



February 29, 2008

Watco Team:

By now you probably have realized I have a tremendous amount of respect and admiration for former Green Bay Packers coach, Vince Lombardi. There are many reasons why I feel this way, but one of the main reasons is that he lived his life in a way that revolved around self-discipline, which he learned early and impacted his success.

Coach Lombardi had a very disciplined upbringing at home and school. He was greatly influenced by the disciplines taught by his parents and by the disciplines of his education from Fordham University, a Jesuit school, and from West Point where the code of honor and duty prevailed. This discipline served Lombardi well throughout his life and was a distinguishing characteristic behind his achievements as a coach.

It should come as no surprise that Lombardi was a leader who dedicated his life to a set of rules; rules that when applied, set him apart from others and propelled him to become one of, if not the best, coach of all time.


The first of the rules involves self awareness. How we lead is how we are as people. If we do not spend the time to really understand ourselves through honest and careful assessment, then it will be difficult to know our leadership traits. In all cases, leadership begins with honesty and integrity that leads to trust. If others are suspicious of your integrity it will be difficult for them to trust you as a leader. Lack of trust is the quickest way to destroy the integrity of your leadership. As leaders, we are under a microscope. Inconsistencies between what we say and do can at best lead people to believe we do not take our message seriously, and at worst destroy trust.

There are four things we can do to improve our leadership:

1. Be honest with yourself. Take time to reflect on and understand your own strengths and weaknesses. Make a conscientious effort to improve on weaknesses and to advance your strengths.
2. Trust is earned through patient investment in building people through knowledge, understanding, respecting others and fairness in treatment. Trust is not earned through intimidation, command and control management or management by fear and greed.
3. We must have a track record of consistency in what we say and do. Don't try to fake it. People know the difference and to think otherwise is arrogance.
4. Never compromise your principles. If you do how can you claim them as principles?

Although there are many things we can do to improve ourselves as leaders, these four things alone, when practiced, have the ability to positively impact each of us.

Thanks for all you do for our Customers, People and Company.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Steen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line above the first few letters.