

**Building Strong
and Supportive Leadership**

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Leadership Introduction

50% of a manager's performance depends on the performance of their team. A Manager is the key member of the team, motivating their staff to provide that all important element, - customer satisfaction.

This is paramount to the success of the department and the future growth of the business. More and more in a demanding world, there is a greater need to go the extra mile to exceed our customer's expectations to ensure continued sales and customer retention. The role of all team leaders is therefore critical.

Managerial work is changing, because of the influence of:

- new technology
- changing markets
- changing culture

Within organisations there are:

- fewer levels - the flatter structure
- the distance between managers and staff is disappearing
- long careers are becoming less and less

This will have implications for team leaders who will need to:

- find different ways of managing
- find different ways to motivate
- find different ways to 'add value'
- find different ways to develop themselves

The business needs of the future will only be achieved by developing leaders to meet the future role.

Leadership is that part of management concerned with getting results through people. There are other aspects of management including technical and administrative requirements, but most managers believe leadership is the most essential characteristic for effective performance of their job.

Most of us know, at an instinctive level, that management and leadership are different. But understanding just how they differ at a practical level is often elusive. Yet that practical understanding is essential if we are to fulfil our role as managers and stimulate high performance from our staff.

We know that organisational performance is increasingly a product of the motivation and focus of the people the organisation employs. A major effect on people's motivation and focus is how they are led. Consequently, encouraging managers to be better leaders is an important and continual theme in training.

Management v Leadership

The words 'management' and 'leadership' have different origins and, by looking at those origins, we can get an insight into their true meanings.

Management comes from the Latin 'manus' or 'hand'. 'Management', therefore, is basically about 'controlling' things (being 'hands-on') such as budgets, timescales, progress etc.

Leadership The word Leader is taken from the North European word 'Lide' meaning a path, route or journey leadership, therefore, is basically about 'direction', 'movement', 'progress' and 'change'.

Managers tend to get things done by controlling people whereas leaders tend to get things done by inspiring people. Motivation from a manager is often rational 'Do this and you'll be rewarded or avoid punishment'.

“Management is the efficient use of resources to achieve results with and through the efforts of other people”

“Leadership is a dynamic process through which influence is exercised over others to commit enthusiastically to the achievement of the task.”

Leadership does not come naturally to the vast majority of people and there are three main reasons:

- First, managers, supervisors etc have three parts to their jobs - a 'doing things' part in which they get on with their trade or professional activities
- Second a 'managing processes' part in which they control the numbers, work schedules etc
- Thirdly a 'leading people' part in which they provide direction, inspiration and encourage high performance.

Most of us are naturally drawn towards the 'doing things' activities because that is what originally attracted us to that trade or profession.

As our performance is usually judged by numbers, deadlines etc, we are also drawn towards the 'managing processes' part of our jobs. This leaves very little time for the 'leading people' part of our jobs.

Our performance is assessed almost exclusively on managerial processes (budgets, timescales and other easily quantifiable results) and, quite simply, what gets measured gets done.

'Leading people' requires the ability to be assertive, persuasive, considerate, resilient, self confident etc. These abilities do not come naturally to everyone. As we develop them, however, the 'leading people' part of our job becomes easier, more effective and more satisfying.

Leadership Styles

There are four main leadership styles:

Autocratic These leaders impose rigid standards on their teams
Rarely delegate
Do not communicate openly
Like people to work to set methods of working
Rely on their position and power

Disadvantages of this style

The team may resent the lack of involvement
There is no sharing of ideas or communication.

Democratic Encourage their teams and set them targets
Delegates
Allow team members to achieve tasks using their own methods
Involve the team in decision making

Disadvantages of this style

Decision making becomes time consuming
The risk of error is higher

Charismatic Inspire the team to achieve
Use sheer emotive power to push the team for greater improvement
Are likely to emerge as successful leaders

Disadvantages of this style

The leadership depends entirely on personality power alone

Laissez Faire Take a hands off approach to the daily work of the team
Allow the team to make their own decisions with little or no guidance

Disadvantages of this style

High risk of error
Team members may become demotivated
Leader loses touch with the activities of the team

Leaders can probably modify their style to some extent if,

- They can change their values
- They can be open and receptive
- They are secure
- They understand their own effectiveness and because they want to.

