

ATTITUDE

37. Put the "Eye-Sparkle Factor" on Your Menu. I gave a lecture in Switzerland on "talent selection"—and the use of "unconventional" (emotional, mostly) measures for so doing. At a break I had an exchange with a youthful participant, who wondered aloud why I would go on and on and on ... and then on ... about the likes of "vivacity":

"Suppose you and I were opening the restaurant of our dreams," I said to her. "We'd both put in \$75,000 ... effectively, our life's savings. We were 'betting the farm.' We were dead certain we had a great idea, and we'd bargained our way into a very good location—and through our networking even lassoed a terrific chef. Now the time had come to hire 'the others'—e.g., waiters and waitresses and busboys. Numerous applicants had satisfactory 'restaurant experience.' But several didn't. One young woman (man) in particular was a rank amateur—but had the most compelling 'sparkle' in her/his eye. The sort about which we Americans say 'lit up the room.' How would that 'sparkle' that 'lit up the room' rank in our hire-no hire consideration? Remember, we've bet our entire stake on the restaurant."

She reluctantly agreed, lesser Swiss emotionalism notwithstanding, that the "sparkle" pretty much ruled.

Message: So-called "soft factors"—which are the true "hard factors"—rule! For scientists who must convince others to spend money to support their research. For IS/IT bosses who only succeed if users become enthusiasts. And for those "betting the farm" on the restaurant of their dreams.

38. Pleasant, Caring, Engaged—at 6 A.M.! There's a bistro I frequent near my Boston house. The coffee is available at 6A.M. And for years I went there—as much for the woman who had first-shift duty. She wasn't "a babe". And her style would *not* be described as "chirpy." But she seemed to enjoy what she did, and when we'd exchange a few pleasant sentences. She was:

*Pleasant.
Caring.
Engaged.*

I strongly urge you to put those three blockbuster traits at or near the top of the list in the hiring manual—for every job.

39. Hire "Cheerful"—Or: That Damned AV Guy! I was in a foul mood before a speech—a disastrous state of affairs. At the AV check, the guy in charge was in great humor. Despite myself, I was infected. Attitude is contagious. A happy camper creates a happy camp. And someone in a foul mood can befoul an entire battalion in a flash. Again, in hiring, promoting, evaluating—pay close attention to these "soft" factors which in actual fact are the ultimate "HARD" factors!

40. Which "Flag" Are You Waving? At a road construction stop, one flagman was of good spirits, per my reading of his face; and the other was emanating bad vibes. The job ain't great, but I was reminded of Dr. King's declaration, one of the few I've committed to memory:

"If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that

all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well."

This (to me at least) doesn't mean one shouldn't aspire to more than a flagman's job—but it does mean that we can literally ... CHANGE THE WORLD AND CHANGE OUR SURROUNDINGS ... by a unilateral effort to bring a certain attitude to what we do.

Are you Flagman #2?
Or Dr. King's street sweeper?
Today?
Right now?

This document is #11 in a series of 48 highlights from Tom Peters' *The Little BIG Things: 163 Ways to Pursue Excellence* (HarperStudio, 2010). For more information, visit tompeters.com.

