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Make The Elephant Jump -- Leading With A Kind Heart

By Brent Filson

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Leadership is not about getting people to do what they want. If they did what they want, you wouldn't be needed as a leader. Instead, leadership is about getting people to do what they don't want to do (or don't think they can do) - and be ardently committed to doing it.

This paradox lies at the heart of all great leadership.

Unlike management, which involves simply the care and feeding of your organizational elephant, great leadership gets that elephant to jump.

Anyone who knows anything about elephants knows that they may run, they may stand on their hind legs, they may kneel on their fore legs, they may roll over; but they don't jump.

And that's what leadership is all about: getting organizations to do what they usually can't do, i.e., getting great results consistently.

Now, you can't do the jumping yourself. The elephant must do it. You can't push the elephant into the air. It must jump of its own volition.

Making the elephant jump involves cultivating a special relationship between the leader and the people of the organization.

Many leaders misunderstand that relationship. They try to use fear and pain to spur the activity needed to achieve consistently great results. "Sure, I'll get this elephant to jump. Just give me an electric prod!"

But inducing fear and pain are habit forming and ultimately destructive both to the leader and the people.

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To make the elephant jump -- not now and then but consistently, i.e., to lead people to consistently to achieve great results -- deep, human emotional bonding between leader and people must take place. And fundamental to that bonding is the nature of the heart of the leader.

This is the secret: You can't get the elephant to jump unless you have a kind heart. Kindness in leadership means following the Leadership Imperative: "I will lead people in such a way that we not only achieve the needed results but we, the people and me, become better as leaders and people."

Most leaders focus on the first part "getting better results" and forget about the second part. But in truth, when you have a kind heart, getting results and helping people be better are not two things but one.

From now on, see every leadership challenge you face as a way of having people increase their

knowledge, their skills, their courage, their tenacity, and their leadership abilities. Cultivating that perspective is a kindness.

But don't mistake kindness for being nice. Don't mistake kindness for having people simply feel good. Don't mistake kindness for allowing people to indulge the worst aspects of their character, laziness, inconsiderateness, selfishness, etc.

Furthermore, you may be kind and have people be frustrated with you. Many great leaders I've had relationships with got me frustrated as they had me go through the trouble of tackling challenges I might not otherwise have tackled. (In fact, deep, human, emotional bonding cannot happen without a great deal of frustration.) But I was motivated despite my frustrations because I recognized that they essentially had my best interests at heart.

Yes, through skill, persuasiveness, understanding, forcefulness, education, and guidance, you can get the elephant to jump -- as long as you do it through the kindness of your heart.

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<http://www.actionleadership.com>

Elephant-Back Safaris In South Africa

By SA-Venues.com Editor

South Africa Elephant Back Safaris – following in the footsteps of the Ancients: Elephants, the largest land animals in the world, inspire a feeling of awe and respect in most people. Weighing up to 6 tons (11 000lb) and reaching speeds of up to 40km/hr, this monster of the animal kingdom has an impressive presence.

Whilst the majority of people will never have the opportunity to come close or even touch these animals, many South African game reserves (SEE:

www.sa-venues.com

) offer the once in a lifetime

chance to do an Elephant Back Safari. Imagine yourself, perched 6ft in the air on the back of a 6 ton elephant, slowly making your way through open velds or dense forests. It's a safari like no other. As such, Elephant Back Safari's in South Africa are growing in popularity.

Game viewing on elephant back provides you with the unique opportunity of getting really close to wildlife (SEE:

www.sa-venues.com/wildlife

) that you could normally only view from far off. The smell of

the elephants overpowers that of people so that other animals like rhino, giraffe and buck etc will not be scared off by the scent of people nearby. As such you're able to get close up to extraordinary wildlife. An elephant back safari at most game reserves is usually a well catered for event including meals and of course, the elephant ride. The elephants are prepared with a comfortable saddle and you'll be seated behind an experienced elephant handler. An elephant back safari will usually last around an hour and 30 minutes. Granted, your initial few minutes on the back of this monstrous animal will be endured with more than a little apprehension, but rest assured that as the safari begins and you become accustomed to the rhythmic and calm movements of the elephant, the experience that follows will be incredible.

Many game reserves in South Africa also provide the unique and enjoyable opportunity to walk along with the elephants as you move through the velds and forests. Being surrounded by these enormous animals and moving along with them during the safari is a sobering experience and one that is not easily forgotten. The elephant sanctuary near the Magaliesberg Mountains offers the opportunity of spending an entire day out with these animals and taking part in activities like elephant walks, elephant back safari rides, feeding and brushing the elephants and much more.

A South African elephant back safari is a truly wonderful experience. Being immersed so deeply in nature and interacting with such powerful creatures is deeply rewarding and satisfying and is an

opportunity that should not be missed.

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