

Team Leadership: Trust - The Currency of Leadership

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Team Leadership

The team leadership approach focuses on helping the group to accomplish its goals by monitoring the group, diagnosing the group, and then taking the correct action to keep the group focused on achieving its goals (Northouse, 2013). Our text describes a model that illustrates the various decisions team leaders make to improve the team's productivity: monitoring or action taking, internal or external intervention, and the appropriate leadership function to improve group functioning (Northouse, 2013). The text introduces us to McGrath's Graph of leadership functions. The top left corner of the graph is the first function of a team leader. In the first quadrant, the leader diagnoses the group's deficiencies. In the next quadrant to the right of the first, the leader takes remedial action. The first two quadrants are internal, the first is internal monitoring, and the second is internal action. Quadrant 3 is external monitoring where the leader forecasts environmental changes. The last quadrant, number 4, is external action where the leader acts to prevent negative changes to the group (Northouse, 2013). McGrath's Graph shows that a leader's first decision is to decide whether to continue monitoring group behavior or take action to guide the group towards its goals. The second decision confronting a leader is whether the group needs help in task issues or relational issues. The third decision a leader must make is if the leader's intervention should be internal or external (Northouse, 2013).

The focus of the article chosen for this assignment helps managers decide how to maintain trust of the team's member while making the decisions required lead. In the article, Peshawaria states, "A team with high trust will similarly produce results faster and at a lower cost" (Peshawaria, 2013). Peshawaria lists six "Cs" that leaders can use to earn trust with team members: commitment, character, competence, consistency, caring, and centrality. Commitment is the vision the leader has for the future and how well the leader uses that vision to provide hope

and inspiration to the followers. Character is the set of values the leader lives by and the followers must know that their leader is pursuing the vision by the right set of rules. The leader must have more than just people skills; the leader must have competence in his chosen field. The leader is consistent who is dependable and does what he says he will do when he says he will do it. Leaders who are caring, who take care of the best interests of the group member will get the group member's best efforts and energy. Followers subject uncaring leaders to negative reactions and even sabotage of group efforts. Centricity deals with whether or not the boss is a "giver" or a "taker". "Givers" or leaders, who implement the view that taking care of others automatically takes care of my own interests, enjoy higher levels of trust from their followers than do "takers" (Peshawaria, 2013).

One criticism that leaders have with Peshawaria's approach is that leaders are at a disadvantage in earning trust from subordinates when part of a leader's job includes negative reinforcement. Negative reinforcements include things like discipline, employee evaluations, terminations, etc. Peshawaria counters this criticism by urging leaders to employ a 20: 60: 20 approach with followers. This approach recognizes that the top 20% of subordinates produce 80% of the team's output and a leader should do whatever they can to support this group and earn their trust. A leader needs to maintain a reasonably high level of trust with the next 60% of group members as these people support the efforts of the top 20%. Peshawaria argues that using time to win the trust of the least productive, (bottom 20%), is not an efficient use of time since no matter how hard a leader tries not everyone is going to respond to those efforts (Peshawaria, 2013). There is some statistical evidence to back up Peshawaria's approach. In the late nineteenth-century, an Italian scientist named Vilfredo Pareto noted that 80% of an activity in a process is caused by 20% of the factors. Pareto's concept is called the 80-20 rule. This concept

shows that managers who concentrate on 20% of the factors can attack 80% of the problem

(Lind, 2010).

References

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