



Authentic Communication Could Land Your Dream Job

By Lou Solomon

No one is surprised that Holly Kaczmarczyk has been named CEO of Wells Fargo International, headquartered in Dublin. She has done a stellar job heading the Business Credit division of Wells Fargo Capital Finance with teams across the country. She speaks several languages. She has 25 years in the business and a reputation for being a smart leader who got results with positive urgency and common sense.

Kaczmarczyk (Kaz-mar-chik) has all the right credentials, but what she has that makes her a true star is an authentic style of communication and the trust she forges in relationships. Kaczmarczyk wouldn't have been invited to interview for her dream job if it weren't for one of those relationships. She bumped into an old friend and colleague with whom she met for an occasional cup of coffee when they were in the same office. He remembered that she would be interested in an international assignment if the timing was right for her family. With her son in college now, the timing was right. Leaders like Kaczmarczyk are scarce so they stand out. What I hear from her clients, peers, direct reports and her friends is comments like, "Holly is just real." What exactly do they mean?

Natural charisma

Kaczmarczyk is genuinely interested in what you have to say. She is attentive in a way that elicits candid, interesting input from others. People want to tell her what's really going on. Research coming out of the Human Dynamics Lab at MIT shows that this ability contributes to an individual's magnetism and success. People with natural charisma don't have a mysterious gift from the gene pool. They do have an honest interest in people.

Real before rank

Confidence is the attractive energy that comes from not having to act like a big deal. Leaders who prioritize the human connection before wielding power are perceived to be more trustworthy than those who do the reverse. This is not to say that Kaczmarczyk is some sort of push over. Quite the opposite. She simply does not posture by title or play games of superiority.

Vulnerability

Many executives have a death grip on invulnerability. Kaczmarczyk has never minded giving people a glimpse behind her title. She doesn't pretend to be perfect or have all the right answers. She invites feedback and asks others to contribute their ideas. She shares what her life has taught her through the times she got it right – and the times she got it wrong.

Talent development

To help generate the kind of employee engagement that drives performance, leaders have to build strategic competencies that benefit the employee, the team and the organization. Kaczmarczyk believes passionately in developing people. She creates a culture of mentorship and promotion. She knows that in a tough marketplace, high performance people are the competitive differentiation.

Keeping promises

Think about a leader, co-worker, strategic partner, vendor or employee you trust. Why do you trust them? I'll bet it's because they are willing to keep big and small promises, and choose people over immediate gain.

Kaczmarczyk keeps the big promises. She goes to the mat for her people. She also keeps the small promises and returns your phone calls and emails. As Kaczmarczyk navigated the intense series of interviews in Dublin, she did not show up using resume-speak. She was conversational and focused on making a human connection with her interviewers. She told stories about her experience in the industry and shared honestly her concerns. She created chemistry. She got the job.

Was it a chance meeting with an old friend in the hallway, or a meeting she had been preparing for her entire career? Kaczmarczyk would say the latter. Authentic communication is not a “nice to have.” If you can’t leverage trust in your relationships, you may miss your dream job and fall short of your potential in leadership and life itself. Begin where you are. Begin with the next interaction.



Lou Solomon is an author, TEDx speaker and founder of Interact, a communications company that helps executives and their teams develop into strong communicators, with a focus on making real connections, earning trust and building influence.