



Leading Courageously in Times of Change – DESIGN FIRM LEADERSHIP SERIES

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In concentrating upon the over-arching idea of leading courageously within your organization, we will look at the characteristics of managing vs. leading, identifying the characteristics that excellent leader/managers possess and how those traits make them successful.

To facilitate the use of this material in your firm, please consider the **Recommended Discussion** exercises included in this paper. Its purpose is to provide leaders and team members with an opportunity to gain insight about a major learning point and how it influences a team's ability to coalesce and perform. Many of our clients have found it useful to engage in highly participative exchanges with team members facilitated by the team leader. The duration of this session should take approximately 15-20 minutes each. The intent is to make this information "come to life," allowing all leaders and team members to share their perceptions for the benefit of the group as a whole.

Managing vs. Leading

Managing can be defined as "Doing Things Right," while leading focuses principally on "Doing the Right Things." In moving this topic forward, I often allude to two very insightful quotes to set the tone for courageous leadership expectations:

"A leader is someone you would choose to follow to a place you wouldn't go by yourself."

(The Futurist, Joel Barker).

"In leading, example isn't the main thing, it is the only thing."

(Albert Schweitzer)

In both of these quotes, we find important insights about leading and managing. Specifically, demonstrating consistently as your organization's leader, that the values and principles by which you measure your team members and yourself are those that cause all participants to reach greater heights together in whatever assignments they undertake.



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Berkley DP has partnered with PACES, LLC to develop this educational series addressing critical and highly relevant subjects which, when configured together, will provide you with the building blocks to create an impactful Executive Program.

We encourage you to use the unique insights and informative discussions of this series to advance the executive and leadership development of your firm.

Understand the Prescription for Success

Enlightened leaders/managers are advised to follow a common prescription for motivating, measuring and counseling their team participants; they should:

Focus the team and the individuals on goals:



- Set clear standards and establish goals with a clear process path from inception to completion.
- Provide constant feedback during the project to ensure successful completion of the assignment.
- Make certain that the team celebrates successfully completed milestones along the way. (This establishes and maintains a sense of progression momentum for all team members to enjoy. These “celebrations” are not necessarily high-profile events but can be a simple team gathering to address and recognize the accomplishment of a milestone together.

Expect the best:



- Establish high expectations of your team from the start and empower them with the resources to deliver.
- Engender within the team members a clear-cut opportunity for them to rise to the challenge and achieve success for the project and themselves.

Pay attention:



- Pay attention to the structure of the work – both what is working and what is not.
- Pay attention to the human dimension of the structure of the work (Is the environment onerous or overwhelming? If so, modify the work process as much as practicable.)
- Understand each individual’s need for tailored, personalized feedback throughout the project or assignment.
- Avoid micro-managing—focus on ends more often than means.
- Maintain a consistent personal, supportive presence—MBWA (managing by walking around) in all phases of the assignment.

Tell the stories (to evolve the team’s sense of cohesion and purpose):



- Reminisce about successful efforts on the team’s assignments and projects in the current project and in past efforts.
- Communicate positive examples, bringing to life the circumstances and solutions derived to achieve success in prior efforts.
- Provide inspiration to overcome roadblocks and determine what additional resources would be most helpful.
- Create “legends” from your team’s past successes giving a sense of purpose and history of the team’s ability to achieve “stretch” goals.

Deliver personalized recognition:



- Let people know that you value them as individuals.
- Know drivers/hot buttons (What would they as a team and as individuals enjoy as a reward for both interim and ultimate success on the project?)
- Tailor the acknowledgement to the individual's preferences—some team members prefer to be publicly recognized, others privately.
- Be generous with praise—but, remember, sincerity makes it authentic and worthwhile.

Celebrate together:



- Formally, through emails/memos.
- Informally, through brief get-togethers, cake, pizza or other foods of your team's choice.
- Link periodic celebrations to milestones.
- This process of "celebration" helps people remain connected throughout the project, from inception to project completion.

Set the example:



- Walk the talk. (Demonstrate consistently what you expect of your team and to serve as a model for proper leadership and behavior.)

Recommended Discussion:

Consider, initially and periodically thereafter, the answer to the question: What does our organization value in a leader?

A great way to clarify answers to this question is to have team members think about leaders in the organization as a whole and why the group considers them excellent leaders.

Discuss openly, creating shared examples for all to recognize. Discuss openly, creating shared examples for all to recognize.

Enhancing Performance

When these methodologies and tactics are consistently and predictably applied to projects and assignments, the combined skill of the team members is enhanced and the overall performance of the team progresses significantly over time. The intimate knowledge gained through the application of this approach aligns and provides confidence to the team enabling it to even undertake even the most complex projects with enthusiasm and a sense of purpose, resulting in excellent execution.

Implementing this strategy and method of operation also serves as a growth vehicle for team members and builds not only a sense of common purpose but also a unique camaraderie that causes the team to be an essential contributor to the growth and achievement of the company as a whole.

In addition, when two or more separate teams are mandated to align on a major project, the use of these techniques in the early coordination phases of the assignment accelerates the cohesion of these disparate groups as they move together in tandem to achieve success and team/personal growth on that project. It is therefore incumbent on the team leader/managers to have the various teams discuss these points together, agree on goals early, move in a common direction through the use of the above cited techniques and achieve success with a minimum of disorientation and confusion.

Questions & Feedback

Is your organization interested in learning more about Leading Courageously? Let us know how we may be of help.

Use the button at the right to:

- Let us know what you think about this series
- Tell us how you're using the material and how it's working for you
- Ask us questions
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