Functional or Action Centred Leadership

Drawing on his research into leadership, Professor John Adair developed the concept of Action Centred Leadership and evolved an effective diagram to express it.

John Adair is known internationally as an author and management consultant. He was a Professor of Leadership Studies at the University of Surrey in 1979. He then worked for ICI with Sir John Harvey-Jones.

Leadership Qualities - Any group will expect its leader to have certain qualities and these will vary with the situation. There is not, however, a standard mix of qualities to make the perfect leader in all situations. It is therefore important to look at the actions a leader has to take to be effective.

For too many years the search for successful management has been seen almost exclusively as a search for the right individual. Organisations have been preoccupied with the qualifications, experience and achievements of individuals. Yet all of us know in our hearts that the ideal individual for a given job cannot be found. They cannot be found because they cannot exist.

Any attempt to list the qualities of a good manager demonstrates why he/she cannot exist: far too many of the qualities are mutually exclusive: highly intelligent but not be too clever; He/she must be highly forceful and yet sensitive to people's feelings; dynamic and still patient; also a fluent communicator and a good listener; must be decisive and also must be reflective; and so on. And if you do find this jewel among managers, this paragon of mutually incompatible characteristics, what will you do when he/she steps under a bus, or leaves to take up a better job with your principal competitor?

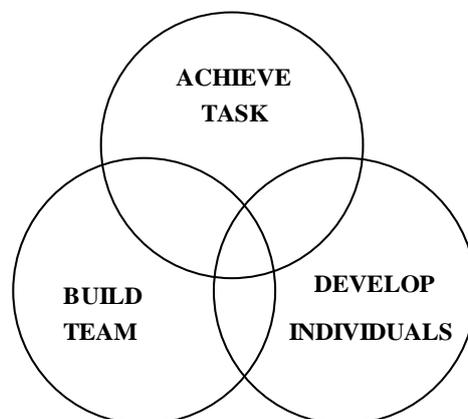
The Qualities of a Leader

Judgement, Initiative, Integrity, Foresight, Energy, Drive, Interpersonal Skills

Decisiveness, Dependability, Emotional Intelligence and Stability, Fairness, Ambition

Dedication, Objectivity, Co-operation

Leadership Actions - The leader is employed to get a job done through the people they have control over. They, therefore, have three areas in which to work:-



Applying Action Centred Leadership

The model shows three circles overlapping, demonstrating how all three are interrelated. To be effective, a team needs team spirit and targets to aim at in order to get the task done. The individual has personal needs and ambitions and a need to be an active member of the team.

The leader's responsibility, irrespective of the level of management is to:-

1. Achieve the task
2. Develop individuals
3. Build the team

A breakdown or neglect in one area will affect the others, and prevent the job being done as effectively as it could be.

There will be occasions when the leader may have to devote all their energies to the Achieve Task circle - during a period of extreme pressure for example. This is reality and as long as the leader is aware that the other two circles have been neglected and takes the first opportunity to satisfying the other two areas.

However if this was a regular occurrence this may indicate that the role or style of leadership is in appropriate. Action Centred Leadership is based not on what a leader is but on what a leader does.

The leader's job is, therefore, to satisfy all three areas by achieving the task, developing and motivating the individual and welding the individuals into a cohesive team committed to "getting the job done". This can be achieved through the following table.

