



# PETRA PEOPLE

4 STEPS TO BECOME A MORE GENUINE LEADER



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### **LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS**

Communication is a skill – one that needs to be practiced to be perfected in a leader. And, the root of all effective communication is honesty. CEOs and business owners often think that means being totally unfiltered with employees, and unfortunately, some choose to embrace “brutal honesty” – however insensitive or accusatory—as a tactic of communication. It’s no surprise that this method usually backfires and, over a sustained period of time, can lead to disheartened employees, high turnover and a lack of trust in management. But it doesn’t have to be that way. When honest communication is positive and constructive, it helps leaders build and maintain strong, loyal teams.

Here are four steps to open up lines of communication and become the “honesty standard leader” for your team:



## **SHOW THE “REAL YOU”**

Do people see who you really are, or are you playing a role? The fact is people can see through your “act” more easily than you think. And those around you deserve to know the real you—not just the image you want to present as “the boss.” Admit that you’re human and share vulnerabilities with your team. Be honest about who you are and what’s going on in your life (the good and the bad), and your team will actually trust you more. They’ll begin to share their own stories and become more cohesive.

## **TAKE TIME TO LISTEN**

You’re a leader. You’ve made it your business to do things the way you envision them in order to start your own company and make your dreams a reality. However, that doesn’t mean you should block out advice from others – especially when it’s coming from your employees. Open yourself up to honest criticism and invite feedback about areas you may be overlooking. By trusting your employees with that kind of critique and seeking solutions that will benefit everyone, you’ll begin to encourage higher levels of truth in the workplace and gather the best ideas.

## **SURROUND YOURSELF WITH HONEST PEOPLE**

Are you surrounded with lots of “yes” men and women? If people are just telling you what they think you want to hear, there is no benefit—least of all to your business. Ask for regular “truth checks” with your team. Are they providing ideas freely—especially those which might differ from yours—or do they hesitate to voice their opinions? Surround yourself with people bold and truthful enough to disagree with you. Without dissenting opinions, you’ll never exit your comfort zone, which will limit your personal and professional growth.

## **ACCEPT YOUR IMPERFECTIONS**

You may be the one in charge, but you will never have all the answers. No one person can handle everything, and that includes you. Gather a team of truthful people who balance out your weaknesses with their strengths. Empower them to do what they do best, and play to everyone’s strengths—including your own.

Don’t hesitate to be vulnerable and open up in a genuine way with your employees. Vulnerability breeds trust. Once you have trust, your team will feel comfortable sharing good news, bad news and everything in between. And, that’s what you want. Genuine leaders don’t need to be “brutal” –just honest. Try it. Your employees—and you—will notice the difference.

*This article originally appeared on [SmallBizDaily.com](http://SmallBizDaily.com).*

# THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

**The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.**

## **Looking to change your business life - forever?**

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

*Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at [www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) for more business and leadership insight.*

### **PETRA COACH**

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