



TOPIC: LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT
TITLE: CLARITY OF EXPECTATIONS

March 8, 2000

"Leadership is a process, a set of attributes that stems not so much from the ability to wield formal authority or to assert power, but the ability to get people to listen and follow." - R. Reich

Do you ever wish you could eliminate the peaks and valleys of performance and sustain it at a steadily increasing level? Well, this is the first newsletter of a trilogy dedicated to just that - sustaining desired behaviors in others.

I often talk with managers who are frustrated with employee performance. When they address it, they see some improvement, but it eventually lapses. How do you keep that from happening? For lasting impact, you need to change the behavior.

Behavior change is a combination of three things: clarity of expectations, competency to do the skill, and motivation to get it done. When these are combined, you build momentum, sustain performance and create success.

My message today is going to focus on establishing clarity of expectations. It's not always as simple as telling someone what you want accomplished. Communication is often a challenge - not everyone hears what you think you are telling them. In order to truly achieve clarity, you need to create purpose - a vision of what you want, a belief in why someone should contribute, an understanding of their role and a clear understanding of your expectations of performance. When all these are combined you achieve the first part of the foundation to success.

Let's talk about these in more detail:

The Vision

The word "vision" is often overused and can sometimes end up as a monologue of words no one really understands. What works is creating a vivid picture of what you want to accomplish and inspiring others to join you on your quest. Personally explain to others why you want to accomplish your goal, why it excites you, and why others should join you. Take it beyond the basic "we'll meet our financial objectives" to the greater purpose - what are you doing for your clients, your employees, the industry, the community, the world?

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TITLE: HOW BIG DO YOU HOLD YOURSELF?

What are the three key messages you will communicate about the purpose of your vision and inspire others to join you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

The Belief

Once you've stated your vision, now you need to create the belief among the "troops". No one will work for something they don't believe in. Belief inspires action that's sustainable. Do your employees, partners, peers share your belief in the noble cause?

What obstacle will you have to overcome to inspire beliefs in your objectives? How will you overcome it?

An Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities

Often visions tend to be "senior management's" job to implement. The farther down you are in the organization, the more the "vision" seems not applicable to you. The key is for everyone to know exactly how they contribute to the vision. In other words, what part do I play in this company to achieve the vision?

Clear performance expectations are also critical. How would your employees/associates answer the question: What are your top three performance expectations? And, what behaviors do you need to do consistently and well in order to achieve them? What are you doing to clarify your expectations to your employees?

Here's some help to get you started; answer the following questions:

In order to achieve your vision, what role do you play?

What is the most critical behavior you need to do consistently and well in order to achieve your vision?

What are your performance expectations for yourself?

What roles do your managers play? Your partners? Your peers?

What is their most critical behavior?

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What are your performance expectations for them?

What role do the employees play in achieving the vision?

What is their most critical behavior?

What are your performance expectations of them?

My challenge for you this week is to explain your vision, inspire others to join you, clarify roles and set clear performance expectations. Tune in to future newsletters where I'll talk about the other factors in sustaining desired behaviors.