KEY FUNCTIONS	TASK	TEAM	INDIVIDUAL
Define objectives:	Identify resources and constraints Clarify task Obtain information Define accountability	Assemble team Give reasons why Gain acceptance	Involve each team member
Plan	Consider options Establish priorities Plan time	Consult Encourage ideas Agree standards	Listen Assess abilities Delegate Agree targets
Brief and Inform	Establish control Brief plan Obtain feedback	Structure Answer questions Prepare and train	Check understanding Counsel Enthuse
Control & Support	Maintain standards Report progress Adjust plan Set example	Co-ordinate Maintain external co-operation Relieve tension	Guide and encourage Recognise effort Discipline
Review	Evaluate results Consider future action	Recognise team's success Learn from mistakes	Appraise performance Identify training needs Aid personal growth

Situational Leadership (Blanchard & Hersey)

In simple terms, a situational leader is one who can adopt different leadership styles depending on the situation. Most of us do this anyway in our dealings with other people: we try not to get angry with a nervous colleague; we chase up tasks with some people more than others because we know they'll forget otherwise.

Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey created a model for Situational Leadership (1969) that allows a manager to analyse the needs of the situation they are dealing with, and then adopt the most appropriate leadership style. It's proved popular with managers over the years because it passes the two basic tests of such models: it's simple to understand, and it works in most environments for most people.

The model rests on two fundamental concepts: leadership style, and development level. They categorised all leadership styles into four behaviour types, which they named S1 to S4

- **Task behaviour** is the extent to which the leader provides directions for the actions of followers, sets goals for them, and defines their roles and how to undertake them.
- **Relationship behaviour** is the extent, to which the leader engages in two way communications with followers, listens to them and provides support and encouragement.

S1: Directing/Telling Leaders define the roles and tasks of the 'follower', and manage them closely. Decisions are made by the leader and announced, so communication is largely one-way.

S2: Coaching/Selling Leaders still define roles and tasks, but seek ideas and suggestions from the follower. Decisions remain the leader's prerogative, but communication is much more two-way.

S3: Supporting/Participating Leaders pass day-to-day decisions, such as task allocation and processes, to the follower. The leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control is with the follower.

S4: Delegating Leaders are still involved in decisions and problem-solving, but control is with the follower. The follower decides when and how the leader will be involved.

Effective leaders are versatile in being able to move around the grid according to the situation, so there is no one right style. However, we tend to have a preferred style, and in applying Situational Leadership you need to know which one that is for you.

Development Level

The right leadership style will depend very much on the person being led - the follower - and Blanchard and Hersey extended their model to include the Development Level of the follower.

They said that the leader's style should be driven by the **competence** and **commitment** of the follower, and came up with four levels:

D4	High Competence High Commitment	Experienced at the job, and comfortable with their own ability to do it well. May even be more skilled than the leader.
D3	High Competence Variable Commitment	Experienced and capable, but may lack the confidence to go it alone, or the motivation to do it well / quickly
D2	Some Competence Low Commitment	May have some relevant skills, but won't be able to do the job without help. The task or the situation may be new to them.
D1	Low Competence Low Commitment	Generally lacking the specific skills required for the job in hand, and lacks any confidence and / or motivation to tackle it.

Development Levels are also situational. The person might be generally skilled, confident and motivated in my job, but would still drop into Level D1 when faced, say, with a task requiring skills I don't possess. For example, lots of managers are D4 when dealing with the day-to-day running of their department, but move to D1 or D2 when dealing with a sensitive employee issue.

The development level is now called the Performance Readiness level (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 2008) adapted from Hersey's Situational Selling. Ron Campbell of the Centre of Leadership Studies has expanded this concept to include behavioural indicators of each readiness level.

Four Levels of Readiness

- R1- Unable and Insecure or Unwilling low follower readiness (immature)
- R2- Unable but Confident or Willing low to moderate follower readiness
- R3- Able but Insecure or Unwilling moderate to high follower readiness
- R4- Able and Confident and Willing high follower readiness (mature)
-

With individuals who are new, unwilling or feeling insecure a higher degree of directing is required, a clarity and direction which creates trust. If the group is competent, has a high level of willingness and dares to go into action, then less directing is needed and so on.

Objectives of the Leader

- To identify the level of readiness (maturity) of followers and adopt the appropriate style of leadership.
- To help the followers reach a higher level of readiness (maturity).

