



TOPIC: LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT

TITLE: WHAT HAT ARE YOU WEARING TODAY?

August 24, 2000

We all wear many different hats in our careers, families, relationships and lives. Sometimes it seems that we are doing a constant juggling act, and in reality, we are.

Managers play many different roles. Specifically, they wear three distinct and different hats: the leader, the manager and the coach. Although these relate very easily to business, they also relate to how we operate as parents, spouses, friends and peers. In all these relationships, we have the opportunity to wear each of these hats, and very often need to juggle them. We can't always wear them one at a time. But whether we're at work or at home, the people we interact with, support and lead, need us to wear each of these hats, even when it might be uncomfortable.

Let's take a look at them individually:

The Leader Hat

This is the hat we wear when our role is to lead, inspire and motivate. When you wear this hat, you become the message you are trying to convey, not just through your words, but your actions. The leader's job is not just to preach the message, but in fact, live the message. It is through his or her behavior, that those around them understand what they should do.

So, how do you know if you're effective at wearing this hat? First, take a look at your values.

What's important to you?

What do you stand for?

What won't you stand for?

How do you honor or live each of these values? Rate them on a scale of 1-10.

Actions speak louder than words. If someone were to watch you on videotape, do your actions support your values? Would they know what's important to you when they looked at your office, your home or your surroundings?

It is through the leaders' actions, and words, that people are inspired to strive toward a common goal. They understand why the goal is important, why they are critical, and what they are truly trying to achieve - the noble cause. Inspiration, motivation and example causes others to live the vision.

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The Manager Hat

Now we move on to the hat of manager - the person who manages the process. If we have worn our leader hat effectively, we have created a vision of what we want to achieve, and are demonstrating its importance through our behaviors. Now it's time to make sure that the appropriate time, resources, training and support are available to do the job. It is here that you set clear expectations and goals, identify the plan and process to complete the job, and how to measure success. It is also important to identify any additional resources which are necessary and see that they are provided where possible. Your job as the manager is to identify the obstacles along the way, and remove them.

The Coach Hat

This can be an overlooked, and often misunderstood role. Let me dispel a myth first - your job is not to have all the answers. The coach's role is to help others discover their own answers. Here is the philosophy: people are naturally creative and resourceful. It's not that they don't know what to do, it's that they don't always know how to do it. They are often caught up in the other things that seem overwhelming. Here is your opportunity to change behavior and cultivate learning. Ask hard questions, and help them identify their own solutions.

What do they want?

What could you do? What else?

What will you do?

So, how do you know when to wear each hat? The reality is that you need to wear all three, and you also need to change them as necessary. There will be times that you need to focus more on being the leader, and less on being the manager, or you might need to be the coach. The key is to identify which one you spend most of your time in, and more importantly, which one you should spend your time in. You have the opportunity to move yourself along the continuum and change your behavior, and cast a shadow for your employees, children, spouse and other relationships.

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So, here's my challenge for you this week: TRY ON A DIFFERENT HAT!

The hat that I'm going to try on this week is:

In order to wear this hat, I will commit to the following behaviors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We all consciously or unconsciously cast our own shadow, influencing others around us. The more you focus on choosing your hat, the more significant a shadow you cast in your work or home lives.