

THESE MATERIALS WERE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH

SEMINARS FOR
EXCELLENCE IN
Nonprofit
MANAGEMENT

Leading so People Follow

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Supported by the Professional Development Fund of
Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation

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THE EXTRA DIMENSION OF LEADERSHIP

Management is the process of planning, organizing, directing, controlling and coordinating resources to achieve organizational goals. Leadership is all this, but with an extra dimension.

Think of someone you have worked for whom you regard as a strong leader. Forget for a moment the qualities you believe s/he embodies. Concentrate instead on what people have said about the leader. Chances are many of the characteristics are reflected in the following statements:

- “She made me see things in a new light.”
- “He took the blinders from my eyes. I could see possibilities I hadn’t recognized before.”
- “She made me outdo myself; I never realized what I was capable of before.”
- “He had a way of bringing out the best in people.”
- “She made this an exciting place to work.”
- “He set an example for people to follow.”
- “Some of the most important things I know about this place, I learned from her.”
- “He gave me plenty of feedback – both positive and developmental.”
- “I never felt ownership in this place until I worked for her.”
- “He inspired pride in me and pride in the team, plus the whole organization regarded us with pride.”

People who inspire tributes such as these are more than managers. They have vision, set directions, engage employees and enable people to extend their capabilities. They inspire loyalty, command respect and create the kind of environment in which employees will go the extra mile for them. What do your employees say about you?

When researchers ask countless employees to describe what their ideal leader did and how their actions made them feel, the answers are usually as follows:

Actions of Leader

How I Felt

Listened

Valued

Delegated

Challenged

Set high standards

Committed to excellence

Left me alone to do my job

Trusted

Supported me

Cared for

Gave me positive and negative feedback

Developed

Instructed/taught me

Coached/mentored

Engaged me in the process

Motivated

If you want to enhance your own leadership potential, begin by emulating the ideal leader who inspired you.

HOW LEADERS MOTIVATE

CHALLENGE THE PROCESS. Leaders are pioneers - people who seek out new opportunities and are willing to challenge the status quo. They innovate, experiment and explore ways to improve the organization. They treat mistakes as learning experiences. Leaders stay prepared to meet whatever challenges confront them.

ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT. Leaders infuse employees with spirit-developing relationships based on mutual trust. They stress collaborative goals. They actively involve others in planning, giving them discretion to make their own decisions. Leaders ensure that everyone in the organization feels capable and strong.

MODEL THE WAY. Leaders are clear about their business values and beliefs. They keep people and projects on course by behaving consistently with these values and by modeling how they expect others to act. Leaders plan and break down projects into achievable steps, creating opportunities for small wins. They make it easier for others to achieve goals by focusing on key priorities. Leaders are strong team members, as well as strong team leaders. While they don't try to manage someone else's area, they do see themselves as leaders of the total organization, not just their own area.

INSPIRE A SHARED VISION. Leaders look toward and beyond the horizon. They envision the future with a positive and hopeful outlook. Leaders are expressive and attract followers through their genuineness and skillful communications. They show others how mutual interests can be met through commitment to a common purpose.

ENCOURAGE THE HEART. Leaders encourage employees to persist in their efforts by linking recognition with accomplishments, visibly recognizing contributions to the common vision. They let others know that their efforts are appreciated and express pride in the team's accomplishments. Leaders find ways to celebrate achievements. They nurture a team spirit that enables all to sustain continued efforts.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEADERS

Circle those that you can honestly say apply to you:

1. Link the employees and the team to larger organizational goals
2. Communicate respectfully and in a timely fashion
3. Make decisions with input from others; listen to feedback and ask questions
4. Give team members the information they need to do their jobs
5. Set goals and emphasize them
6. Work with their employees to develop standards and measures
7. Follow-up with employees to ensure achievement of standards and measures
8. Hold employees accountable for the attainment of goals, standards and measures
9. Show loyalty to the organization and to their employees
10. Create an atmosphere of trust and growth
11. Give praise and recognition to motivate and reward good performance
12. Criticize constructively and developmentally
13. Create an atmosphere where strong dialogue with employees is encouraged
14. Share the mission and goals of your area with your team members
15. Develop plans and renegotiate them when necessary
16. Display tolerance and flexibility
17. Exhibit a willingness to change
18. Treat employees with respect, openness, honesty, fairness and consistency
19. Model trust and mutual respect and expect the same of employees
20. Demonstrate a willingness to take charge
21. Set guidelines for how employees are to treat one another
22. Represent the team and fight the “good fight” when appropriate

LEADERSHIP PROFILE - SELF ASSESSMENT

Place a checkmark to rank yourself honestly on the degree to which you exhibit leadership qualities in managing your staff and working with colleagues.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Self-confidence	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Respect for/confidence in others	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Ability to empower/challenge others	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Ability to inspire others	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Fairness, being equitable	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Ability to inspire excellence	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Ability to work with people at all levels	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Ability to communicate with others	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Expertise/knowledge	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Ethical behavior	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Creativity	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Willingness to take risks	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

How well do you translate your leadership qualities into actions? Rank yourself honestly on the degree to which you use leadership skills in managing your staff and working with colleagues.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Delegate	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Motivate/influence	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Coach/counsel/develop	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Encourage teamwork	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Serve as a role model	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Discover/create new opportunities and goals	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

A score of 25-30 means you translate your leadership qualities into leadership skills/actions very effectively.

LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN

List the leadership **qualities** you would like to enhance in the future:

List the leadership **skills** you would like to enhance in the future:

Describe what you will do to enhance these skills in the future:

Describe what you hope to achieve by enhancing your use of these skills in your management practices:

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Organizational leadership needs to consist of both good management and strong leadership. Organizational leaders are “stewards” of the organization; they must lead the organization to new territory and ensure long term organizational success and viability.

The root meaning of “manage” is “hand” as in handle. Webster describes it as handle, direct, control, administer, regulate. Managing implies handling things, maintaining order; it’s about organization and control; it implies staying behind and minding the store. It’s an important function, but in new and changing circumstances, the organization needs leadership.

The root meaning of “lead” is “guide” – to guide as in leading a group by going in advance. Lead has a sense of movement about it. When you lead, you “go first”. You venture into new or unexplored territories, guiding others to new and unfamiliar places.

Leadership is more dynamic and more emotional than management; it brings out feelings, even passion, in people. Leadership is not a position – it is a process – a way of relating to employees. Leadership creates a working environment that motivates people to pursue a shared mission and vision and to achieve high performance results around the mission and vision. Your job is to contribute to the organization in a way that ensures that your organization attains these essential behavioral elements of Leadership:

Visionary – Visionaries paint a clear picture of the future destination – where the organization is headed. They decide where to head and plan how to get there. They create and communicate a mission or roadmap that describes the organization’s purpose or reason for existence. They model their commitment to the mission by “walking the talk” and never losing sight of the future destination. They motivate the team that reports to them to take action by helping them see where they fit into the larger picture and what direction to follow along the way.

Strategic Thinker – Before embarking on their journey, leaders scope out the landscape and plan their routes accordingly. They realize that their picture of the future destination will only be as good as its execution. They think strategically about outcomes and results; about what it takes to translate the picture into reality. Strategic thinkers contribute to the organization’s mission and strategy and take responsibility for aligning their particular mission with that of the larger organization. They keep their sights on the big picture and provide their people with a mission. Strategic thinkers are not static; they seize opportunities and adapt to changing conditions.

Change Agent – When confronted with challenges and changing conditions, leaders weigh the risks and adjust their plans – always with the final destination in mind. Successful leaders are able to take strategic risks and lead through change. They understand the complexity of change and act as change agents to mobilize the workforce. Effective change agents are able to discover new opportunities and support continuous improvement while maintaining high performance teams. They model for their employees how to expect, welcome and gain value from change and coach employees to do the same.

Team Builder – There are no leaders without followers. While on the journey, leaders draw on the strengths and ideas of their followers. Strong leaders realize that collective wisdom is simply greater than individual insight and they tap into wisdom by building a team environment. Leaders create teams that recognize their interdependence and understand that goals are accomplished with mutual support; teams that have a sense of ownership. They build a climate of trust and empowerment with open and honest communication – 360 degrees. They respect differences and effectively manage and enhance diversity.

Communicator – There is a strong correlation between effective communication and business success. A good leader is one who communicates up, down and across the organization and creates an environment in which employees and teams communicate freely. Listening is a key element in effective communication. By applying good listening skills, strong leaders deepen their understanding, clarify others' perspectives and discover innovative ways to solve problems, improve products and motivate people. Leaders are insistent on hearing, and being open to, not just good news, but bad news as well.

Coach – On the way to guiding employees to places they have never been before, leaders must provide coaching. They must give positive feedback to those who are traveling down the road in the right direction to inspire them to continue on the journey. They must give corrective feedback to those who have gotten off the road, have lost their way and need to be guided back in the right direction.

Performance Manager – Leaders bring out the best in their people and believe that this is essential to the organization's success. Strong performance management means moving beyond the once a year performance appraisal to a more strategic, on-going process that: sets clear performance goals for individuals and teams, plans for employee and team development needs, continually monitors and supports individual and team performance, rewards and recognizes performance achievements and sets the path for long term goals.

Role Model – Leaders are role models for all others in the organization. It is up to them to inspire and lead employees so they will learn how to travel the roads and weather the changes as they make their way to the organization's future destination. Leaders are role models who are trusted and respected – *a leader who others will willingly choose to follow.*

STRATEGIC THINKERS

- Are aware of the organization's strategy and take responsibility for aligning their mission with the organization's strategy.
- Provide their people with a mission – a roadmap to follow
- Keep their sights on the big picture; they maintain a keen awareness of their organization, industry, their workforce and themselves
- Are not static. They seize opportunities and readily adapt to changing conditions.
- Effectively engage their employees in the mission and the strategy of the unit/organization
- Link their part of the organization with other teams and departments; help remove barriers between areas and minimize the silos.

BASED ON THE ABOVE:

- What are 2-3 strategic initiatives that your area/department will need to take over the next 12 months?
- What are you going to do to prepare your staff for the implementation of these strategies?
- What support do you need from other areas within your organization to make these strategies a reality?
- What is your role to build these linkages?