

THE THREE MAGIC WORDS: YOU ARE RIGHT!

"David, this work should have been finished yesterday!" "You are absolutely right boss!" David doesn't remind his boss about the huge workload that was there yesterday. He believes in the power of the magic words, and while others come and go, David's job remains secure. The boss always acts leniently with David and he can get off with doing less work. "Jacob, it's your fault that we can't provide our children properly!" "You are absolutely right, darling!" Jacob doesn't remind his wife that in part, she too was at fault. Jacob believes in the magic words, and while many of his friends have stressed and broken families, he has a peaceful family life. What I want to stress here is not really those three words for the same attitude can express itself in many forms. What I want is to stress the attitude behind those three words, a practical attitude that ignores the superficial and is ready to swallow one's self-ego, rather than engage in meaningless and endless conflict. I have watched this kind of people share some common traits that make them enormously effective, and I have watched the same traits everywhere in people who are considered "dependable." These are superb time managers, who are not ready to spend even a nanosecond on issues that can be avoided by pulling a bland face or a dumb grin. You think that they are pitiful, but they don't even bother themselves by thinking about you. And they don't care what you think about them. All they care about is work and performance. You meet them with any issue that can be avoided, and they will say, "you are right," pat you on the back, and be on their way faster than you can bat your eyelids. You too have seen this kind of people. It is extremely difficult to corner them on any issue and get a concrete answer. They will never take an interest unless the issue is truly major or concerns them personally. The CEO of my last company was like this. When at least twenty of us, and all good dependable workers were being laid off, and I went to talk with him, he continually went off topic and even went to the extent of asking me whether I would write free for him to help in making a personal website. Whatever I would say, he agreed that I was right. As is my nature, instead of hating him for ignoring me under such dire situation, I began to study him and learn his game. He was the CEO, and he was still running a company of more than 200 employees and had stake in a dozen other companies. To think that he was dumb was the dumbest thing I could do. So, I took an interest in studying the type. Such people seemed to be more common at the top of organizations than at the bottom. Therefore, somewhere, surely, they held the secret of success. In fact, years later, I caught up with my past CEO and asked him how he avoided issues and saved time to advance his career so dramatically. You may not like his solution, and I do not advise either for or against what he said, but this is what he said: "The ABCD of administration is the key to save your time and focus it on real issues. A = Avoid; B = Bypass; C = Confuse; D = Decide." This was his strategy. Whatever issue you took to him, first he will try to avoid you. If you persisted, and he found it difficult to avoid you, he would engage in conversation, but bypass the actual issue and veer the conversation off topic. If you again went back the next day, this time he will surely confuse you as to the nature of both the issue and the solution, and send you searching for solution elsewhere. If you still kept up, only then would he take a decision on the issue. It was his way of making sure that the issue was serious enough to spend his time and risk personal intervention. I have been through the same cycle many times with different bosses and have come to recognize the pattern. Does it seem familiar to you? The great thing with these people are they are always very humble, they seem almost devoid of any self-ego, they are always focused on their own work and seem to have a lot of time on their hands, and you would never find them in a no-win situation. They are always at the top of organizations and on any issue, they will confidently tell you, "You are right!"

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