

# BORDERLESS LEARNING

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO LEARN SERVANT LEADERSHIP

BY LUIS F DURAN-APARICIO

### We have lots to celebrate!

Two weeks ago we had another home run in San Antonio with one of our Legacy Clients, TDIndustries. It was the third time we taught the Introduction to Servant Leadership in Spanish and it was received in a spectacular fashion by all 18 Partners. The participants were engaged and connected a lot, they felt a sense of belonging and they were grateful to have it in their language.

We had some pushback from a couple of participants, but by the end of the day they soaked up all the concepts and even asked for a longer class. Of course, AMCA did not do this alone. You see, we normally have a class sponsor who connects all the skills we present with their experiences in the office or field so the teachings become applicable and not just some airy-fairy subject that sounds great but might not be substantial. This time around, our friend Merary Garcia from TD San Antonio was our sponsor, and she did a terrific job



Merary Garcia



with her stories and examples as well as her participation in the team activities and discussions we facilitated.

The Business Unit Manager, Tom Brimer, opened the session with a welcoming message, and then the leader of the People Department, Paulina Heaney, kicked off the class.

I will not bore you with a ton of details, but I'd like to give you a little history on how this class came to be.

About 3 years ago we started noticing that there were several Partners that did not have fluency in English and I was doing a lot of translating for them during the Servant Leadership classes. Ann, Duane and I played with the idea of creating a class in Spanish to be able to fulfill this need but we did not know if it was going to be something TD and other Clients would want. However, when we brought it up with TDIndustries they loved the idea. It took us about a year to translate it to Spanish and modify it to be not just a literal translation, but a

cultural one as well. We did a few drafts and run-through rehearsals until we had it where we wanted it. Now it was getting very close to show time in Dallas. We have always taught our classes in duos or trios so we prepared to teach this class with a co-presenter from TDIndustries. We met with a wonderful superintendent, Alberto Sandoval, about 3-4 times to rehearse, and then we were ready.

Alberto did a wonderful job bringing the stories and examples that normally the class sponsor provides, aside from teaching some of the content. The first class was rather successful, although I must admit I was scared and nervous. But to our surprise, the crowd responded nicely and we had to extend the class for about 30 more minutes. We were even featured in Forbes Magazine as the first ever servant leadership class taught in Spanish in the US.

From this class, there's a story that I'd like to share which was an outstanding example of the emotional bank account. After teaching that piece, we asked if people had any questions

or comments. One of the participants raised his hand and told us that his wife had been struggling with cancer for a few years and she was told she only had about 4 months left to live. Throughout her struggle, this man's supervisor had offered him time off and money if he needed it but he had refused until now. The participant went on to say that he approached his supervisor, told him the situation and requested to go to Mexico for the last month so his wife could pass with her loved ones by her side. His supervisor promised him that he would keep his job for when this man returned

and also gave him some money from his personal account to help with the costs. To him, this was an enormous deposit in his emotional account.

For our second class, we were asked to perform in Houston. Our friend Alberto could not leave overnight due to his responsibility for two projects as a superintendent so we had to wing it with one teacher only since it would take a few rehearsals for another co-presenter to be able to make the content theirs. This time around, Duane came with me to Houston to help with the

technology side of the presentation and we had a response similar to our first time, People were in tune with the idea and became avid supporters of TDIndustries and servant leadership.

I'll take you back to the beginning of this piece, the celebratory part. We are excited to have this new curriculum and to be able to serve a new market. We are hopeful that we are going to see a lot of opportunities in other companies to present this powerful message and continue to change the world.

