

Quality Leadership Today

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In today's society there are ongoing changes to our economy, healthcare, education and numerous other areas; all of which are impacted by leadership. The way each community views leadership and the manner in which leaders are followed dictates the results that impact our world. There are many theories that define various models of leadership. These range from Transformational leadership, Servant leadership all the way to Transactional leadership. All of these have unique traits that classify a leader based on their style into one category or another. Today, leadership is expanding, as the demand for high quality leadership continues to be on the rise; organizations continue to grow and the expectation of the employee's increase. What constitutes as a high quality leader? There are three attributes that are essential for the leaders of the 21st Century; Empowered Leadership, Empowered Emotional Intelligence and Hybrid Leaders.

Empowered leadership consists of two elements. First the ability to empower the employees in a positive and productive manner that will help the organization in addition to helping the employees continue to grow. The empowerment of employees is not a means of assigning additional work to an employee or expecting the employee to make decisions they are not qualified to make. Empowerment is a way of working with employees through encouragement to partake in various aspects of the organization through planning, developing strategies, searching for new ideas and developing better methods within the organization (Sasiadek, 2006; Goddard & Brown, 1995). The second element to empowered leadership pertains directly to the organizational leader in an effort to inspire, captivate imaginations and raise the bar in terms of the level of expectations. In a recent study it was shared that "leaders need to create environments in which employees trust each other; only then will people feel comfortable about experimenting with new ideas and safe enough to take reasonable risks" (2006, pg31; Dobbs, 1993).

Emotional intelligence is closely related to empowered leadership as the combination of the two allow leaders to have a clearer understanding of the people they work with and how to motivate them. According to Jamieson (2014) "empowerment through emotional intelligence is the way to utilize one's communication skills, the ability to create rapport and empathy with people, to influence outcomes and the behaviors of other people" (para 4). As human beings emotions play a significant part of our life. These emotions can and do carry over to our work environment. "When an emotion is triggered in one's brain, the nervous systems responds by creating feelings in the body and certain thoughts in one's mind (Lamia, 2010, para1). These thoughts and feelings

can impact the motivation one has in terms of completing a task or participating in work projects. There are five key areas that are important to understand when it comes to emotional intelligence. They are: self-regulation, motivation, social skills, self-awareness and empathy (EQmentor, 2009). As a leader it is important to have the ability to work with people and understand these emotions and the impact they have on individuals. Leaders that are able to ask the right questions of employee(s) are better able to manage the emotions and lead employee in the right direction to continue to be motivated and productive.

Hybrid leadership is defined as a “blend between the strengths of male leadership behaviors and values with the strengths of female leadership behaviors and values” (Bourgeois, 2003, pg4). It has been established that when one blends the leadership styles of both men and women; the results equate to a more impactful and effective leader (Bourgeois, 2003). In a study conducted by The Center for Workforce Excellence Company it was established that there are several key characteristics that men and women tend to favor. In the study it identified that men tend to be more strategic thinkers, visionaries, independent thinkers, analytical and values leadership and the drive in others (Bourgeois, 2003). Women on the other hand, tend to be more collaborative, open communicators, support empowerment, understand the need for work/life balance, attention to details and openly demonstrates value placed on others (2003). By combining the strengths of both genders, leaders are able to work more effectivity in addition to optimizing better results for the organization.

Leadership behaviors continue to change with the times. Many of the leadership styles used in the 21st Century were unheard of in the 20th Century. According to Steve Denning, the 20th Century was more” focused on finite goals of delivering goods and services to make money” (2010, para 1). However today there is a more “infinite goal of delighting customers...” (2010, para 1). The understanding of stakeholders; both internally and externally will impact not only the reputation of the organization, but also the manner in which employees operate and thrive. The recession of 2007-2009 forced many companies to change the manner in which they operate, which included the styles and behaviors of leadership. In order for the 21st century leader to be successful it is important that they understand the traditional styles of leadership. It is even more important today that leaders are able to incorporate the styles of empowered leadership, emotional intelligence and the understanding and application of hybrid leadership.

Citations

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