

Hello, this is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. As always, thank you for tuning in. Please subscribe to our social media channels. That helps us with our search engine optimization, and as always, we would like to have your comments below. Good, bad or indifferent, we're open to criticism. Just let us know what you think about the blogs and what you might like to hear in the future as well.

So, this week I want to talk about how to immediately become a better leader and I've got a wonderful book to recommend to you also. I was at a peer group meeting recently, and I know you guys are sick of me talking about peer group meetings, but we learn so much. The group gave pointed feedback to the host and boy, this guy just really stuck his head in the sand and it was obvious from the first hour of feedback that he wasn't going to take any of the recommendations and take action.

And it just sort of shocked me that a group of peers gave their blood toil sweat and tears on behalf of this and gave him heartfelt recommendations, and it was clear he thought that he, frankly, was smarter than everybody else in the room. And it was really disappointing and eye opening. Along those same lines, we have a couple of guys here with extensive experience in the IT industry and a friend of a friend wanted to come in and talk about his latest greatest IT idea that was going to make everybody a few million bucks.

And he came in and Golly Moses, the guy, you could just tell from the beginning, was in love with this product. He was in love with the zeros and ones and the capacity of this product. And we began to ask questions and he blew right through the questions and barely even listened to us. And then we had a few fairly harsh criticisms that we thought the guy needed to hear if he was going to make his product robust enough to be successful.

And basically, he wanted to compete with Alibaba, which is like, I think that guy was the richest guy in the world as a result of his startup. And it just wasn't ready for market, but the guy was in love with this product and in love with his baby, his creation, and he just blew through everything we said and didn't listen to anything. We just shut down and finally just gave up and called the meeting to a close.

And you know, we had a psychologist on staff for many years, Dr. Mike. And after Mike had been with us, he stayed with us 12, 15 years, something like that. After his first six months on the job, I called him and I said, "Dr. Mike, you've been in a clinical practice for 20 years and you've dealt with a lot of business owners and consulting and all that. What do you see that's different about family business leaders relative to the other kinds of people that you've interacted with?"

And he said, "They talk all the time. They just talk and talk and talk." And that's my suggestion. If you want to be a better leader immediately, you want to get more results out of your people and out of your organization, shut up and listen sometimes. I agree with Dr. Mike. Our clients talk so much that when I find I'm on the phone with them, I have to intentionally interrupt to ask questions and get clarifications and direction.

So this is the book I want to recommend to you. It's called, ***It's Your Ship*** by Mike Abrashoff. I did a speech alongside Mike. Well, he did a speech. I did remarks, a couple of years ago in New York. It's Your Ship, it's a

great, great book. The story here is Mike took over the worst performing ship in the US Navy, the USS Benfold, and there was no manual. There was no book like this.

There was no guideline for him to know how to turn a low performer into a high performer. So you know what he did? He went around to everybody on the ship, all of his shipmates, irrespective of rank or position, and he just started asking them questions and listening to them. And guess what? The people that were actually doing the jobs on the ship had all kinds of great ideas for making improvements.

He listened to them, he took their ideas, and within, he had about a two year run there as the captain of the Benfold, a little bit less than that in fact, he turned it into the best performing ship in the Navy. In 20 months, he went from the absolute worst performer to the absolute best performer. Twenty short months. That's how long it took.

He did it by asking questions and then listening to the people on his ship that actually had the power to make little things happen that added up into big things. So great book, *It's Your Ship* by Mike Abrashoff. Get it, and if you want to immediately be a better leader in your organization, listen. Listen to your people. Thank you. Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. I'd love to have your comments.