

Construction Break

Laugh a little, learn a little & take a break from the daily grind

Spring 2011



Safety Alert!

Distracted Driving Kills

The followings is taken from an open letter dated, October 4, 2010, and posted on the OSHA website. Please take

a moment and visit www.osha.gov.

The human toll is tragic. DOT reports that in 2009, more than 5,400 people died in crashes linked to distraction and thousands more were injured. "Texting while driving" has

become such a prominent hazard that 30 states now ban text messaging for all drivers.

OSHA is partnering with others across government, industry and the public to bring together important information and tools to attack texting while driving and other distracted driver hazards. We invite you to learn more about combating this problem by visiting www.osha.gov and at DOT's distracted driving website, www.distraction.gov.

"DOT reports that in 2009, more than 5,400 people died in crashes linked to distraction and thousands more were injured."

Empowerment: What Does It Mean To Empower?

Webster's Dictionary defines "empower" as a transitive verb meaning "to give official authority or legal power to; enable; to promote the self-actualization or influence of." Synonyms include such words such as accredit, certify, charter, commission, authorize, enable, invest, license, vest and warrant. Examples of empower

include seeking changes in the workplace that will empower.

As we attempted to research the concept or idea of empowerment, we found it to be an intangible and rather ambiguous process to define. We have heard the word so much that most of us look at it as the latest buzzword used



around the water cooler. Many employ the word not really understanding what it really means. If you were to read ten articles on empowerment, each of them will have a different take on its meaning. Thus, we must try to understand where the power comes from in order to make the action work.

The potential for empowerment depends on two things, First, empowerment requires that power can change; if power cannot change, if it is intrinsic in positions or people, then empowerment is not possible. Second, empowerment relies upon the idea that power can expand or grow.

Power does not exist in isolation, nor is it inherent in individuals. By implication, since power is created in relationships, power and power relationships can change. Empowerment as a process of change, then, becomes a meaningful concept. People empowering people can be invaluable; it is the interaction with the team members, watching others become empowered, using the resources given them, that allows for the success of the concept.

To create change, we must change individually, to enable us to become partners in solving the complex issues that may face us.

continued on page 4



Walter B. Davis Company

P.O. Box 35241

Charlotte, NC 28235-5241

TEL 704-358-3793

FAX 704-358-3887

www.wbdavisco.com

With Age Comes Wisdom

We wish a Happy Birthday this spring to the following employees:

Eric Samuel	May 7
Walter B. Davis	May 11
Dominique Fullwood	May 12
Harrison Agbozo	June 4
Evonne Fullwood	June 9



Empowerment... *continued from page 1*

The Leader's Equation teaches leaders how their roles have changed. The leader's responsibility is to create an environment where individuals are accountable and can succeed. Once the expectations have been set, the leader's role is to observe and assist as necessary, thus enabling individuals to become empowered. Accountability of performance by individuals can be gauged using the following measurements:

- a) Everyone must understand performance expectations and be well-equipped for success.
- b) Leaders are expected to, and willingly delegate, assignments.
- c) Leaders actively work to appropriately move accountability lower in the organization.
- d) Individuals actively seek increased accountability.
- e) Leaders transfer the accountability for personal performance to individuals.
- f) Individuals willingly accept accountability for personal performance.
- g) Leaders understand they are accountable for creating the environment of success (expect/equip), not the personal performance of each individual.
- h) Windows to regularly gauge personal and learn success are in place and actively managed.
- i) Leaders focus on desired results and support individuals and teams only as necessary.
- j) Individuals understand that once the environment for success is in place, they are accountable for their personal performance.

Employee empowerment includes Employee Engagement, HR Management, Employee Management, Employee Development and Employee Survey, which equals total Employee Involvement.

References

- Howarth, LLC (2009) Howarth, LLC TLE-01 *The Leader's Equation*
- Kreisberg, S. (1992) *Transforming Power: Domination, Empowerment, and Education*. Albany, N.Y., State University of New York Press
- Lips, H. (1991) *Women, Men, and Power*, Mountain View, CA; Mayfield
- Lukes, S. (1994) *Power: A Radical View*, London Macmillan Press, Ltd.

