Work-Wise: People Don't Leave Jobs -- They Leave Bosses!**

One of the "Ah-hahs" for people attending my leadership workshop is when we get to the question: "What do people want from their jobs?" Sadly, many supervisors are still stuck in the 20th century model of thinking the answer is: "High wages, Job security, and Promotion within the company." Things have changed!!!

Today's job market and workplace, and the new entry-level workers of the digital generation who are joining your profession, require some serious reframing and responses from supervisors. You not only need to be good at recruiting good people -- you need to be good at retaining them too! Bosses and supervisors who make the mistake of not understanding these new workplace dynamics also risk chasing your best and brightest out the door, because today's job market allows them the option of leaving a job they otherwise love, and they know they can do better than working for a boss who may be anything from inept, to difficult to work with/for, to toxic. For example, in his book titled "Drive," Dan Pink studied what motivates workers in the 21st century; his top 3 findings are:

(1) Autonomy - the boss says they trust you to know what needs to be done and how to do it, and doesn't micro-manage, second-guess, "hover," etc.; (2) Mastery - employees will have the opportunity to learn, grow and become more competent; (3) Purpose - in today's increasingly cynical world, many people want to know that what they do makes a positive difference to others.

Because you're a leader, I hope this reminds you to check your own perceptions about what you think your coworkers (and customers) want from you, and their job. Ask people what they think and what they need, and be accessible and a good listener so people will talk with you. Be the kind of boss people want to work for, and not be the reason they choose to leave a job they otherwise love, because of the boss ...

### 4. A few quotes related to **"Talking about Race, Diversity & Equity" for the days ahead ...**

*No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for loves comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite. - Nelson Mandella, "The Long Walk to Freedom"*

*It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences. - Audre Lorde, Our Dead Behind Us*

*In this country "American" means white. Everybody else has to hyphenate. - Toni Morrison*

*Hating people because of their color is wrong. And it doesn't matter which color does*

*the hating. It's just plain wrong. - Muhammad Ali*

*Pride is concerned with WHO is right. Humility is concerned with WHAT is right. - Ezra Benson*

*Every miserable fool who has nothing at all of which he can be proud, adopts as a last resource pride in the nation to which he belongs; he is ready and happy to defend all its faults and follies tooth and nail, thus reimbursing himself for his own inferiority. - Arthur Schopenhauer*

*10% of conflict is due to difference of opinion, and 90% is due to delivery and tone of voice. - unknown*

*Ignorance and prejudice are the handmaidens of propaganda. Our mission, therefore, is to confront ignorance with knowledge, bigotry with tolerance, and isolation with the outstretched hand of generosity. Racism can, will, and must be defeated. - Kofi Annan*

*I wish I could say that racism and prejudice were only distant memories. We must dissent from the indifference. We must dissent from the apathy. We must dissent from the fear, the hatred and the mistrust. We must dissent because America can do better, because America has no choice but to do better. - Thurgood Marshall*

*Racist thought and action says far more about the person they come from than the person they are directed at. - Chris Crutcher*

*Racism does not have a good track record. It's been tried out for a long time, and you'd think by now we'd want to put an end to it instead of putting it under new management. - Thomas Sowell*

*The piano keys are black and white, but they sound like a million colors in your mind! - Maria Cristina Mena*

## **5. What I Do, how to Contact me, and how to Unsubscribe.**

I specialize in helping people create more harmony in their own life, and in their relationships with others, by making Congruent Choices - aligning your Attitudes, Aptitudes and Actions - so at days end you feel Content, not regret. I do this by sharing keynotes and workshops that inspire hope and help people improve skills to cope (Personal Excellence, Communication & Relationships, Teamwork, and Leadership), and original music, stories and humor to induce some fun along the way!

*If you need a presenter who shares content, energy and inspiration, call me so we can discuss what you need, and how I might be able to help!*

More info: [www.kimratz.com](http://www.kimratz.com).

Contact me: Click "Reply," or call me at (952) 938-4472.

To Un-subscribe: Click "Reply" & write "unsubscribe" in Subject line to be removed from the list.