



Tom's

Schin Sights



SANTA, I KNOW HIM!!!

If you know me, I'm all about the holidays (Christmas in particular). I have a ton of Holiday Spirit, and I try to share it everywhere I go. I recognize that's not everyone, but if all I do is make you smile today, then I've done my job in spreading Joy (pay it forward). Today, you get the holiday edition of Tom's Schin Sights, with a little extra Jingle Bell, a dash of holly, and maybe a springle of Santa's (non-demoninational) magic pixie dust.



If that were my only holiday decoration...



Elephant in the room?

Latest on Culture

Your company isn't immune to trials and tribulations.

It just isn't. If you stop and think, "that'll never happen to us" or "no one here would ever..." - you're mistaken. You might be LUCKY, but as they say in the Hunger Games, "may the odds be ever in your favor."

Having a mindset of 'it'll never happen' is unrealistic. Maybe those troubling times will never occur, but you're discounting the human factor. People are people. They make mistakes - small ones are fine, as we can learn from them and grow. Big mistakes can be painful, and costly. How you handle them MATTERS. For example, if you're non-challant or flippant about a major issue, people may think you're out of touch with reality. They may also think that it's ok for THEM to do something - i.e. what's good for the goose is good for the gander. They may also realize that if you handle little and big things poorly, it's a sign of things to come.

Today more than ever, employees want to feel connected to the how and why of your business values. If they don't connect to what you're saying (job market challenges aside) they're going to leave. Either literally or figuratively. So, if you say you're about "Doing the Right Thing" (a common value poster item), then make sure you AND your managers are following through on that commitment. There are few bridge burners bigger than "do as I say, not as I do" type management.

To me, it's how you handle adversity that sets leaders apart. We can all be the boss people look to for guidance when things are going great. Are you prepared, rather, are your managers prepared to be the boss teams need when things aren't peachy keen? Don't let that elephant in the room be your ruin. It'll stampede the hell out of your culture, your people, and ultimately your business. Don't be the elephant.

Blog Commentary



I haven't written a ton of blog entries as of late, but was revisiting one I posted over the summer. Thematically, we'll call this my **REGIFTING** of a piece of existing content - JUST for you (aren't I nice?). It focused on mindful communication. One of the pieces I regularly think of when working with others is the idea that we don't give enough clear examples of what "good" or "acceptable" looks like. We say things like, "give it a shot, and come back to me with your draft." Your team wants clarity. Let them stretch their boundaries, but give them a couple of ideas of what good looks like (i.e. acceptable challenges in a meeting sound like this... or sharing concerns is welcome, but I'd like for you to also bring potential solutions so we can solve it together). Read the piece if you missed it and it'll give you a few more ideas for your people leaders, as well as how to apply it to their teams.

Leadership thought of the month

Ever buy one of those kits, you know, the ones you build with your kids. It seems like such a great idea. They give you precut pieces, packaged frosting and decorations, and the hope that you'll make the same house as on the box. What could go wrong?

You buy the kit, your kids are excited, you're feeling the holiday spirit, then you open the box and get started. Pieces break, the frosting is dried so it won't stick, kids go off crying, just turns into a hot mess. No one's happy, so you just throw in the towel. All for naught.



GingerBread Statue of Liberty

Like a gingerbread house, good leadership planning takes time and patience. You can't expect to buy it out of a box (real or virtual) and wave the magic wand, and get a perfect Statue of Liberty Gingerbread house. It takes planning, staging, some trial & error, and then slow, methodical progress, to get to the finished product. (*Noting that leadership development never ends)


Consider questions like: What's the vision of this program? What resources will I need to draw upon? How can I make it sticky? What will interest and motivate my managers to participate in the present, as well as ongoing? How do I handle distractions/detours? How will I know we've been successful?

As you gain clarity on the questions above, you can start to bring this into focus, and then enjoy the fruits (or graham crackers) of your labor. Enjoy the build, laugh when a wall falls off, and plan for the unexpected. Your leaders want to be challenged, and with those challenges come the unknown (how they answer the call). The more you prepare, the better they'll respond. Leadership shouldn't happen by accident. It doesn't need to be a perfect plan to start, but you should have some discussions about what start looks like, and where you're going. Adjust along the way, make it more challenging, and don't be afraid to revisit some things. Practice practice practice.

**no gingerbread houses were hurt during the making of this newsletter*

Send a voice message to This Meeting Should Have B...

Is your microphone ready?

 Start recording

1 Record - 2 Listen - 3 Send

The Extras

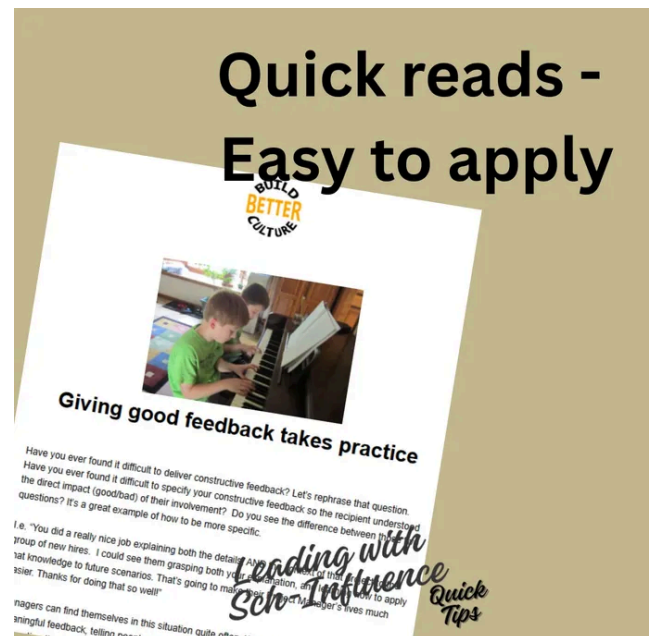
If you haven't caught it on your favorite streaming (audio or video) feed, be sure to listen to "[This meeting should have been a podcast](#)" (on the WrkDefined network). Join my co-host, [Tom Horne](#) and I, as we navigate the nuttiness of corporate jargon, things impacting the culture & engagement headlines, and other absurdities.

We are always looking for good stories to share. I'd love it if you'd [leave us an anonymous message](#) about worst meeting, or work story ever. It doesn't even have to be worst. If we like it, we'll use it in an upcoming episode.

Shameless Plug time

Some months ago, I created a simple tool called [Leading with Sch-Influence](#). Yes it has my name baked in, that's half the fun. What is it though? It's a series of helpful tips for managers to apply to their day to day. In some ways, it's a way to get managers moving on things they're avoiding. The tips are simple (3 paragraphs), and easy to apply for just about anyone.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up. It's Free, and if you think I'm a cotton-headed ninny-muggins, then just unsubscribe. Give it a try!



Have other questions, or just want to connect? Email me at tom@buildbetterculture.com

Wishing you a fabulous holiday season, wherever you're at. See you in 2026!

Tom



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