



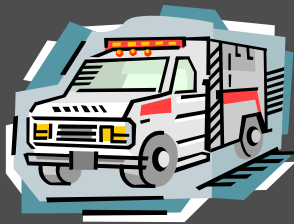
"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."

Monica Wofford

Articles

Cool Leaders Listen...
even when things get heated

You are relaxing on vacation out in the country... on a road that looks like that last scene of the movie *Cast Away*. You can almost hear a cow chewing grass in the distance. Suddenly,



an ambulance comes racing down the dirt road with sirens blaring and dust flying. Your instincts tell you to run out of the house and see what the commotion is all about. You begin to listen closely to where the sirens go and for any other noises.

Now, you are leaving the office, headed out to the multistory parking garage. Your neck is tense and you have had a long day. A diesel truck is driving into the garage and proceeds to set off every car alarm from the massive vibrations on the way up. The noise is almost deafening, but you barely look, and express little interest. You get to your car as quickly as possible, open the door, close it mainly to enjoy a little peace and quiet and then take a big sigh of exasperation. Depending on the level of stress and the level of constant "noise" in your office, these are exactly the behaviors you are exhibiting at the office.

When things are quiet and all of a

Contagious Leadership Article Series

7 Shocking Secrets to Leading in Uncertain Times... that will cut your attrition in half!

by **Monica Wofford**
www.monicawofford.com

The mantra has become "blah... blah... blah... *in these times*". Or I bet you've heard, "Well, it depends on what the market does..." or "We'll see come November." It is everywhere, it's contagious, and it is crippling our workforces and your ability to lead them. In uncertain times, people freeze, make no decisions, spend less in areas where they should spend more, and generally flee at the first sign of "greener grass". Here are some techniques you can use to be a Contagious Leader of people (including you) in these "uncertain times". These just may keep you from watching them all run out the revolving door to whoever promises them more money and perks.

1. STOP GETTING IN THE WAY

There is a book called *The Clue Train Manifesto* that talks about (in a round about sort of way) what happens when you tell people not to gossip. They do it more and get

In this video, Monica talks about how confidence and other things can get in the way of our leadership



"Click on video once. Then click arrow at bottom of video screen to play."

more creative with it. The same is true

for telling people to leave (or begging them or forcing them to stay with consequences or threats). When you force someone to stick around they find



"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."

Monica Wofford

Articles

sudden someone quits, you pay attention. When you're in the midst of a merger, there are impending layoffs, or you've just gotten a new boss, there is a lot of "noise" – psychological noise. During these times, if someone quits, you might listen and yet your instincts tell you to retreat and hibernate or at the very least pull back and reserve concern so that you can save it up for the bigger matters in front of you. Stress at the office will not only cause you to "lose your cool" on occasion, it will cause you to lose your sense of urgency, your sense of interest, your ability to be objective, your ability to listen, and your alertness.

We burn out (and flip out) fast when we are always on high alert. It's contagious and these days companies



are keeping employees on high alert almost constantly with so many changes, gossip galore, secrecy, lack of direction, and

poor leadership.

Keep your cool (and your alertness, interest, objectivity, and team) with a selection of these tips:

1. Maintain a sense of humor
2. Get quiet at least once a day
3. Open lines of communication
4. Talk about the stress
5. Give more recognition
6. TAKE YOUR PTO and VACATIONS!

ways to leave faster. Stop getting in the way. Let them go. And some will. But more importantly, stop getting in the way of effective leadership. Quit using blame. Avoid keeping quiet when what they want is more information. Bad information is better than no information, as without any information they just make it up to suit their needs.

2. GO NEGATIVE

At Sandler Sales, one lesson in selling involves going "negative" when the customer begins to show objections. For example, if a customer says "I can get this cheaper at another place." one response can be "That sounds good. I think that would be a better solution for you." Of course the customer might walk, but more often when

one goes negative, the customer will follow and want to be included. The same is true for leadership. If an employee says "I think I should go work for someone else." you might try "That sounds like a good plan. Should I help you pack your office?" On the one hand, you have just called his bluff, but on the other, if you show that you support their decision, you might remove some defensive barriers and be able to get to the real issue. (there is so much more we could say on this one, but let's just stick with that one piece of the concept)

"How to Stop Office Negativity" courses are seeing massive increases in attendance. The only problem is that companies send only their negative folks. Instead, have Monica design a course for your company such as:

- Dealing Delicately with Difficulty
- The Power of Influence
- Contagious Communication: The Impact of Tact and Skill

3. LISTEN INTENTLY

A mentor of mine and former boss used to clear his desk, mute his phone, blacken his computer screen and fold his hands in front of him as if ready for story-time, whenever someone knocked on his office door frame and said "Hey John, gotta sec?" We learned very quickly that John was not the guy you asked for directions to the copier. You didn't want to make the man go to all that trouble. But you did go to John if you really needed an ear and you



"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."



