

THE NEW STYLE OF LEADERSHIP

Leaders are the driving force behind every successful business. They are the people that motivate their team to work hard to bring in results and to make a measurable difference. But as much as leaders can be a positive force, they can also be destructive if they hold on to old leadership practices. Much like every other business model, the concept of leadership has evolved into a new practice. This modernized practice requires adjustments to be made from the inside of every company, so that they can be ready for the changes in the industry and the incoming generation of employees.

Traditional leadership was about taking on a commanding role in a company so that you could bring your ideas into action through the help of your employees. Leaders had control over all of the projects being put forward, and they held themselves responsible for telling their team what the next steps were. These old practices are becoming irrelevant though, as new employees are starting off from a high level of education, and are expecting to be challenged and mentored.

By maintaining the expectations of outdated leadership positions companies will become ineffective and find progress difficult. Leaders need to shift into the more modernized role – they need to loosen their reigns so that they can encourage open conversations and brainstorming. It's no longer about telling a staff member what they need to do; it's about listening to what the staff member can bring to the table.

HERE ARE A FEW OF THE THINGS THAT NEED TO CHANGE IN ORDER TO BRING FORWARD A NEW STYLE OF LEADERSHIP:

1 **Have a Leader VS. Have a Leadership Culture**

In larger companies there are a number of leaders that are responsible for their own projects, team members, and portfolios. Although this can lead to a lot of things being done all at once, it can also cause silos, and conflicts between departments. In order for a company to make progress towards a new style of leadership, they need to create a leadership culture. This means that they encourage all of the leaders of the different areas to come together and support each other's ventures and ideas. By creating a company culture that promotes this connection you remove communication problems and you teach a company to accept responsibility for themselves instead of placing blame on other departments.

2 **Command VS. Listen**

A leader is often responsible for coming up with a plan to move an opportunity forward, and this can sometimes mean that they take on the role of a commanding officer in order to make sure it gets done. However, this might not be the most effective way to get tasks done. New leadership encourages leaders to take the time to listen to their employees, so that they can learn what the most effective style of management is for each person. Every team member will be different, and they might all require a different approach.

3

Invest in Tools VS. Invest in People

Gadgets, programs and data analytics are great, and there is no reason to stop using them or think that they're losing their value. However, they need to not be the focus of a work environment. In a company, you work with real people, and so it's vital to develop real human relationships. These are people that are going to work with you for weeks, months, maybe years, and every moment that isn't spend building up trust and respect is a moment wasted. Also, as a leader, taking on a mentorship role can be mutually beneficial, because it will offer both parties an opportunity for personal and career growth. The more time you spend getting to know your team the more likely it is that they'll enjoy working for you and discussing new ideas with you.

4

Message VS. Engage

It used to be that leaders would have the answer already decided long before they went to their team. They would have taken the time to think about it, weigh the options, and decide that it was best. There is no denying that someone who is in a leadership position probably knows a lot about their specialty, but that's not to say that their team can't be an added inspiration. The new leaders want to engage their team so that they can have open conversations that push each other towards new and innovative ideas. When you engage your team you are not only promoting creativity and teamwork, but you're promoting a trusting work environment. The more comfortable your team is with sharing their ideas, the more likely you'll be able to take the best ones and turn them into real opportunities.

5

Assign Blame VS. Accept Responsibility

There are some people that don't believe managers should ever say they're sorry. They also don't believe that managers are ever wrong. This is incorrect, and a manager that is unwilling to admit their faults is not helping themselves, the company, or their employees. There will always be times when something genuinely can be blamed on one specific person, but often time's people associate blame when it's really a group mistake. When you work as a team you need to take responsibility for the victories and the failures, and when you admit to your failures you're able to learn from them. Nobody can go without failing, but it's definitely possible to take each failure as an opportunity.

6

Tell VS. Show

Leaders often have a separate office that keeps them separated from their team members. There is nothing wrong with this approach – it is commonly seen as appreciation from the company, because a leader is taking on more responsibility and has proven that they are a valuable member of the team. However, it's difficult for a team to listen to a boss that rarely shows him or herself doing work, or that doesn't make a point of coming over and talking to employees about the projects they're working on. They need to make sure that they don't fall into the trap of "Do what I say, not as I do." Employees can be easily inspired by a leader that shows they're just as willing to put in the extra miles as they are.

THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW WILL BE INDIVIDUALS THAT APPRECIATE TEAMWORK, CREATIVITY, OPEN COMMUNICATION AND TRUST. BY CHANGING THE LEADERSHIP CULTURE FROM WITHIN, COMPANIES WILL BE ABLE TO CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS ABLE TO MOVE COHESIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY ON PROJECTS ACROSS ALL DEPARTMENTS, AND THAT IS ENCOURAGES DISCUSSION AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS.

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