



Self-Sabotage: Restricting Habits and Counterproductive Behaviors

By Nancy Capistran, PCC, CPC

A CEO asked if I would work with him as he transitioned into a new career opportunity. I was initially hesitant because the “word on the street” about him was not favorable. My criteria for working with any client is that they have to be committed and open-minded to accelerate their success. Over the years, I have learned and have achieved more optimal results when I form my own views versus judging someone on the views of others. I do not put a lot of weight on what others think of a person or a situation: I lead with what I experience firsthand.

Sadly, my own experiences with this client confirmed the word on the street. I had known him for over a year, and the few times that we had interacted I was left with the feeling that he thought that he was superior to most people in intelligence, power, wealth, talent, and his place in society. I believe his elitism started when he was a young boy and then continued to be fostered well into adulthood until he eventually became a narcissist. His bad reputation required damage control.

This senior leader’s pompous style was a turnoff to many, and yet he had no concept that he had snobbish behavior. We don’t know what we don’t know. When we are raised a certain way, we grow up with our own definition of what is “normal” behavior, and yet the “normal” barometer indicates something different to every one of us. His haughty approach made others doubt their own self-worth. “Showing up” this way can ding one’s reputation and one’s personal brand, and eventually it will limit one’s overall success.

I have always tried to meet people where they are. In our one-to-one sessions, I had the opportunity to see a totally different side of this client, a side that was quite pleasant. I found myself looking forward to and eventually enjoying our time together. Often elitists are harboring feelings of deep insecurity themselves, but since I had observed both sides of his style, I was able to bring attention to, and then help him to understand, how he was being perceived. This revelation was a bona fide shock to him – I believe he genuinely had no idea. Through our work together, he learned to embrace and reveal his genuine self to others. This has elevated his relationships with authenticity. On a number of occasions, he has turned negative relationships into more approving ones because he is leading his life and showing up with a more approachable style.

To build relationships with lasting impact requires that our motives be upstanding. Spotlight your curiosity to learn new ideas and foster collaborative, long-lasting relationships. Surround yourself with those who have similar guiding principles to create a more robust and authentic lifestyle. For the most successful outcomes, build and manage your life in a way that expands your universe of opportunities by consistently

reinforcing your reputation as a genuine giver. Those who are the takers in our world cannot sustain the test of time. Those who are fakers are found out sooner rather than later.

People tend to be more generous in their personal lives while concurrently having sharp elbows in their careers. I believe it is because the competitive nature of business brings out a different side in each of us. Showing up as your genuine self is freeing. People want to see the true essence of who you are every day. Oftentimes, people carefully craft a persona that they think others want them to have. They hide their faults so that no one sees the real them. As human beings, we long to be liked, imperfections and all. Be brave and embrace your vulnerabilities. Once we make the decision to become our whole selves, we can start to accept others as their whole selves.



About the Author: Nancy Capistran is a best-selling author, an award-winning, internationally certified executive coach, motivational speaker, and trusted advisor. She is Principal of [Capistran Leadership, LLC](#), and [Crisis Interception, LLC](#). Nancy's best-selling international leadership book: [Open Your Eyes and LEAD](#) shows readers how to become a positive force in the world and how to balance and manage omnipresent tensions while striving for leadership excellence. Capistran shares inspirational stories and advice from her 30+ year career to help both seasoned and emerging leaders develop intentionality while maintaining their core values and beliefs even when life's pressures dictate otherwise.