Monica Wofford

Articles

NEW!
"I'm COOL
KIT!"



You loved the T-shirt and now you want more! Keep your cool AND your sense of humor at the office with your very own "I'm Cool Kit!"

CLICK HERE to order yours now! only \$27

Now you can share a note on your "I'm Cool"™ post-it® note pad. Drink coffee from your "I'm Cool"™ latte mug. Move mountains with your "I'm Cool"™ mouse pad. Well, you get the



idea, plus you'll get an "I'm Cool"™ T-shirt, pen, and decal. When

things heat up this summer and the air of uncertainty is too much to bear, share a little levity, a little confidence and some "I'm Cool"™.

The "I'm Cool" kit comes in its very own box and makes great

- gifts
- recognition
- awards

would get one, as well as some good advice. Do away with the "open door policy" garbage and actually open your door and your ears. Often employees looking to leave will tell you in ways that you can see and "hear"...if you are really listening and giving them and the job your full attention when they need it.

4. SHOW THEM YOU CARE

There is a phrase that goes "they don't care how much you know, until you show them how much you care". Sounds a bit like a Hallmark card, doesn't it? Yet, when I conducted training for Hallmark I verified it did not come from them. Suffice it to say, whoever the author is, it is a true statement.

Monica has provided training for employees at some of the following companies:

- Hilton
- Estee Lauder
- AT&T
- The US Mint
- Hallmark
- United Health Care
- Hormel Foods

Those employees you lead often leave when they feel they are not cared about, not valued, and not special to you or the company. Simple things can show you care. One client of mine has a dry erase calendar in his office and asked each employee to come in and write their birthday on the calendar. Thus he got them to come in on their time and got himself a reminder of special days! Some contagious leaders

send cards using www.sendoutcards.com or www.plaxo.com, two online services that will send an e-card or hard copy card for special occasions, get wells, or congrats messages among others. Some contagious leaders merely walk around and talk to people, even call them by name! Who knew?! "Make them feel special" as Mary Kay Ash used to say.

5. GET PERSONAL

How many times have you said "Hi, how are you?" to someone in the hall, yet never slowed down long enough to actually hear the response? We are moving so fast and in such focused fashion that we forget to listen to the answer to what could be a personal question. (I get it, there are some from whom you don't want an answer and for those, just say HI and keep walking)



"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."



Monica Wofford

Articles

• reminders to those with attitudes
[CLICK HERE](#) to order yours now!

5 Powerful Questions to Ask a COACH Before You Spend a Dime

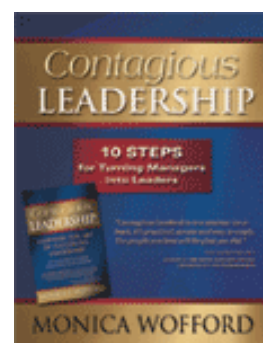
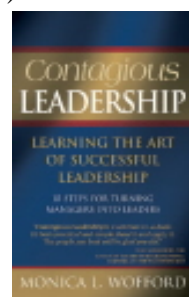
Since 2001, there have been over 2 million lay-offs in the state of Florida. (450,000 between '01 and '03) Some days it seems that most of these individuals have become Life Coaches or aspiring speakers and it is tough to determine which ones are good and which ones are using this "title" to talk about getting a "real job" with you. If you have decided you need a coach for your life or your business, ask these questions and get the information before you spend the money:

1. What have other clients been able to achieve with your help?
2. Do you have references?
3. How long is your coaching process?
4. Do you use a specific formula for each client or will you customize to my needs?
5. How much access will I have to your time during our agreement?