Leadership and Development Matching

Blanchard and Hersey said that the Leadership Style (S1 - S4) of the leader must correspond to the Development level (D1 - D4) of the follower - and it's the leader who adapts.

For example, a new person joins your team and you're asked to help them through the first few days. You sit them in front of a PC, show them a pile of invoices that need to be processed today, and push off to a meeting. They're at level D1, and you've adopted S4.

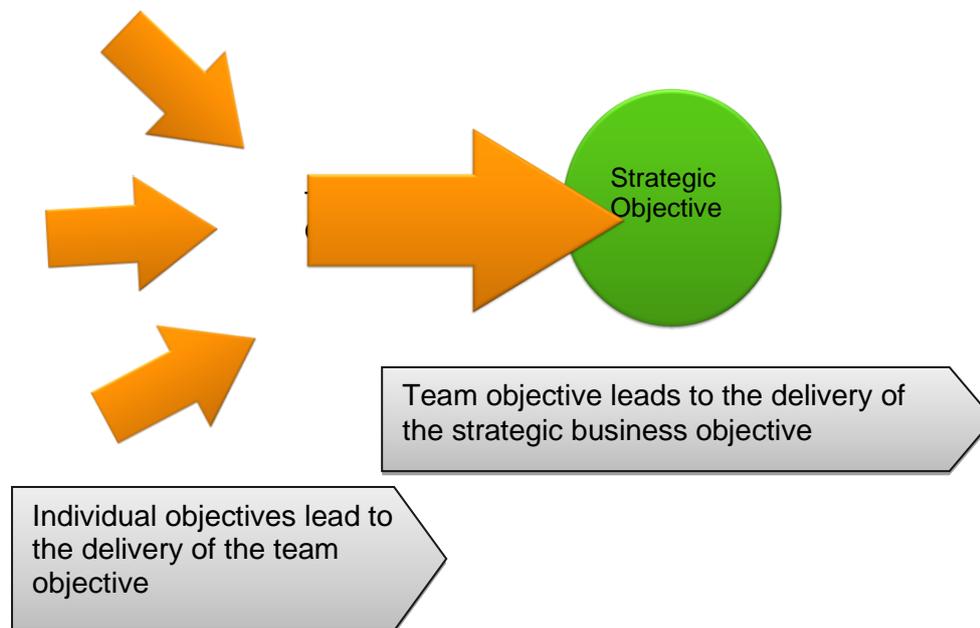
Everyone loses because the new person feels helpless and demotivated, and you don't get the invoices processed.

On the other hand, you're handing over to an experienced colleague before you leave for a holiday. You've listed all the tasks that need to be done, and a set of instructions on how to carry out each one. They're at level D4, and you've adopted S1. The work will probably get done, but not the way you expected, and your colleague despises you for treating him like an idiot.

But swap the situations and things get better. Leave detailed instructions and a checklist for the new person, and they'll thank you for it. Give your colleague a quick chat and a few notes before you go on holiday, and everything will be fine.

By adopting the right style to suit the follower's development level, work gets done, relationships are built up, and most importantly, the follower's development level will rise to D4, to everyone's benefit.

Aligning Team Objectives to Performance



Objectives

Objective setting is a key skill for any manager and this skill area reflects your ability to set and clarify performance objectives for members of your team, which are both challenging and realistic.

Recognise the need to keep a healthy balance of objectives between completion of task and individual development. Clarify the overall objectives of each team member, using summarising techniques, to ensure that both you and team members have the same understanding of objectives. Stretch the comfort zones of each team member, not allowing them to settle for the routine.

Five Principles of Goal Setting

In 1990, Locke and Latham published their seminal work, "A Theory of Goal Setting and Task Performance." In this book, they reinforced the need to set specific and difficult goals, and they outlined three other characteristics of successful goal setting.

To motivate, goals must take into consideration the degree to which each of the following exists:

1. Clarity.
2. Challenge.
3. Commitment.
4. Feedback.
5. Task complexity.

Motivation

Your role as Manager is to lead your team so that defined objectives are reached and the task is carried out to the best possible ability of the team. So when there is a job to be done, how can you the manager, get your team to do it?

