



MONDAYS *with Mike* MONDAYS

Creating an atmosphere of relaxed intensity

Scott Mautz, in his book *Make It Matter*, shares the following excerpt about creating an atmosphere of relaxed intensity.

Linda Kaplan Thaler is the first to laugh at a joke or open a meeting with a funny story, and yet is the last to give an inch to the competition.

Nancy Kramer laughs when I tell her she’s known for creating an atmosphere of “relaxed intensity.” She tells me, “Yes, that’s me. The intensity comes from my push to bring out the genius, and the relaxed describes the fact that I do so with a smile and a twinkle in my eye.”

Julie Mininberg is passionate about taking time to laugh and just as passionate about making competitors cry.

Leaders who excel at meaning-making also want to win, and they want to have fun while winning, so they tend to excel at creating what I call “relaxed intensity.” The strong desire to win fuels the sense of being on a united, winning team and inspires people’s work with a greater sense of purpose.

Working in an atmosphere of relaxed intensity enhances the feeling that you are part of something special. Externally focused competitiveness nets a greater sense of mission, while shared levity yields a greater sense of camaraderie and belongingness. This combination helps employees better connect with leadership and each other.

Yes, the “art” of leadership is finding the right balance of what Scott Mautz suggests. This week, let’s take a look at our leadership environments at work, at home, in the locker room, in the board room, and in our service opportunities. Let’s see if we can energize a “relaxed intensity.”

Have a great week!

