



## *Reasonable Voice*

### **Seeing Around Corners**

Ask any CEO about one of the best qualities that their most valuable employees possess, and you're likely to hear about the ability to anticipate what's ahead, even when no one really knows for sure.

Part skill, part intuition, and part initiative, an employee that works to help his organization's leaders prepare for the most likely outcome of a business strategy is indeed a valuable asset.

Many employees don't realize that the skill part of this equation can be developed with the right amount of initiative. It all begins with the right questions, and a lot of curiosity. In fact, I've come to realize that curiosity and initiative are probably the most important qualities of a good employee, period.

When was the last time you asked your CEO about her vision for the organization? I'm not talking about the annual budget, or the marketing copy that appears on the company website. What's the timeframe the CEO has in mind for a major milestone in her vision? What does the CEO see as the ideal market share two or three years from now? What should the customer base, product mix, or sales goals look like? And what resources (human, financial, physical and informational) are most important to her?

For my own part, the best jobs I ever had were when I learned to ask these questions – and then set out to help identify some of the steps I could take to support their achievement. And while it certainly takes a CEO willing to share their vision, sometimes it's a matter of asking the right questions to get the information you need to get started. That doesn't happen by sitting around waiting for someone to tell you.

When the time finally came to be CEO of my own firm, there was no better feeling than working with an employee that had the desire, ability, and initiative to "see around corners." It made going to work a joy – and the success that followed was extraordinary.

So, take some time to think about your own role at work, and how you can help the CEO secure her vision for the future of your company. And then start asking questions as you look around the corner.

There might be something pretty valuable waiting there for your organization – and for you.

Michael Meath  
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