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Turning Busyness into Business

How are you today? Let me guess. Busy? Very busy? Or maybe, really really very very busy?

Busyness has become a new badge of honor. It may have replaced 'fine' as the way we greet each other. Count how many times you use or hear the word "busy" during the day. What might it say about us? Here are some options:

1. We are struggling so much with time management that it's the most important thing to share with each other
2. We aren't working on anything interesting enough to talk about.
3. We don't have the energy or motivation to engage in a more meaningful discussion.
4. We have started to believe that the word 'busy' elevates our spirits and those of others.

Perhaps we should shift this.

These casual conversations in the hallway, elevator or beverage bar are important. I see them as "impromptu leadership moments." Rather than losing the opportunity with "busy" talk, how about initiating a conversation that has more impact?

The next time someone asks, "How are you?" consider responding in one of the following ways:

- Share a success: "Great – my team just accomplished X and I'm really proud of them."
- Mention a business issue: "Fabulous – I'm trying to get my head around X and it's been a really interesting challenge."
- Initiate a positive exchange: "Terrific. I'm working on some really exciting stuff. What's going on with you?"

These kinds of responses can turn a casual conversation into a meaningful connection that can help us leverage a success, solve a problem or make a difference for someone else.

The Bottom Line: Let's swear off the word "busy." Instead of lamenting about our hectic day, leverage these conversations – those leadership moments – to turn "busyness" in business.