

USING THE 'CHRIS PAUL EFFECT' AS A GUIDE By Rick Boxx

Readers of Monday Manna come from many backgrounds. Some people are high-ranking executives, even CEOs. Most would fit into other classifications: Managers, department heads, salespeople, retail clerks, administrative assistants, entrepreneurs, professional people like physicians, attorneys, CPAs, engineers. The list could go on. We all have different levels of authority and responsibility. However, even if you are not a CEO or business owner, at any level you can still have incredible influence on your team.

A recent article in the respected periodical, Harvard Business Review, was titled, "Every Team Needs a Super-Facilitator." It highlights longtime professional basketball player, Chris Paul, as a super-facilitator. Four times he has joined a new team and within two years each team experienced their best record ever.

Chris Paul has become known for encouraging and getting the best from his teammates. According to the authors of the HBR article, teammates can add tremendous value to any team by learning to encourage and maximize the diverse expertise of their peers and cultivating trust.

This principle is not limited to the realm of sports. It applies to virtually every area of life, including the business and professional world. We all work on teams. Even entrepreneurs rely on skills and abilities others possess that they do not. So, while we are seeking to benefit from them to accomplish our goals and objectives, we can also strive to be like Chris Paul – to bring out the best in them.

Reading through the Bible, we find much being said about the power and effects of encouraging others and build up one another. Here are several examples:

Providing motivation. True leaders are people who prove to be worth following. That means they have vision and communicate it to others, work with enthusiasm, demonstrate how things should be done, and understand and value the capabilities of everyone on their team. "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24).

Setting the example. Working with excellence, integrity, determination and humility are just some of the qualities that inspire others. When we set high standards of conduct and behavior for others, the impact cannot help but influence others in positive ways. "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Sharpening each other's abilities. Have you heard of creative friction? This occurs in the process of developing ideas, planning, and actual implementation of plans. Sometimes this results in constructive conflict, the offering and discussion of differing opinions and perspectives. Just as metal blades become sharper as they come into contact with each other, we too can

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become sharper and more effective in doing our jobs in rubbing shoulders with one another. “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another” (Proverbs 27:17).

Receiving mutual support. Inspiring others and seeking to motivate them to perform at their best is not a one-way pursuit. Often there is a reciprocal benefit, receiving encouragement and support as we are striving to provide those things to people we are teamed up with. “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Regardless of your position, look for ways to encourage each teammate and their collective value.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of someone you know or have worked with that exhibited traits similar to the basketball player Chris Paul who was described? What do you remember most about that person and the effect he or she had on other people?
2. How do you think someone becomes a “super-facilitator,” being able to bring out the best in others?
3. Consider the team in which you are currently working. Is there someone – even yourself – that would be an example of this “Chris Paul effect”? What steps do you think you could take to be more like that kind of person?
4. If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, striving to serve and represent Him in the workplace, you understand He was the ultimate example of motivating others and challenging them to do and become the best they could be. How can your relationship with Christ enable you to become a stronger, more impactful member of your team?

Challenge for This Week

The challenges, demands and stresses of the 21st century marketplace are enough to wear down even the strongest among us. Take some time to do some personal evaluation: What is your typical attitude from day to day? Are you someone people look to for encouragement and inspiration? Or are you more likely to draw energy away from them?

It would be helpful to share your conclusions with someone else – a close friend or coworker, accountability team, mentor or group of advisors. Discuss – and pray about – how you can motivate one another to become “super-facilitators.”

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Matthew 16:24; John 13:15; Ephesians 5:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Peter 2:21; Hebrews 13:7

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