Monica provides coaching on a limited basis. If you wish to learn more and see if you qualify for her

Getting personal means you have show them that you have an ounce of interest in who they are as individuals. It might also mean you stop talking about people in terms of "Human Capital" or "Human Resources". They are not hash marks on a chart, they are people. It could also mean that you avoid describing them as "those that work FOR me". Try those that work WITH me instead and see if you don't boost their ego. (that is the whole premise of Chapter 1 of *Contagious Leadership*TM)

[CLICK HERE](#) TO ORDER YOUR
CONTAGIOUS LEADERSHIP
BOOK
OR 6 CD SET



6. AWFUL-IZE

Brian Tracy has a section of his CD series *Psychology of Achievement* in which he walks you through worry. To keep from worrying, he says "come up with and visualize the absolute worst thing that could happen. Then figure out how to deal with that and what you would do if it happened. When you have a plan for the worst case scenario, you will no longer worry about it." Much of what causes employees to leave is fear of the unknown and fear of "what ifs". Rather than allow them to "what if" themselves to death, bring up the worst case scenario in a staff meeting. Ask them all to come up with the worst possible outcome of whatever change is going on and then come up with solutions to those outcomes. Having a plan in place for the awful stuff, in other words solving the "awful-izing" that is happening anyway, will free the minds of those employees to think of solutions and focus on the work to be done.

7. STICK TOGETHER

"When the going gets tough, the tough get going" and sometimes that means the tough go away or go into seclusion or go nuts. Contagious Leaders are tough in the sense that they can handle a lot of pressure, stress, and responsibilities. But if they go into hiding when things get rough, then the employees they lead feel rapidly leaderless, like they are missing direction, and as if they must find a new team elsewhere to feel a "part of something".



"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."

Monica Wofford

Articles

programs, contact her at
Monica@monicawofford.com.

Contagious Confidence™ Builders

When you look in the mirror and beyond, these tips may help you maintain your sense of confidence...

1. Say "I'm Cool!" to yourself in the mirror (naked or not).
2. Avoid the news – literally walk away.
3. Catch your negative self talk.
4. Maintain a sense of hope.
5. Spend time with friends who make you feel good about yourself.
6. Find more friends that make you feel good about yourself.
7. Do something for someone else as this will help you take the focus off of your and your issues.
8. Just laugh out loud.
9. Practice being fascinated instead of frustrated.
10. Avoid the temptation to believe someone's look or actions is really about you.
11. Visualize negative nellys and neds in your life as wearing Eyeore suits.
12. Do something nice for yourself. A walk in the park, spending time with a puppy, go to a bookstore to just look and smell coffee – all are free and can be relaxing and renewing.
13. Go out of your way to make it a great day for someone less fortunate.
14. Think of something good that you do and tell yourself "I Rock!"
15. Remember that you are the ONLY

For this reason, sticking together and sharing the concerns, questions, and fears is usually a more effective plan. At least then you will be whining, moaning, and groaning together. Okay, not really, but possibly and that would actually be better than going it alone. After all, "misery does love company" (and so does your attrition percentage!)

Attrition is the rate by which employees are leaving your organization versus the rate at which new hires are coming in. Different industries have differing attrition averages. For example, the call center industry for which I have designed entire leadership universities has a "normal" range that runs from 33-75% per year. (one in particular had 144% before I began working with them!) Government offices in which I have trained many employees with 30 year tenures or more have an attrition rate that is usually less than 10%. When times get uncertain, as they are now, those who would normally have stuck it out can leave your organization in a hurry, in search of a safer, more stable and less uncertain environment. Whether you are a Contagious Leader of others or just the leader of the voices in your head, the grass is not always greener wherever you go and the times are also not always as uncertain as our "What if-ing" can make them seem.

Stay Contagious!

Monica Wofford is a business leader who speaks and provides training. She is the President of Monica Wofford International, Inc, Orlando-based training firm (www.monicawofford.com) and the CEO of Contagious Conferences. (www.contagiousconferences.com)

However, when not running her companies, she is an often requested key note speaker, writer of books and articles, and curriculum designer for corporate training. Her first book, **Contagious Leadership: Ten Steps to Transition from Manager to Leader**, is sold world wide and has been turned into a training course, requested by companies such as AT&T, the FAA, and Estee Lauder. Monica's primary mission is to help people get out of their own way. If you are in management, this means she provides training for managers who were promoted, but not prepared. For individuals, this means she helps you have confidence even when you are confident that you're not worth it! You and your company are worth being better than you are now. Call the MWI office today to book Monica as your next conference speaker, leadership retreat trainer, or outsourced training solution.



www.monicawofford.com 1-866-386-0121 www.contagiousconferences.com



“We all know you can’t always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That’s Contagious Confidence.”

