

Do You Notice?

Life keeps us busy. It is easy to rush from meeting to meeting, only to go home and rush to fulfill family obligations. Amidst all this, do you notice? Do you notice your co-worker has a new sweater? Do you notice that a person in the meeting is pre-occupied? Do you notice that an employee always brings in treats for the office?

To notice is an attribute that contributes to your success. Why? From a person's intention to another person's attention—noticing is caring. And it's all about seeing the unseen.

Have you ever seen something being built? At first, every day looks different: the land is cleared, a deep hole is dug, walls appear, and a roof covers the structure. But then, it all stops even though workers are there. The inside wiring, plumbing, and heating happen behind the walls, and you don't notice. It is this unseen work that makes the structure usable.

In the same way, we are all works in progress—and not everything that happens may be visible. But just because it's not immediately noticeable, doesn't mean it's not notable. We all contribute to an organization's structure. And success is only through the sum of our strengths, which overcome our individual weaknesses.

Albert Einstein famously wrote on his chalkboard—a favorite quote he had taken to heart: “Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted, counts.” Or, as others have said, “What is unseen has just as much value as what is seen.”

This quote relates to what we aspire to do every day. It's up to all of us to A.C.T.—be Authentic, make a Connection, and give others a Taste of who we are ... to enable the unseen to be seen. That's what people notice—as the transactions become the relations. It is a fact of life and leadership: When people are noticed, they know someone cares. And when they know someone cares, they feel valued. And when they feel valued, they will believe they are indeed part of something bigger than themselves. They will feel like they belong.

Inspired by an email from Korn Ferry, March 17, 2024.