



# *Two Things Leaders Should Never Do*

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I'm starting to see a couple of disturbing behaviours among leaders out there, and it's happened so much recently I thought I would bring it to your attention. Both come about from over-earnest leaders who are trying to do the right thing but end up taking inappropriate advantage of people. Take a hard look at how you engage with employees, prospective employees, and vendors, and see if you're making this mistake:

**1) Leaders who exploit job hunters** – The founder of a non-profit called me recently looking for a new president to lead the organization. I immediately suggested an excellent candidate that had the exact experience and expertise the founder was looking for. He scheduled a call with my suggested candidate and spent more than an hour asking him very specific questions about how he would run the organization. Then, they scheduled a follow up call to discuss it in more detail. Then another!

Then the candidate never heard from the founder again. Apparently, the founder was just squeezing as much information as he could with no intention of actually hiring him. In my friend's well-intentioned desire to show his experience and expertise, he probably shared hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of advice, only to see the founder walk away with it for free.

I'll never recommend another candidate to that organization, because you should never exploit a potential

employee just for your own benefit. Even if you think you're saving money for the non-profit, or you think since he or she is willing to share, it wasn't exactly coerced – it still doesn't matter.

It's taking advantage and it's incredibly bad form.

**2) The second example is when a leader directly asks employees or vendors how to replace them** - I know this sounds preposterous, but I've had multiple people call me recently who have had this happen (and it's happened to me as well). It's usually a case of a leader who's trying to save money. In my case, our team at Cooke Pictures was doing great work and hitting the target time and time again, but the leader simply wanted to save money and bring the work in-house. But instead of doing the hard work of exploring the marketplace, he took the shortcut of asking me how to replace me.

It's an incredibly awkward situation because it puts the employee or vendor in a very vulnerable position. They don't want to damage the relationship by being unwilling to help, but they're essentially helping you fire them.

Once again, it's very poor taste, shows a leader's inexperience, and takes advantage.

Great leadership isn't about taking advantage of vulnerable employees, job applicants, freelancers or vendors. It's about inspiring them to accomplish things you never dream of doing.

***Be that kind of leader.***