

Lead To Manage! Part Three / last



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Effective leadership requires and necessitates that the leader must be open to feedback – especially the negative - and proves that there are no negative consequences of that negative feedback. Everyone makes mistakes. Being a leader does not mean that one is infallible, and people around us can see and observe these mistakes. Have you ever come across a situation, when your manager asked you about your opinion and when you said it, he/she almost sacked you? If the leader delivers any kind of punishment after the negative feedback, he/she is encouraging people not to perform and to start losing trust and respect of him/her.

In addition, effective leaders do not complain about people who bring up problems, question them, or ask for help. Colin Powell said, “The day the soldiers stop bringing you their problems, is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help them, or concluded that you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.”

Another attribute of the effective leader is balancing the existing traditions and change. One of the biggest mistakes that some managers do is trying to change everything. No doubt, that the best leadership achievements come from changing things; as Harry Truman, the 33rd president of the United States, said, “Men make history, and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous and skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better”.

However, traditions do not change according to our wishes easily. It takes a lot of time to change people's thought, attitude, habits, and behaviour. Trying to change every thing will create more resistance, force people to refuse to cooperate with these changes, and that will make things worse. According to psychologists, people, through out the years, develop strong views and perspectives that will make them resist change. Even though the change would bring better results, resisting change is simply a human nature.

Effective leaders do not use their authority power to control others; this is not leadership. Instead, they use their personality power to get others to respond favourably to instructions and orders. They influence and inspire people to get things done willingly, and lead these people to greater achievements. In Harvard Business Review (2004), Brian Pitman said, "The more leaders control others, the less likely it is that people will excel, the less they will be trusted. Leaders do not control; they support and serve".

Effective leaders help others to discover their greatness and add value to them. Leadership is not only about founding one's voice; it is also about helping others to find theirs; It is letting and helping people to discover their worth and potential, instill in them a sense of belonging, idealism, and self-esteem, and encourage them to be their best. Effective leadership is showing and teaching ordinary people how to do the work of extraordinary people.

Stephen Covey said, "An empowered organization is one in which individuals have the knowledge, skill, desire, and opportunity to personally succeed in a way that leads to collective organizational success".

Effective leaders set the example and the model, and understand that they are what others see of them. They practice what they say, their actions are consistent with their words, and they keep their promises, have unquestionable credibility, and are highly ethical. That will make people feel proud of working under them in the organization, committed to it and have a sense of ownership.

If employees feel that the leader has no credibility, they will perform only if he/she is watching, they will look for another job, say good things about the organization in public, but criticize it privately, and their primary motivation will come from tangible rewards.

Being a successful and an effective leader necessitates serving others. Effective leaders build their success by helping other people to build theirs. Managers, leaders, and people in general can get anything they want if they just help and serve others to get what they want.

I used to ask participants of my seminars whether I could force others to serve me; their answers always were "No". The truth is that anyone can force others to serve him/her, simply by serving these people first. The more you serve, the more those whom you served will serve you.