

Humble Criticism

Dale teaches us that if we're going to criticize, we'd better get some perspective before we speak. So talk about our own mistakes before we criticize. This serves several useful purposes:

1. It reminds us that we aren't perfect. In fact, it may serve to remind us that in their shoes at their point in life, they may be doing better than we did at the same point in similar circumstances. When we realize that, we may just wind up giving them one of those compliments with a period on the end! *Trust that they are doing the best they can.*

2. It enables us to come alongside someone instead of preaching at them. We can explain that we have wrestled with or continue to wrestle with the same issue, and we were able to cope with it by doing "x." This is teaching instead of dictating. We take from our own experience and simply share the lessons learned in a quiet and understanding way. *Trust that they are teachable.*

3. If we humble ourselves by revealing our own weaknesses, and we praise the person we're talking to, then an honest line of communication can be opened. We don't have to be perfect to encourage others to improve. We can discuss our own desire to change, the benefits we hope to realize by changing, and the consequences if we don't. Then allow the other person to choose their own course of action or inaction. *Trust that they will make the right choice.*

Leadership principle: *Effective leadership is learning to trust more and more, and becoming more and more trustworthy.* William Gross