



FARRAR'S FAUCET

ACTIONABLE THOUGHTS ON PRINCIPLED BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

The Self Identity Exercise

How you view yourself, and how others view you, has a major impact on how effective you are.

We know from extensive research that if you identify with a group that gives you a sense of meaning, purpose and belonging, it's likely that your positive self-image will spill over into your ability to interact positively with the world. In other words, if you feel you are part of a group or community that is generally successful, you are more likely to be generally successful yourself.

There is also a very obvious corollary of this. It is usually called the "halo effect". If other people identify you with a positive and successful group, they are more likely to think of you the same way. Not only that, but as a result they are more likely to present you with opportunities, forgive you for minor mistakes and recognize you for your achievements.

Exercise:

Pick three aspects of your self-identify that have the most power to describe you to others and yourself. It is likely the most powerful self-identities will be the ones that most differentiate you from other people. For example, being an American in America is unlikely to be a powerful differentiator. On the other hand, being an American might be a powerful descriptor of yourself if you move to the Middle East. Similarly, being a good parent is unlikely to be a powerful self-identity, although it might be if you have made some significant sacrifice to be a parent and it has changed your life as a result.

Here are three of my most significant self-identities, along with a few words that describe each one for me:

Psychologist: A person with evidence based expertise in how people behave.

Australian: A bit of rebel, open-minded, friendly, believes in a "fair go for all".

Marathoner: Self-disciplined, determined to finish, able to achieve over the long-haul.

What three groups do you most identify with?

Review:

What do you do to live up to the ideals of the groups you identify with? How do you communicate to others that this is who you are? What happens when what you aspire to do comes in conflict with the demands of your life?

For Advanced Discussion:

Ask three to five of your closest friends, colleagues and associates to do the same exercise thinking of you. Do they come up with the same three ways of looking at you? What are the differences? Explain your three self-identities to them and note how they react.

ABOUT ME: DAVID FARRAR



An Australian living in the US since 2001, David is a psychologist with an international practice as a consultant and professional speaker. David studied at the Royal Military College of Australia, (MUR), University of Melbourne, and Northwestern University, (Kellogg Business School). David has degrees in economics and psychology, graduated his master's program with honors, and qualified as a psychologist in Australia. David is the President and CEO of FGRAssociates, LLC. He is also an Adjunct Professor at Saint Mary's University and the College of Saint Scholastica where he teaches Ethics, Leadership and Conflict Management in MBA and other graduate programs.

View page online: <http://farrarsfaucet.blogspot.com/2009/02/self-identity-exercise.html>
Home page: www.ThePrincipledLeader.com Contact me at David.Farrar@FGRAssociates.com