



THE Learning Advantage

Mobley's Musings: Leaders Are People Too

I always looked up to my parents, teachers, and leaders when I was young, expecting them to be perfect and paragons of wisdom and virtue. I was saddened and sometimes angry when they didn't live up to my unrealistic expectations. In time I came to realize that these leaders are just people striving to do the best they can.

Many of the leaders I coach humble me with their passion, integrity, and willingness to be vulnerable in their quest to do the right thing. Recently, I have seen some leaders create openings for conversations about race and social injustice. They realize these are sensitive topics and admit they don't have the answers, but they also know open and honest discussions that permit others to share their perspectives without being judged are important to a healthy environment.

Some amazing restaurant owners have dipped into their profit to keep their staff employed during the COVID crisis. Many good companies are taking care of their employees by finding creative ways for them to work from home. And many employers have put the safety of their employees and their families first by allowing them to stay home if they are at higher risk.

Nowadays we tend to criticize or judge leaders harshly when they disappoint us, but it's important to notice what they are doing that goes above and beyond expectations. We create our own realities, so if you look for flaws you will surely find them. But if you look for goodness, you will find it there too. In fact, giving others a break can make you feel better.

Sandy



Ask Sandy

Friend versus friendly

Clients ask me if they should be friends with their staff and direct reports. They'd like to go to lunch and socialize with them, and they assume these outings promote harmonious working relationships. But how will the people who aren't invited or can't join the group feel about being excluded? And what happens when you have to deliver a tough performance message to your "friend"?

Ted was buddies with many of his male direct reports. They played sports together and had monthly card games while Ted's female direct reports were left out. A couple of the guys may have been chagrined when they lost a round of golf or a poker hand, but the real losers were the women. They missed out on the informal conversations about work that occurred over cards or beers after a game. And the men developed a camaraderie that effectively, even if unintentionally, excluded the women.

I have found that becoming too friendly with your staff makes the relationship more difficult. When a boss knows too much about a direct report's private life it is hard to keep it from affecting business decisions. If I know a direct report's spouse is looking for a job in another state, how do I not factor that in when deciding who to promote?

Being friendly is different. Being friendly means you can express interest in your staff and their families, but you keep the relationship professional and take care to involve the whole team in social activities, not just a few of your direct reports. A little professional distance makes everyone more comfortable.

Learning for Leaders: Even though some people are just easier to get along with than others, leaders should ensure that every member of their team gets the benefit of their time and support.

Coaches Corner: Ask clients what they do to ensure equity across all their direct reports.

If you have questions you'd like Sandy to address in future newsletters, email them to sandy@learningadvantageinc.com

LIKE & SHARE on the Juicy Work Facebook Page and the first 250 people will have the chance to win a 30-minute career coaching session OR a \$50 Amazon gift card!



Building Individual and Organizational Change-Ability: Part 2

This is the second part of the article featured in the July issue of Juicy Work News

Communication is Key

Organizational change is more complex than individual change because of the number of people involved (both employees and customers), their varying responses to change, and the potential impacts on the organization. Organizational development and change theorist Richard Beckhard developed the following formula to depict the relationship between factors supporting and preventing change in an organization.

$$V \times FS \times D > R$$

According to Beckhard's formula, for change to happen in an organization, the **Vision**, multiplied by a clear sense of the **First Steps** required to make the change, multiplied by **Dissatisfaction** about the status quo, must be greater than the **Resistance** to change.

Most organizations focus on two of the equation's elements, but rarely the third. And, if any of the elements in the equation is zero, we know from elementary math that the product of multiplying it by any of the other factors will result in zero, thus the organization will be unable to overcome the inevitable resistance to change. Consider a recent organizational change and which elements of the change formula were clear and strong. Was the vision a compelling one that members of the organization could see themselves in? Was it clear what first steps needed to be taken to make the change? Was there profound dissatisfaction with the status quo?

One plant of a large chemical company had been losing profitability over a period of seven years. But because the rest of the organization was healthy, the plant had been supported. When a new vice president took over management of the division that included the plant, he set new profit goals. If the plant did not meet the profit expectations, he would close it. A reengineering team was called in to meet with management and begin an aggressive change process to restore the plant's profitability.

READ MORE



Share this email:



Manage your preferences | Opt out using TrueRemove™
Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.
View this email online.

7200 Michael Place
Falls Church, VA | 22046 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.