

DeLisle Worrell: Emotional talent – the final leadership frontier

Welcome remarks by Dr DeLisle Worrell, Governor of the Central Bank of Barbados, at the Emotional Intelligence Conference “Emotional talent – the final leadership frontier”, Bridgetown, 19 October 2012.

* * *

I am delighted to welcome such a large and enthusiastic audience to today’s lecture. Many of you know that the Central Bank of Barbados has embarked on a strategy of renewal, based on the premise that we can be as efficient as possible only if we all strive to help each other to be as happy as we can be on the job. This is a revolutionary notion; we have grown up in a culture where work and happiness are at opposite ends of the spectrum. Work is a chore, a necessary evil, and happiness is for the weekend, our vacation, and blissful retirement, when someone will pay you a salary to do absolutely nothing.

However, many of us have realised that we enjoy working. At first you think you must be really weird, if you’re working through the night just because you are so absorbed in what you’re doing, but then you notice that other people are doing similar things, on occasions when they are specially motivated to do so; such as when there is a big occasion like this event to be organised, for example.

So you begin to ask yourself – why can’t all work be like that? Why is it that, even with the most sophisticated management systems, as a general rule most employees are miserable on the job. And why is this true even of employees who enjoy what they do, are good at it, and are willing to work long hours? The missing element, we have come to realise, is the human element, and that is where our emotions come into play. We are emotional beings, and it matters a great deal to our motivation, our happiness and our performance, that our colleagues and our managers care about us.

These emotional habits, caring about our staff, wanting them to do well and be happy, are what we are trying to cultivate at the Central Bank of Barbados. Already we have evidence that this is a sure path to high morale and enviable levels of efficiency. We have several examples of top class performance, and those involved can bear testimony to the wonderful spirit associated with these events.

As we embarked on this journey, with the help of consultants skilled in the new technologies of management, we became aware that we had achieved something essential for the development of this country at our relatively advanced state of human development. In management practice, as in many other fields, Barbados must leapfrog to the head of the class, if we are to make our way in this increasingly competitive and unforgiving world. That is what Emotional Intelligence does for us. The practitioners in this field are leading a revolution in business practice, and we can place ourselves at the forefront, in implementing business practices that will distinguish the leading companies of the 21st century. Here today to assist us on that journey is one of the discipline’s most accomplished practitioners, Mr. Tim Sanders. We are honoured by your presence and we value the help you are offering to all the participants gathered here today, towards achieving our goal of outstanding efficiency and productivity through the cultivation of a happy and well motivated workforce.