

# Expecting the Best: Exemplary Behavior for Leaders

Save to myBoK

by Mervat Abdelhak, PhD, RHIA

An HIM colleague gave me the book *Encouraging the Heart: A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others* as a gift a few months back. Authors James Kouzes and Barry Posner are well published on leadership and have researched, studied, and catalogued numerous best practices in leadership and exemplary behavior for leaders. They have found that extraordinary leaders follow five practices:

- Challenge the process
- Inspire a shared vision
- Enable others to act
- Model the way
- Encourage the heart

The authors believe that people aspire to higher standards of performance when they are genuinely appreciated for their efforts and their dedication and are publicly recognized for their outstanding achievements.

## Exhibiting Leadership Behavior

Reflecting upon what I have read, I find many of the principles and examples in the book apply to all of us as we lead our profession and industry through the coming electronic transformation. I have found that the notion of “expecting the best” in particular is very applicable as we prepare for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead. For AHIMA and the HIM profession to succeed, we must maintain a high level of self-efficacy.

As leaders, practitioners, educators, managers, volunteers, supervisors, employers, and employees, we must expect the best of ourselves and from others. Kouzes and Posner write, “The thoughts and beliefs we hold in our minds are intangible. They can’t be weighed and measured like the raw materials that come in the finished products that run off the assembly line. But seen or not, measurable or not, they have an enormous impact on the people around us.”<sup>1</sup>

## Lessons Learned

As association leaders, we must believe in the abilities of our members. As members, we must believe in ourselves and in our colleagues’ abilities. The power of self-esteem and expecting the best from every individual and from our organization will enable us to set more challenging goals and achieve better results. Our attitude and self-esteem influence our behavior toward others. It is the principle of the self-fulfilling prophecy; individuals act consistently with your expectations.

The expectation that we can and will embrace the challenges that lie ahead is core to our success. If the realities of our practice differ from our expectations, we must determine what changes we need to make to enable us to achieve our goals. Developing esteem within our profession, inspiring and uplifting the membership, believing in our knowledge and skills, and knowing that we are capable of transforming to an e-HIM<sup>TM</sup> environment are all unequivocally essential ingredients for our success.

Together we can envision our success as we embrace the future. Our expectation that success will occur changes how we behave, act, and perform. Our changed behavior will then make success more likely to happen—a self-fulfilling prophecy!

## Note

1. Kouzes, James M., and Barry Z. Posner. *Encouraging the Heart: A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2003, p. 71–72.

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