

Leaders of Integrity: Extending Favor With No Strings Attached

Shay Hughes

Last week I had the opportunity to attend the Leaders of Integrity leadership development breakfast program series presented by Ethical Edge in Costa Mesa. The theme of this event was “Building Trust Through Connection” via the principles addressed in Dr. Henry Cloud’s book, *Integrity: The Courage To Meet The Demands of Reality*.

The event was particularly special, as our Executive Vice President, David Marino, had been invited to serve as a panelist alongside Cynthia Burnham, who spoke on the topic of empathy, and Kathy Gardarian who spoke on the topic of vulnerability. David spoke on the topic of extending favor.

Loosely defined, the concept of extending favor involves doing anything good, kind or helpful for others, without any expectations. It is trusting without fear of being somehow shortchanged. In a general way, extending favor means looking out for the best interest of others, to the exclusion of yourself.

I have to say that I have never thought about the work that we do at Hughes Marino in terms of ‘extending favor’ in the same way that David described it, and I absolutely loved his take on the concept.

He said:

“Extending favor is not about doing favors for others, with the expectation of something in return. It’s about putting you first, regardless of the consequences to me. It’s not me versus you, or even me with you. It’s about you. In fact, the whole concept of a ‘win-win’ situation is really broken. It sounds good, but it implies that I’ll create a ‘win’ for you, subject to me winning, too.”

David went on to illustrate the way our company embraces the concept of extending favor, both internally and with our clients. From an inside perspective, our entire culture at Hughes Marino is built around extending favor to our team. It’s not about what the individual can do for the company, but what our company can do for our team members, to make their lives balanced, more fulfilling, and more rewarding. As David said, we have a flat organization for that very reason. We trust inherently, and a victory for an individual team member is a victory for the company – not the other way around.

When it comes to our clients, we are adamant about extending favor as



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well. We never ask clients to sign an engagement letter, as David pointed out, because those are merely in place to protect brokers, not their clients. We also shy away from most long term (10 year) leases for our clients, preferring to protect them from risks rather than focusing on a larger commission.



Hughes Marino Executive Vice President, David Marino, speaking on the Leaders of Integrity panel alongside Founder/CEO of Qualis International, Inc., Kathy Gardarian (left) and Leadership Consultant, Cynthia Burnham (right).

Moreover, we're always there to help tenants sublease space free of charge should they need it.

Leaving the breakfast, I have to say I was truly inspired by David's parting words. He said that he strives each day to extend favor with no strings attached in all areas of his life. To him it's not just about being a man of integrity with his clients. It's about putting his family, his friends, and his colleagues first, with no agenda or intention to come in second. It's all about them.

Personally, I can't recall ever hearing a more worthwhile goal.

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