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Larry Stybel. and Maryanne Peabody

HOW TO READ PEOPLE WITH THE "FAD HOP" TECHNIQUE.

Robin had been hired by a founder as Chief Operations Officer to help the company grow organically and via acquisition. The goal was to position the company for eventual sale within five years. After six months, Robin made a formal PowerPoint slide presentation to the founder to present her plans.

It was clear from the founder's polite but vague response that the founder had rejected the recommended action steps. Robin's response was, "I'm hired to grow the founder's company and he won't listen. Why am I here??!!"

In responding to Robin's dilemma, our response was to wonder whether the problem was Robin's recommendations or the way the recommendations had been presented. There is a well-known cliché in the restaurant industry: "50% of the enjoyment of the food is presentation." Might this also apply in business?

Your ideas vs How You Present Your Ideas.

We suggested that Robin believed "the facts speak for themselves" while the CEO/Founder believed "this is *my* company. I am the decider!"

Robin was presenting information to the CEO in ways that were comfortable for Robin. She had not given enough thought to how to frame the information so that the CEO would be open to listening.

We suggested letting things sit for 90 days, then to schedule a second meeting. Have the PowerPoint deck available if the CEO wants to see it. Focus Robin's communication on "This is *your* company. You have clear goals and some of the recommendations may make you uncomfortable. You are the boss."

A Framework To Read People.

It is important to read people so that your ideas can be effectively presented. The framework we use was inspired by psychologist Howard Gardner of Harvard University (2006), but we have expanded it. There are seven factors to be aware of, each rated on a scale of 0-10. Use "FAD-HOP" as a mnemonic device to remember the framework.

(F) Facts (0-10).

How important is data? A "0" rating means the person is not convinced by facts. A 10 means the person thinks it is of the utmost importance that arguments be data-driven. You may be a 10 but if your target is a 2, you better load your presentation with emotion.

A typical example is a family business CEO who contends that the goal is 15% sales growth per year—but is emotionally driven, wanting to be known as superior to his CEO peers in the industry.

(A) Likely Acceptance (0-10).

What is the probability of the person accepting 100% of your proposal? A 0-rating means there is zero likelihood. A 10 means 100% probability of the person accepting 100% of your proposal. Anything between 0 and 10 is your estimate of how big a first step should be.

If that first step is successful, confidence is built for future steps. Your vision may be big but what sells best may be a small step.

(D) "I am the Decider" (0-10)

Who makes the decisions? A 0 rating means the person strongly believes in team consensus. A 10 means that the person strongly believes "I am the Decider." A 7 means the person wants to go through the process of consensus but ultimately the Decider rules. The higher the score on this factor, the more you must verbally humble yourself.

Humbling yourself means saying, "This is your company," "It is up to you," and "You are in charge."

(H) Humor (0-10).

Does the person have a good sense of humor? A 0 rating means the person has no sense of humor. A 1 rating means the person is open to humor at the expense of others—ridiculing competitors, adversaries, colleagues, etc. A 10 means the person is open to humor where all parties can laugh together.

(O) Differences of Opinion (0-10)

How open is the person to other perspectives? A 0 means the person does not welcome new ideas. A 10 means a preference for dialog and conflicting views.

If the target leader is close to a 0, then your presentation needs to focus on how your ideas support the leader's framework.

(P) Get to the Point (0-10)

What is the person's preferred style of getting to the point of things? A 0 means the person prefers you to make your point indirectly through stories and analogies. A 10 means a preference for getting to the point quickly with an Executive Summary at the start of your presentation.

Summary and Conclusions.

Robin was an example of a leader who had spent too much time on data but not enough time to how the data was to be presented.

FAD HOP is our framework to read others. This framework assumes that you are trying to convince one person or a relatively homogenous group. It

assumes that you have enough primary or secondary data to make educated guesses to calculate FAD-HOP.

FAD-HOP requires sensitivity to situational factors: Your CEO might appreciate humor when the subject is business growth but not when the subject is bankruptcy.

References

H. Gardner. *Changing Minds: the art and science of changing our own and other peoples' minds.* 2006, Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

L. Stybel and M. Peabody. "Are You Funny Enough to be an Effective Leader?" Psychology Today, 2022, https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/platform-success/202206/are-you…

About the Author

Dr. Laurence J. Stybel and Maryanne Peabody are co-founders of the Boston-based B:B firm, Stybel Peabody Associates, Inc. They provide corporations with retained search for Board members, CEOs, COOs, and CFOs; 1:1 leadership coaching; and C-Suite outplacement.

Contact:

Maryanne Peabody

Stybel Peabody Associates, Inc.

One Boston Place, Suite 2600

Boston, MA 02108

peabody@stybelpeabody.com