Monica Wofford

Articles

you on the planet and if that is your only differentiating factor – then that is enough and so are you!



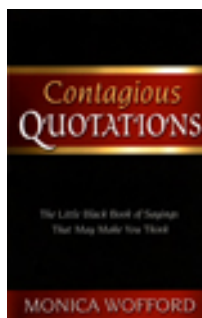
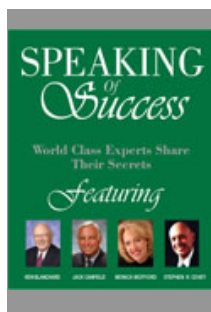
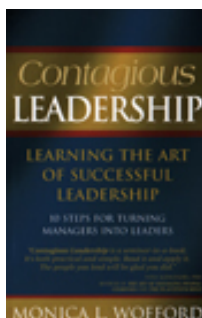
"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."

Articles

Monica Wofford



Enjoy a sampling of the products and services available through the Monica Wofford family of companies.



BOOKS

Contagious Leadership - \$20 [Click Here to Order](#)

Learn how to lead with this easy read

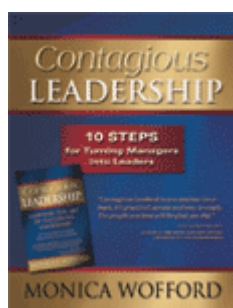
Speaking of Success - \$19.95 [Click Here to Order](#)

Read success tips from the masters, Jack Canfield, Ken Blanchard, Steven Covey... and Monica Wofford

Contagious Quotations - \$20 [Click Here to Order](#)

The little black book of quotations from Monica

AUDIO LEARNING TOOLS



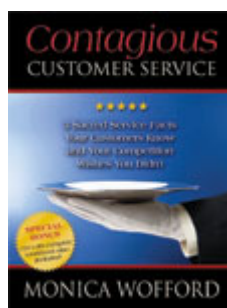
Contagious Leadership

The book on steroids on 6 CDs – includes templates you can print.

\$89.95

[Click Here to Order](#)

DVDs



Contagious Customer Service

1 hour DVD on how to treat your customers so that they continue to come back!

\$149.95

[Click Here to Order](#)

Our Top-Selling T-shirts!

\$10 each and worth every look, every whistle and every moment you will feel more confident!

[Click Here to Order Your Size](#)





"We all know you can't always change the life you have, but you can change how you look at it. How you react to it, and how it makes you feel...That's Contagious Confidence."

Articles

Monica Wofford



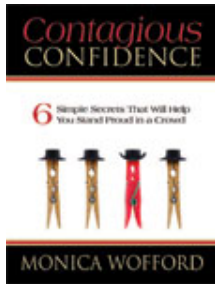
CONFIDENCE BUILDERS

Contagious Confidence™ Survival Kit - \$79.97

[Click Here to Order](#)

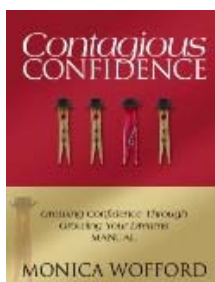
Includes:

- Confidence CD Set
- Thank you notes – Thanks for being you!
- Confidence legal pad – keep your mind on your list!
- Confidence Dream Manual



Contagious Confidence™ 2 CD Set
Bonus CD – Contagious Communication
Learn how to stand proud in any crowd and speak your mind without scaring anyone away.
\$49.95

[Click Here to Order](#)



Contagious Confidence™ Dream Manual
Use this full color 40 page manual to fill out what you want from life and fill in pictures that help you visualize your dreams. Consider it your very own coloring book for the adult that is looking to recapture your dreams.
\$12.00

[Click Here to Order](#)

Contagious Conferences holds 4 conferences per year and our next one is in October of 2008. This conference is for women and will focus on Relationships and Communication.



Find out more at www.contagiousconferences.com