Leaders and Delegating

by Sophia Tutorial

1. Leadership

According to Pype, Mertens, Helewaut, and Krystallidou (2018), it takes leadership, not merely management, to guide an organization through a rapidly changing external world, and working effectively through change is what distinguishes leading versus managing in an organization.

When sector and marketplace environments are stable, there is general buy-in around the values and direction of the organization. Resources are adequate, and, with no new competition, most organizations can get by with competent and able managers.

But in a climate of continuous change, a clear future direction is instead vague and not necessarily shared by internal stakeholders, traditional sources of support evaporate, and there are disruptive new entrants to the market (Pype et al.). This is when leadership is most needed.

Leaders are defined as influential people who guide individuals and groups to establish and reach goals. Leaders practice and promote integrity, determination, sociability, and emotional intelligence based on personal experience.

Steffel, Williams, and Perrmann-Graham (2016) note that leadership is a choice that can be regretful and satisfying at the same time. The decision to bear responsibility for a positive outcome to a situation is sometimes too much for some leaders to handle. According to Dannenberg (2014), leaders desire a positive image to be responsible, although it can cost the leader personally if the expectation and the motivation of the leader are not generous.

Leading by example and showing people what needs to be done allows individuals of the group to then take charge and maintain effective personal decision making. There is a positive effect on cooperation and communication when leaders lead a task in person. When a leader does not contribute as much in person, cooperation and communication can fail.

2. Delegation

To delegate is to assign responsibility to someone else in order to complete a task But remember, you, as a leader, retain the overall responsibility and accountability for the project's success.

Delegating responsibility for a task is based on the type of job or position one may have or the type of task that is required of a person. Steffel and Williams (2017) state that delegating responsibility is a choice Leaders need to find a balance of knowing when to properly delegate and when to lead by example because it is the best combination to have for an effective and efficient team to reach its goals.

⚙ **THINK ABOUT IT**

Think about times you have been given a responsibility – how did it feel? Did you understand your task at hand? Did you feel prepared to handle the situation?

3. Lead By Example or Words

Another way that people lead is by being a role model to others and showing them what it is like to lead by example. There are leaders who can be too demanding, take all the work for themselves to prove their self-worth, and can take all the credit even though it should have been a group effort. This can be a fine line between determining a good leader from a great leader. Leading by example is what most leaders strive for since it is the most effective way to lead and the way most people are happy about its outcomes.

People who lead by coercive power, or the use of legitimate power, does not improve ethics and morale. Coercive power relates to the practice of compelling employees to adhere to ethical values under the threat of punishment. The legitimate use of power is another poor way to lead by example. Leaders take the sides of individuals and only view certain ideas for how they can one day lead the company, and it sets a bad example for the company. However, the power of a role model and the ethical power of expertise is the best example of how a leader can lead by example.

Leaders are observed in multiple facets and can be observed in a small-scale performance team to a Fortune 500 organization. Leaders can contribute by example, or they can contribute by words (Dannenberg, 2014). According to Dannenberg, leading by words means the leader pledges or promises the intended contribution before the team of followers their contributions in a simultaneous manner.

Leading by words is not as credible as leading by example because pledges are not credible. Leading by example, the leader contributes to the people before others can contribute to the decision, hence the phrase "leading by example." According to Dannenberg, leading by words and leading by example both exist, but it depends on the type of leader. Individuals or groups that prefer to lead by words acknowledge it is better to have a leader lead by words than to have a leader who does not lead at all.

4. Leading vs. Delegating

Determining when to be a leader by example or to delegate responsibility for a task demonstrates the behavior of a true leader. A true leader will combine leadership and delegation into one role. Leading by example is a sure way to develop future leaders. Developing future talent is one part of leadership that is very rewarding. But delegation can be another way to develop future leaders. It is important to understand that in life, some are given the title of "follower" and others are given the title of "leader." Even though there can be hundreds of leaders in one room, it takes a true leader to demonstrate that sometimes, you must be a follower to be a leader. This mindset is what determines and sets apart novice leaders from natural-born leaders.

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