



Leadership Living

the MasterPoint™ Series for the ascendant professional

by Tim Herd

“Those” people



I do believe in spooks! I do! I do! I do!

So exclaimed the Cowardly Lion in the Land of Oz: When confronted by a personal threat, he simply gave over to his fears and allowed their power to rule him.

Tsk. Poor guy. That was before he discovered he already had all the courage he needed. And though the threats to his personhood did in fact exist, their impacts were based more on perception than reality.

Kind of like cliques. Without doubting their existence, I don't believe in cliques, thereby denying their influence over me.

Despite being the crushers of self-esteem you thought you had left behind in junior high school, they've followed you to the workplace, the volunteer committee, the professional organization, and the civic club. Their existence is confirmed by the outsider, and reinforced by the in-crowd.

But like the Cowardly Lion's fears, cliques and their constraints (and all other delineations of people groups!) are more perception than reality. So let's look at it from both sides.

Everyone's more comfortable being with and working with the familiar. That's human nature. It's like your favorite pair of jeans you easily slip into every morning, and spend all your days wearing them. You enjoy the regular friends you have at the places you go and in the things you do. Nothing wrong with that!

But to develop true leadership requires stepping into new situations and responsibilities with new people, overcoming the easy of the status quo and the inertia of the habitual. It necessitates a purposeful push against the boundaries of your comfort zone to conquer, encompass, and assimilate a new, enlarged territory.

A fear of what *might* happen in that enterprise, however, is what shuts down initiative. In the movie, *Back to the Future*, when lovesick teenager George McFly wants to ask pretty Lorraine to the Enchantment Under the Sea Dance, he mourns, "I just don't think I can take that kind of rejection."

You'd like to contribute to a particular cause or group, but you don't look like those people? That's ok. Diversity is a good thing. It leads to stability. You don't think like those people? That's ok. Innovation starts with new ideas. Those people have never invited you. Those people are always the same ones doing it. Those people seem to be doing fine without you.

Who are "those people" anyway? They are those who likely share common interests and goals with you in the first place, and may harbor the same apprehensions you do in making and welcoming new friends and associates.

So how can we facilitate the common cooperation? Those people on the "inside:" express welcome and openness. Those people on the "outside:" offer willingness and openness. Meet at the open door.

True leadership necessitates a purposeful push against the boundaries of your comfort zone to conquer, encompass, and assimilate a new, enlarged territory.

Ol' George McFly ultimately forces himself into action, and in doing so, changes his entire future—and of those he cares about—for the good. Like triumphant George and the courageous Lion, we will discover that self-confidence, self-assurance, self-esteem, (and, dare we say: courage?) grow as we act intentionally to overcome our fears. And those so-called cliques become inconsequential.

MasterPoint 61

*Don't let the specters of cliques spook you.
Step up. Step confidently. Step In.*

©Tim Herd

follow at www.scene-herd.blogspot.com

tim@timherd.com

Leadership trainer Tim Herd is a career executive with extensive service in both private and public sector enterprises. He was the founder and CEO of America's first fully mobile environmental education center, and has been nationally recognized for his "commitment and exceptional contributions to the stewardship of America's natural and cultural resources." As an international speaking professional, Tim brings his observations, humor, and insights from nature, culture, business, and everyday living to help maximize our personal and productive best.

[Click here](#) for information on Tim's new keynote **Tapping and Refining Your Productive Best!**