



Cleopatra And You

April 2011
Volume 10 Issue 4



William E. Caswell

Bill Caswell is an experienced coach of CEOs and senior executives and the author of *The Respect Revolution*, a 12-book series written by a CEO for CEOs as a guide to getting companies to *Excellence*



The Respect Revolution

This 12-volume book series guides a business to *Excellence* and keeps it there.

Get your copy now, available at your local bookstore or at www.respectrevolution.com

Do you have topic ideas? Comments or questions?

Contact **Upkar Bilkhu**
CCCC
190 Bronson Ave. Suite 100
Ottawa, ON K1R 6H4
Tel: (613) 232-1243
Email:
ubilkhu@caswellccc.com

www.caswellccc.com

If we slide back in history to later B.C., we arrive at a time when Anthony was married to Cleopatra. At this point he was co-ruler of the Roman Empire, looking after half while Octavian (later to become Augustus Caesar) cared for the other half of the Empire. Succeeding Julius Caesar, who was assassinated in 44 B.C., the two leaders shared the monarchy as a means to avoid the corruption of a sole head of the Roman Empire. Anthony's authority included Egypt as a state, of which Cleopatra was Queen. It was customary to have kings or queens overseeing each member state.

Around 36 B.C. King Herod of Syria had become irritated by the political actions of Alexandra, Cleopatra's sister who lived in his kingdom. With Anthony distant, Herod decided to have Alexandra's young son murdered – drowned in a swimming party – as a clear warning to cease and desist. Alexandra appealed to Anthony for revenge against Herod but without immediate effect.

In January 35 B.C., Cleopatra, used the occasion of a visit of herself and Anthony to Syria, to get Anthony to mete out punishment to Herod. Anthony did summon Herod to Anthony's temporary Syrian throne, but Anthony had no intention of removing so valuable a ruler¹ without at least an insightful discussion. As a wise ruler himself, Anthony accepted the argument that since he had made Herod king of Syria, Anthony must let Herod act as such and call the shots, politically and otherwise in his own kingdom. Nevertheless for his wife's sake, Anthony had to

at least summon Herod as a show of concern.

When he appeared before Anthony, the very capable Herod soon regained his footing with the General and, after conversing with him, induced him to drop his indignation. Thus, Cleopatra's persuasions had less force than the arguments Herod used to win back Marc Anthony's friendship and respect. Anthony is reported to have told his staff: "It isn't right to ask the king to give an account of his government; for then he wouldn't be a king. Those who gave him that authority must let him use it." He also intoned to Cleopatra that it would be best for her not to meddle so actively with the acts of the king's governance.

Put into the current context, once you delegate, let the new authoritative person run the show. It is for that reason we at CCCC call the act of delegating 'the big divorce'. This historical excerpt provides a fine example of how one should delegate: appoint the person, define the envelope, clarify the authority and then stand back. Never reverse the decisions of the person delegated with authority; otherwise you will not have truly delegated.

Good Luck

Bill Caswell

¹ In a separate book, Herod is shown to be a wise and generous ruler, a patron of the arts and architecture despite the bad rap he gets as having Christ crucified during his watch: Josephus, *Life of Herod*, J. M. Dent Publishers, (London, 1998)