

A Meditation on an Ineffable Quality

By Kelvin D. Meeks

There is a particular skill (that is also a quality) that I find to be exceedingly rare - and much to be valued - in any candidate, for any position - but, one that I have never heard discussed by any candidate interviewing team.

It is not a skill that you would see cited on a resume.

It is not a skill for which you might gain expertise through a course or a degree.

You cannot determine whether a candidate possess this skill/quality simply by asking whether they have it - but it may be inferred by questions that are oblique to the nature of the quality.

Experience is no sure measure or indicator of its presence. Many people glide through their careers - for decades - and seem to have never learned the value of this particular quality.

As hiring manager, or as a manager responsible for actively cultivating the growth of employees under your stewardship - this quality should be more valued in candidates - and nurtured in employees - but few managers themselves seem to be aware of it - and fewer still have the requisite coaching temperament to actively nurture it.

What is this ineffable quality?

While there are several qualities/skills that might fit the parameters of this puzzle/question (e.g. the ability to listen, the greatly desired trait of curiosity, and the ineffable quality/skill of empathy) – the skill/quality that I deem to be greatly desired in any candidate/employee – has a strong bias towards action.

The quality/skill of which I speak?

The Skill of Anticipation / The Ability to Anticipate

The effectiveness of every team, manager, leader, executive – of every organization - would be greatly magnified – by elevating and acknowledging the value of this ineffable quality/skill – as a desired trait to be nurtured by managers - and demonstrated by every team member.

This should not be misconstrued to mean simply showing initiative – which may or may not be aligned with the goals and objectives of the leadership team – but anticipation is the essence of initiative in alignment with the goals/objectives of the leadership team.

Anticipation is more to be desired in a candidate/employee – than reaction.

It is the conscious meditation on – and the result of deep pondering – of this key question: “What are the second and third order effects of the goals/objectives of the leadership team?”

It is the manifestation that "Think Time" has been applied.

In this context - Anticipation is attention, awareness, mindfulness, an inclusive mindset of the needs of the team – not the individual. It is a strong bias for action - and a demonstration of initiative - that is guided by considering what is most needed for the success of the organization and the leadership team.