You can select people who have the necessary skills and knowledge to do the job efficiently. If the required skills are lacking, you can train team members to acquire the skills. But finding ways to match people to jobs is not enough what will be critical is determining how well the job gets done, and the motivation of those doing the work.

What is Motivation

A definition of motivation is “A conscious or unconscious driving force that arouses and directs action towards the achievement of a desired goal”. **Longman Dictionary of the English Language.**

The Environment for Motivation

The key here is to give your employees choices and control. Giving employees choices lets them feel a sense of control over their tasks and environment. This brings a feeling of ownership and greater involvement because the task becomes personalised. The best way to give your employees choice is to enable them to do some of the tasks they enjoy doing, using skills they enjoy using. In addition, you can give employees choices about their environment.

Here are some ideas for where you can give employees choice:

- Job tasks. This is not only the tasks they do but the order they are done in.
- Delegating the results and not the process.
- Dress code.
- Flexitime, when to go for lunch as an example.
- Office decorations; pictures, plants, choice of colours.
- Choosing office supplies, providing opportunity to buy materials needed to complete a project. Give them a budget and let them choose what they need.
- Input on departmental goals: Get employees together and let them help choose and decide what the priorities of the department are for the next week/month.

You can create a motivating environment by:

- Being positive and enthusiastic
- Being a good communicator
- Having a clear purpose, plans & objectives
- Making a days work enjoyable and fulfilling
- Dealing with errors in the correct way
- Regularly praising good performance.

Creating the Team Environment

Team players – All members of a team must be team players and it is often worthwhile making the effort to ensure this is the case by using personality profiling or psychometric testing. Sometimes tough decisions have to be taken in replacing people who are not team players. Rest assured others within the team will understand when they are on the receiving end of a non-team player.

The culture of priorities – The greatest management principle in the world: Whatever you reward, you will get more of. For a motivated team, therefore, it is essential that all members of the team know what their individual priorities are in working towards the team's objective

What does the manager reward or recognise? Here are some examples:

- Do people get rewarded who look busy and work long hours rather than those who get results?
- Are demands made for quality work, but unrealistic deadlines set?
- Is company loyalty demanded and talked about, but with no offer of job security.
- Are people frightened to try something different because of fear of chastisement when what is really needed is creative input?
- Is teamwork demanded, yet one member of a team played off against another?

The culture of priorities is very much linked with the behaviour that is expected. People will always behave the way the reward mechanism has trained them.

- **A common goal** – There must be a common goal, an objective or even a cause to fight for. It is utterly impossible to motivate a team of people without one of these three things.
- **Have a vision** – A vision doesn't necessary have to be written up and displayed on all walls but should allow employees to see where their company could be. It should be shared equally and passionately and enthusiastically embraced.
- **Maintain a high energy level** – People are naturally more motivated when they are busy.
- **Remember the individual** – Significance of the individual is still important, even though people are part of a team. A team is a number of individuals who are interdependent on their overall performance, but who are still individuals in their own right. They must individually feel that their treatment is fair, they are recognised for their contribution, they have a part to play contributing to the goal and that they have the loyalty and respect of the manager and their colleagues.
- **Team identity** – Group belonging motivates, so as a manager, look at every possibility of creating your own team's identity.
- **Share success** – Team members must be able to share in the rewards of success.
- **The positive team** – Communicate positively. Where practical, team bonding can be created by the team experiencing activities outside the daily routine of work. Activity weekends, attending training courses as a group and team competitions are all very worthwhile.
- **Motivational leadership** – The leadership style of the manager must be a motivational one.

Useful Reading Material

Adair, J. (2007) *Leadership for Innovation*

Adair, J. (2006) *Effective Leadership Development*

Adair, J. (2002) *Effective Strategic Leadership*

Hersey, P. and Blanchard, K.H. (1969) *Management of Organisational Behaviour*

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Herzberg F. (1993) *Motivation to Work*