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## These People Just Don't Get It!

Have you ever been frustrated with others in your life who just don't get it? Do you struggle with the fact that they just don't seem to have any urgency or a desire to get things done? Are you at your wit's end trying to get them motivated? What if the problem is not them, but you?

President Dwight Eisenhower once said, "Leadership is the ability to get others to do what you want to be done, because they want to do it." President Eisenhower was the 34th president and served in that office from 1953 – 1961. He was elected in a landslide victory over Adlai Stevens with a 442 – 89 Electoral College victory. President Eisenhower only lost eight states, the largest having only 14 electoral votes. Under his leadership, the nation grew and prospered. His legacy includes the race to space and the interstate system and an incredible expansion of the middle class. With all of that I mind, I believe his greatest achievements had occurred before he was elected to office.

A 1915 graduate of West Point, Eisenhower rose to the rank of five-star general and held the position of Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. He was responsible for the planning and supervising of Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa, and the successful invasions of France and Germany. In 1951 Eisenhower became the first Supreme Commander of NATO. Quite a resume! How did he do it? What did he know that so many of us miss?

I remember hearing from a mentor many years ago the following story. While he was serving Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, a direct report came into Eisenhower's office and began telling him that he was not able to get his men to do what he wanted them to do. While the direct

report was complaining about his men, the general opened his desk drawer and pulled out a piece of string. Placing the pieces of string, lengthwise in front of the officer, the general simply asked him to push the piece of string down the desk. The officer replied, "but general, you cannot push a piece of string". The general smiled and replied, "you cannot push men either. You need to lead them." Eisenhower understood what it took to motivate people.

Motivation is all about being able to influence, and influence is all about adding value to people. If you want to motivate someone do not ask yourself what he or she can do for you, ask yourself what you can do for them. What can you do that can add value to their life? How can you make their life, their work, their day better? If you can do that for them you will, in turn, bring about a desire within them to do what you would like them to do or go where you would like them to go. Motivation is an internal drive to fulfill a need. Until you can touch the heart, you will never be able to ask for their help.

When people are deciding who to follow they look for answers to the following questions:

- Can they help me?
- Do they care about me?
- Can I trust them?

If the answer to these three questions about you is not an unequivocal yes, they will move on. The truth is, people do not leave jobs; they leave bosses. In a time when skilled and qualified people are hard to find, we cannot afford to be a boss who does not engage daily in adding value to others.