



September 14, 2009

This week in continuing to focus on Coach Wooden's "Pyramid of Success" I'll introduce Building Block #13 – Poise. For review, the previous Building Blocks were:

1. Industriousness and Planning
2. Enthusiasm
3. Friendship
4. Cooperation
5. Loyalty
6. Self-control
7. Alertness
8. Initiative
9. Intentness
10. Condition
11. Speed
12. Team Spirit

The first time Franklin Roosevelt met Orson Welles, the President graciously said: "You know Mr. Welles; you are the greatest actor in America."

"Oh no, Mr. President," Welles replied. "You are."

A star succeeds by engaging audiences. Leaders succeed when followers share in the vision. Playwright Arthur Miller observed that: "Leaders have the ability to find the magnetic core that will draw together a fragmented public."

Many experts believe that greatness in leadership is paired with theatricality. While this may be true in some respects, people more often than not can identify when someone is incompetent or disingenuous.

Most people think of poise as calm, self-assured dignity; but according to Coach Wooden, poise is just being you. Trying to be someone you are not is attempting to live up to others' expectations. Acting naturally improves our chances of reaching our highest level of competence.

Even when President Roosevelt used props in his fireside chats to portray a certain image; he did not change his natural persona.

Poise is a result of two fundamental and related traits: self-control and confidence. Confidence is derived when a person is prepared. When a person is prepared, they are in control of their destiny. Confidence leads to self control and comfort in who you are and your capabilities to handle any situation.

Mastering these traits, according to Coach Wooden, is not an easy task. How we master these traits is found in mastering each of the preceding 12 building blocks of leadership.

In the final analysis, the ultimate foundation of leadership is trust. People will follow those they know and have their best interest in mind. Presenting an air of something you are not or asking others to do something you as a leader is unwilling to do is a deception that destroys the foundation of leadership.

We as leaders at Watco must understand that leadership is a responsibility to others and not a right to be treated differently or to privilege. We must build trust with our People by treating everyone with respect, being fair and honest in all dealings and by building a relationship with our People through open communications. We are obligated to execute the management process and to perform this role as managers with dignity and with a formal purpose of helping our People achieve personal and team success. When we do this in a sincere and service oriented manner, we fulfill our responsibilities toward our Customers, People and Company.

Thanks for all you do to serve our Customers, People and Communities in which we work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. D. ...", is positioned below the text. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.