

LEADERSHIP

To thine own self be true is a foundation principle

People who are working into a leadership role must first understand their own values, passions, and strengths, and build on those rather than trying to hide or repair their weaknesses.

In a highly interactive session on *Building Your Brand of Leadership* at *Fundraising Day* of the *Greater Toronto Chapter* of the **Association of Fundraising Professionals**, **Janet Froot**, President of **Horizon Leadership Coaching and Consulting**, laid down this precept for delegates.

"Powerful leadership comes from innate talents combined with experience and skills. From here, it is possible to be a naturally authentic leader. Too often, professionals assume a copycat leadership *persona* that is not truly reflective of their core essence," says Froot.

Emerging leaders should observe those who are already in positions of leadership to determine who they "resonate with" and analyze why, she suggests. They should read and talk about leadership to develop their own guiding principles of what characteristics would be appropriate for them in a leadership role.

They should also offer their talents and support to leaders from whom they can learn, and who will be more likely to engage them if they are interested, open and keen, she says.

Coaching... a developmental option

One way to prepare the path to a leadership role, Froot says, is through leadership coaching, a process that "takes people who are good and makes them great".

Coaching, she says, is a proactive development opportunity for talented employees. By design, it is a future-focussed, individually designed process that supports change, learning and growth. It's based on real time/real life scenarios and helps clients gain new focus and energy, which is important when taking on new leadership roles or undergoing some form of transition.

At Horizon, she notes, coaching is seen as a four-phase process, which usually takes six months.

Phase 1 comprises a foundation session, where a coaching alliance is established and goals and objectives are defined within the context of a compelling mission.

In Phase 2, coach and client work out where the participant wants to be in line with the person's values, passions and strengths, then define where s/he is now and what gaps lie between the two states. They then commit to the vision.

In Phase 3, they brainstorm S.M.A.R.T. targets and possible actions, declare their intentions, take steps to implementation, and evaluate their progress.

Phase 4 involves celebrating success, creating a sustainability plan, and completing the process, arranging for periodic followup.

"If it's time to define your brand of leadership, coaching is a great option," Frood notes. It should result in the creation of three transformational value propositions: **clarity** of vision, **confidence** in self and **commitment** to action.

For further information:

Janet Frood, President, Horizon Leadership Coaching and Consulting,

Tel: 519-471-5505, E-mail: janet.frood@horizonleadership.ca