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A Lasting Leadership Lesson: George Washington's Greatest Leadership Talk

By Brent Filson

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Word count: 745

Summary: The most important victory of the Revolutionary War was not achieved at Saratoga or Yorktown, but in a log hut in 1783 when George Washington put an end to a rebellion by his troops by giving a soft-spoken "Leadership Talk".

A Lasting Leadership Lesson: How One Leadership Talk By George Washington Saved The Revolution (And Our Fledgling Nation) From Catastrophe.

By Brent Filson

Leadership lessons come in many guises. One unforgettable lesson comes from George Washington and his contribution to the most important victory of the Revolutionary War.

That victory occurred neither at Saratoga or Yorktown but in a log hut in 1783 with a few heartfelt words that literally changed the world. And it's not just a history lesson, it's a leadership lesson — for all leaders.

To realize what took place in that hut and its historical importance, we must understand what a Leadership Talk is and what was at stake at that moment in 1783 for America?

As to the Leadership Talk: There's a big difference between speeches/presentations on one hand and Leadership Talks on the other. Whereas a speech or a presentation communicates information,

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Leadership Talks do something more: It establishes a deep, human, emotional connection with the audience.

The Leadership Talk is a much more effective means of leadership communication. If Washington hadn't given a Leadership Talk in the log hut with this assembled officers, who were on the verge of revolt, the Revolution would have ended right then and there; and the history of America would have been far different.

As to what was at stake at that moment in history: This occurred a year and a half after the battle of Yorktown. Popular misconception has the Revolutionary War ending at that battle. However, in reality, the War continued to drag on; and as it did, the Continental Army became increasingly rebellious. Most of the troops hadn't been paid in at least two years. Their promised pensions were not forthcoming. Popular sentiment in the army was gathering to overthrow the Continental Congress and install a

military government.

On the ides of March in 1783, dozens of officers, representing every company in the army, met in a log hut to vote on taking this action when George Washington suddenly and unexpectedly walked in. He gave a speech denouncing the rebellious course they were on. But it wasn't the speech that carried the day; it was the Leadership Talk at the end of the speech. Witnesses report that Washington's speech left many officers unconvinced, and when he was finished, there was much angry muttering among them. To bolster his case, the general pulled out a letter he recently received from a member of the Continental Congress. As he began reading, his usual confident air gave way to hesitancy.

Then, unexpectedly, he drew out a spectacle case from his pocket. Few officers had ever seen him put on spectacles. Usually a severely formal man, he said in a voice softened with apology: "Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown gray but almost blind in the service of my country."

The deep, human, emotional power of that moment can hardly be described. It electrified the officers. Here was their commander who had never taken a furlough during his eight years of command, who had faced storms of musketry fire, who through his daring and intelligence had kept the Army in tact in what most of the world thought was a lost cause, here was George Washington modestly asking his officers to bear with him in an all-too-human failing. It was an astonishing turning point.

As Maj. Samuel Shaw, who was present, wrote in his journal, "There was something so natural, so unaffected in this appeal as rendered it superior to the most studied oratory. It forced its way to the heart, and you might see sensibility moisten every eye."

After Washington left the hut, the officers unanimously voted to "continue to have unshaken confidence in the justice of the Congress and their country" The result was that the Continental Army disbanded without incident after the War formally ended a few months later and thereby set in motion the peaceful events that led to the creation of the Constitution.

Without Washington's intervention, America may very well have become a kind of banana republic, at

the mercy of thousands of armed and angry soldiers and their officers. And it wasn't his speech that did it, it was a Leadership Talk.

Washington's Talk is a lesson for all leaders: The best way to communicate an idea is to bundle it in a human being. If you can't feel it, you can't lead it, and they won't do it.

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The author of 23 books, Brent Filson's recent books are, **THE LEADERSHIP TALK: THE GREATEST LEADERSHIP TOOL** and **101 WAYS TO GIVE GREAT LEADERSHIP TALKS**. He is founder and president of The Filson Leadership Group, Inc. has been helping leaders of top companies worldwide get audacious results. Sign up for his free leadership e-zine and get a free white paper: "49 Ways To Turn Action Into Results," at www.actionleadership.com

On St. Valentine's Day, Or Any Romantic Interlude, Woo Your Sweetheart With Chocolates,

Roses ... AND A Leadership Talk

By Brent Filson

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Word count: 415

Summary: Leadership authority Brent Filson asserts that wooing one's sweetheart can be done with a special kind of communication methodology which he has been teaching leaders worldwide for 21 years.

On St. Valentine's Day, Or Any Romantic Interlude, Woo Your Sweetheart With Chocolates, Roses ... AND A Leadership Talk
by Brent Filson

On Valentine's Day, or any romantic interlude, lovers should woo their sweethearts with chocolates and roses — but also a Leadership Talk.

My experience in teaching the Leadership Talk to thousands of leaders worldwide for the past 21 years confirms that the Talk is a boon for leaders of all ranks and functions in their jobs and careers.

But I've also learned, to my surprise, that many leaders are employing the Leadership Talk effectively outside their jobs in their personal relationships.

Giving Leadership Talks helps leaders get a lot more results in organizations. Leaders see how much more effective as motivational tools Leadership Talks are than speeches and presentations.

A Lasting Leadership Lesson: George Washington's Greatest Leadership Talk

Speeches and presentations communicate information. But Leadership Talks have you establish a deep, human, emotional connection with your audience.

That human connection is important in getting great results in your job; but it is also important in getting great results in your personal life — even your love life.

If you want to win or sustain the fondness of a loved one, a Leadership Talk may just make it happen.

Mixing leadership and love may seem like mixing apples and oranges. But great leadership and love share common elements. For one thing, when you are wooing your lover, you may be taking the lead. And for another, using a Leadership Talk, you're fostering a deep, heartfelt relationship — as great leadership often does.

Here are a few pointers on giving a Leadership Talk that you can put into effect this Valentine's Day or any other interlude for love. Before you speak, simply ask three questions: Do you know the needs of your lover? Can you bring deep belief to the relationship? And can you have your lover take action? If you say `no' to any one of those questions, you can't give a Leadership Talk.

The questions apply to lovers as well. To foster a deep, human emotional relationship, you must know what your sweetheart needs, the deep belief you bring to the relationship, and finally, the action you want your sweetheart to take.

However, the questions are not meant to be stumbling blocks to your Leadership Talk but stepping stones. If you answer `no', step back and assess your situation. Think through what you might say so that you can `yes' to each question. Then speak. Give a Leadership Talk. And, by the way, don't forget the chocolates and roses.

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AND A Leadership Talk

Here's The REAL Reason Bush Won: The Dark Night Of The Leadership Soul
DUMP YOUR SPEECHES FOR LEADERSHIP TALKS!

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