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Leadership Jazz

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A series of essays, rather scattered, but get better as they go along. Keep as reference the chapters on change and selecting leaders.

Leadership begins with premises, not techniques, beliefs, not tools, and understandings, not systems. 7

We should treat the great majority of people (employees) as volunteers. They don't have to stay... 22

The organization needs from its leader (p. 27 ff)

> to define and express both in writing and behavior the beliefs and values of the institution

> a clear statement of its vision and its strategy

> the design of the business

> lean and simple statements of policy consistent with beliefs and values, vision and strategy

> equity

> ensures that priorities are set, that they are steadfastly communicated and adhered to in practice

> planning for the organization at all levels receives the necessary direction and approvals

> reviews and assesses results primarily in three areas: key appointments and promotions, results compared to the plan, the connections to key publics

> the continuous renewal of the organization

> never to embarrass followers

A leader must "make the organization accountable for results compared to the plan. Not to be accountable for results is to be seriously out of touch with reality. 30

Leaders often betray followers and vice versa. Most betrayals come to light after the fact, after one party silently abandons a goal or a commitment. 34

"Instinctively, most of us follow a leader who has real vision and who can transform that vision into a meaningful and hopeful strategy. People with a vision inject ambiguity and risk and uncertainty into our lives. They embark on voyages to new world." 40

"...magnificent visions are rendered ineffectual by the failure of the leader to communicate that vision to the people able to realize it?" 40

Preparation for leadership does not come from books. ...real preparation consists of hard work and wandering in the desert, of much feedback, much forgiveness, and of the yeast of failure. ...it's a lot like learning to hit a curveball-- a fragile and fleeting business." 43

"Success tends to breed arrogance, complacency, and isolation. Success can close a mind faster than prejudice. Success is fragile, like a butterfly." 47

"The key to succeeding...lies in the way we exploit our freedom, make our choices, and anticipate the consequences." 78

"The rate of change today requires that each of us become a frantic learner. Leaders respond to change by learning something. The eager, frantic learners in life find actual joy in the process of change." 84

"Leaders need to choose what to measure in life. The real booby trap is to measure the wrong things. Good short-term results are not synonymous with long-term needs; good numbers don't result from managing numbers." 86

"Really great ideas shake up organizations." 97

True innovation will never be a democratic event. Majorities seldom vote to change. 99

A leader prepares the way for change - prepares the organization. Probably the most important preparation is lavish communication.

Each of us needs to be able to identify with a missions. Each person needs to decide to follow: When you ask someone to do something, make sure you wait for an answer. 99

If you're a leader and you're not sick and tired of communicating, you probably aren't doing a good enough job. 100

All things cannot, and must not, be quantified. Financial and legal matters are truly important, but they do not lie at the heart of our future." 106

A leader's true love should be the people who do the work. 106

List of questions for leaders to ask themselves. See p. 119 ff.

Our need to achieve often leads us to worship an agenda. 128

It's amazing what you can learn when you don't have an agenda. 133

Chapter on CHANGE, PP 140 ff.

> It's more important that we focus more on what we need to be than on what we need to do. 142

> The quality of our relationships is the key to establishing a positive ethos for change.

> An ethos for change derives its vitality from vision-based change. People follow easily the leader who undertakes meaningful changes clearly connected to a strategy.

Sources of tension surrounding change:

> a lack of preparation

> complete inability to control change

- > comfort of routine
- > ignorance of the reasons for change
- > difficulty in separating self from an issue. Our basic values and beliefs don't change every time the organization changes direction. Yet it is difficult to divorce self from issue.
- > inability to reconcile events with values.
- > the necessity of raising the level of trust
- > balancing individual needs and the common good.
- > braving the black gulf of the unfamiliar PP 142-144

Delegation

A good leader says, "I love you enough to make you accountable." It's not easy to delegate well in the hurly-burly of organized life. Delegation requires careful observation, layers of skill, much feedback, and of course some failure. We can't practice true delegation with a lick and a promise. Good delegation is not something leaders do ad hoc. It's a rigorous, disciplined part of being a leader. Goals and assumptions are required. There are the needs of the delegate to be met. There are constraints and results." 155

Delegation requires leaders to bring delegates a clear statement of expectations, to enumerate the job's goals and requirements. 159

The role of expectations is an astonishing thing. Expectations really can help people reach their potential. 160

Delegates need to know the who, what, and when of the project, not the how -- that is what the delegate brings. Good delegation clearly implies that the leader become a mentor. 161

Leaders coach and connect without assuming responsibility or accountability or a share of the work. Leaders delegate completely or not at all. 163

A delegate is constrained to keep the leader informed. Leaders are constrained to accept the results of delegation and deal with them. The leader who delegates cannot become an absentee landlord. 165

How do we deal with results of delegation?

Thank you. Recognition. Rewards. 165

A new challenge is the best reward for a successfully completed project of good performance. 166

Practice leadership without power. 179

Begin to ponder seriously ideas for a second--or third--career. 180

Complexity can become a distraction, though it is normal in organized life. By moving personally and organizationally toward restraint and simplicity, we give ourselves a chance. It really comes down to setting priorities, as banal as that phrase has become. It comes down to dealing with the substantive before the superficial, of dealing with the strategic before the stressful, of leaving a legacy instead of accumulated assets.... 182

Chapter on Selecting Future Leaders. p 207 ff.