

HORSTMANN'S LAWS

The Art of Great Management

The observations and aphorisms that comprise Horstman's Laws represent 30 years of professional development leavened with a lifetime of leadership experiences. When I act in accordance with them, success follows. And, when I ignore or forget them, consequences are close at hand.



It's All About People

This is actually a hard-nosed, scientific and financial reality. Any hour you spend on people is a better investment than an hour spent on systems, processes, or policies. Great people can overcome average systems; average people won't live up to great systems.

ACTION » Spend time with your folks every week. Learn their strengths and weaknesses. Learn their projects. Learn their children's names.



More Communication is Better

No matter what the situation: work or home, professional or personal, boss or subordinate, it is always more communication that solves the problem or clinches the deal. And think about this: communication is what the listener does.

ACTION » *Pick up the phone. Provide an update. Admit you're behind. Over communicate, and you're halfway there.*



You're Not that Smart; They're Not that Dumb

You can't fool people. **Ever.** The fact is, people know when you mislead them. Yes, they might go along with you, but they know that it doesn't feel right. That *you* don't feel right. After all, didn't *you* used to be "them?"

*ACTION » Tell the whole truth. Don't leave anything out.
When in doubt, tell everyone. Use candor as advantage,
rather than seeing it as weakness.*



Control is an Illusion

There is not a single person whom you think
you “control” who would agree with you.

If you really think you’re so good as to control another,
then who in your organization thinks that way about
you? Stop trying to control. You’re wasting your time.
Build relationships that allow you to **influence**.

ACTION » *Build relationships based on trust. Say, “I trust you.” Let your team choose their path at times, even when you disagree.*



The River is Wide, the Currents are Messy, but *all* the Water Ends up in the Ocean

Watch water flow down river sometime. It doesn't march in nice straight lines. It meanders. It's messy. Scientists say 20% of it is actually going *up* river. Your organization is organic—it's made up of people—just like a river. Your projects and timelines are going to be messy and defy control. Stop fighting it.

ACTION » *Don't worry about or punish every missed deadline—wait for a pattern. Think about a chinese finger puzzle. Sometimes a light touch is the way out. Let go-flow—to get ahead.*



There are No Secrets

If you think you can keep something quiet in your organization, you're kidding yourself. What everybody is talking about is what's **not** being said. Everybody knows already. The one associate or friend that you felt you could tell has probably told someone else whom they trusted... and so on. If you try to keep secrets, others lose respect for you because you show you don't trust them.

ACTION » *Tell everybody everything. Forward every e-mail you get to all of your team...automatically. Don't go off the record.*



How You Feel is Your Fault

If you find yourself saying, “that guy/situation/boss makes me mad,” you’re wrong. They did something, and then *you decided* how to respond. Think about the word responsibility. (Response-ability) You’re able to choose your response.

ACTION » *Choose the right response.*
Choose not to get angry. Choose to understand why they behave the way they do. Your response will be more powerful.



The “Other” Way Often Works Just Fine

There's someone else out there who has succeeded to the same level you have with exactly the opposite intuitions you have. (They wonder how you got where you are too.) Your idea that *your way* is the *right way* is routinely controversial.

You just think it's right because it's yours.

ACTION » *Try the opposite every once in a while.
After your first thought, wait for a second—different—one.*

H O R S T M A N ' S L A W S

What are your laws and lessons?

What have you learned? Your successes have no doubt catalyzed your knowledge into wisdom. Are you sharing your wisdom with your associates? *Start now!* Because it's all about people...and more communication is better.

Mark Horstman, *Co-Founder*

www.manager-tools.com

To request your own copy, please write to us at:

laws@manager-tools.com