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The 4-3-2-1 on Leadership from Retired Major General Vinny Boles

By Guest Blogger, Donna DeClemente, [Donna's Promo Talk](#)

Last week I was invited to attend a bi-annual group meeting of the [Renaissance Executive Forums \(REF\) of Upstate York](#). If you're not familiar with REF they bring together top executives from non-competing companies of similar size that act as each others advisory board. The groups are facilitated by one and sometimes two leaders. They normally meet as a group once a month for a half-day session and then one-on-one with the executive coach that heads the group. If you get a good group of members together it can be very rewarding.



Bruce Peters from [CABhq](#) who heads up this division treated us all to a very motivating talk on leadership from retired [Major General Vincent Boles](#). Now I've sat through presentations and talks and discussions on leadership which is a pretty broad topic but have been good and some have been, well I guess you'd say the same-old-same-old thought okay, what's a retired guy from the military going to tell us that we don't know.

Well Vinny, as he asked us to refer to him as, didn't tell us anything that we didn't already know. However, the way he told us and the simplicity of his talk combined with his personal stories was something that I will not forget.

As soon as he started speaking I immediately liked him. In fact it was even before he started speaking because he made it a point to shake my hand, look me in the eye, introduce himself and ask about me. Pretty basic, but it does work. I could tell he had a New York accent even though he is based out of Alabama right now. So when he told me that he was born and grew up in and around the Bronx, we were instantly pals.

Vinny acknowledged that "keeping the team together in times like these" is not easy. The economy has been tough and many companies have had to downsize, but he reminded us that there have always been "times like these". Every time has its challenges and it's in "times like these" when leadership really matters. Leadership affects everyone, whether you are on the job or at home.

So here is the 4-3-2-1 on leadership that Vinny shared with us and the 10 tools and techniques as a leader you can use now.

4. Know what the expectations your team has of you:

- Establish Structure
- Manage Relationships
- Balance Risk
- Make Decisions

3. Ask and answer the following questions:

- What are the standards we will follow?
- What systems do we have in place to meet those standards?
- Who's in charge to get it done?

2. Identify reasons for stress and where they are coming from:

- What the leader knows
- What the team knows

1. Remember the #1 key when leading a team is:


- TRUST

Vinny's final thoughts on leadership are for us to ask more questions to your team and tell less. He believes that teams are made up of three groups - 20% think they know everything, another 20% do know everything and 60% are ones that are really engaged. Those percentages may differ within organizations, but there still in most cases are three groups. So work with that 60% since they are the key to success.

Lastly, remember as a leader you need to smile more often. It can be contagious.

Now I'm not a representative or agent for Vinny Boles in any way. But if you're interested in having him as a key speaker you can find him at www.vinnyboles.com and tell him Donna, formally from the Bronx, sent you.

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