
First Edition

The Successful Leader

Part 1

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Leadership Basics

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

Warren G. Bennis

What is Leadership?

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2. Future
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1.1 Defining Leadership

This seems like a simple question, but providing an answer to it can confuse even seasoned leaders. The Oxford English dictionary defines a leader as:

“A PERSON WHO RULES, GUIDES, OR INSPIRES OTHERS”

Other definitions of leadership as given by leaders themselves include:

“THE ONLY DEFINITION OF A LEADER IS SOMEONE WHO HAS FOLLOWERS.”

Peter Drucker

“LEADERSHIP IS ABOUT ARTICULATING VISIONS, EMBODYING VALUES, AND CREATING THE ENVIRONMENT WITHIN WHICH THINGS CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED.”

Richards & Engle

“THE TASK OF THE LEADER IS TO GET HIS PEOPLE FROM WHERE THEY ARE TO WHERE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN.”

Henry Kissinger

There are in fact hundreds, if not thousands of definitions of leadership and leaders. The fact that there are so many definitions goes to highlight the very human nature of leadership. Leadership is as varied as the many different leaders that exist in the world.

If we try to bring to mind who leaders are, then broadly speaking we tend to think of three types of characters:

- **An organization owner or founder:** beating the odds and any competition to make their company a success.
- **An explorer:** forging the way as the first person up a mountain so that others may follow.
- **A political leader:** dedicated to pursuing a personal vision.

By now you should be getting a feel for just how varied leadership can be. In this book we will be considering leadership in the workplace, and do so by focusing on transformational leadership.

Transformational leadership was originally described by James V. Downton, and further developed by James MacGregor Burns. In simple terms, a good transformational leader is someone who effectively performs the following three steps:

1. **Future:** creating a clear and inspiring vision of the future.

2. **Engage:** motivating people to want to create that future.

3. **Deliver:** delivering that future vision by taking action and getting results.

The Future, Engage, Deliver process was first proposed by Steve Redcliffe in his book *Leadership Plain and Simple*, published by the Financial Times in 2012. Whilst we use these terms in this book to describe the steps, the content of each step as we describe it is more akin to the Kotter Change Model mixed with a Strategic Planning Process. This will make sense soon enough.

Alongside, these three guiding steps to achieve transformation, there are numerous tools, techniques, and processes, leaders can use to help achieve their aims. These include understanding how to:

- Motivate
- Coach
- Delegate
- Give feedback
- Influence

Finally, before any of these can be used to enact a transformational change, leaders must have a high degree of resilience and emotional intelligence (IQ) to resist the setbacks and roadblocks that occur along the way to achieving their vision.

We will cover all of these topics in this book, but let's begin by examining the Future, Engage, Deliver process.

1.2 Future: Creating a Clear and Inspiring Vision

Leadership is always rooted in the future. Good leaders are guided in their daily decisions by the future they want to create.

This stage begins by understanding where you are right now, and understanding where you would like to be, how you would like things to be done or feel in the future. This is achieved by creating a compelling vision of the future.

A compelling vision is at the heart of every successful transformation. This vision must clearly and concisely communicate your organization's goals in a way that is both compelling and convincing. Good leaders provide an evocative and inspiring picture of the future that inspires others to want to achieve.

In an organizational context, visions are rarely created out of thin air. Visions are usually created by:

- First, understanding where you are, using tools such as SWOT Analysis, PEST Analysis, Porter's Five Forces and many others.
- Second, analyzing trends within your industry, within other industries, as well as broader trends happening across society.

As you can see, there are two broad skills to defining the future for your organization: first, the analytical skills of leadership whereby you define where you are and understand your strengths and weaknesses; second, the soft skills of leadership where you create a compelling vision with emotional appeal. This balance of hard and soft skills occurs repeatedly as you learn and practice leadership, and with more practice your skill in both will improve.

1.3 Engage: Motivating People to Want to Create that Future

Your vision is your north star for where you want the organization to go, but it doesn't encourage others to help you get there. To achieve this, you must motivate people to want to achieve your vision of the future with you.

This doesn't mean you communicate to people. It doesn't mean you inform people of what you want them to do. It doesn't mean you present to them where you are going. It means engaging with them, so rather than thinking about how you communicate to your team, instead you are thinking about how others are receiving your message and how it affects their motivation.

Throughout a transformation, storytelling can be a great way to explain a vision. Storytelling uses words and imagery to transport the listener into the future. It creates a narrative to both share the vision, and emotionally pull the listener towards the vision. It also gives the leader the opportunity to share their energy, conviction, and excitement towards creating the future.

Whilst a compelling vision is important to get your team moving, it is also always a good idea to create a sense of urgency - a reason why your team should start now and not tomorrow. Good storytelling should create a "sense of possibility in the air" and the desire to start right now.

As you progress towards your vision, your stories should change to reflect where you are on your journey (your current reality), maintain urgency, and keep the team energized to achieve the vision.

As you may have guessed, there is more to engagement than just being able to tell a great story. Another important part of motivation is setting expectations. We will look at Expectancy Theory later in this book, but for now remember that as well as a compelling vision people also want to know what's in it for them.

- *If team members expect a good outcome for themselves from behaving in a certain way, then they will usually work hard to exhibit that behavior.*

Thus, through storytelling combined with goal setting we can create a real energy and can-do attitude within our team to want to achieve our compelling vision.

People won't follow just anyone. You need to have earned the right to be followed. You do this by day-in and day-out modeling the behavior you expect to see from others. We will examine this further later.

1.4 Deliver: Delivering that Future Vision by Taking Action and Getting Results

Delivering the vision is about empowering others to achieve the vision through goal setting. It is about tracking KPIs, and monitoring progress as we move towards each goal and towards our vision. In short, delivery is about management.

The leader needs to ensure that the work being done is both aligned to the vision and that the work is managed. This may be done by the leader or it may be done by one or more managers that the leader delegates responsibility to. Doing this may require creating a new organizational structure, or setting up a project.

Goals and targets can be set in any combination of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly, according to the needs of the organization.

Major change can take a very long time, but without quick wins people will lose faith or give up altogether. You need to structure the transformation so it contains short term targets, remembering to communicate widely your successes as you go. We structure our goals in this way because it keeps people motivated, and because nothing breeds success like success.

Tools and techniques which can be used to help leaders track progress towards goals include, amongst others:

- KPIs
- Status Reporting
- Giving Feedback

Personal relationships are important here too. As leader you must keep a lookout for people who are blocking or resisting change and take corrective action.

Finally, whilst you're working to deliver your vision, you need to keep your eye on the longer term organizational picture. This means you want to enable your team to deliver even more than they do now, and at a higher quality level, further down the road. To do this you need to help others to help themselves, by developing your team. This involves coaching your individual team members to increase their skills and improve their own leadership.

1.5 Why do We Need Leaders?

You may think that we need leaders because it helps us to organize organizations, for example, a country needs a head of state, an organization needs a CEO etc., but actually the need for leadership is much more natural and human than that.

To understand why, let's consider some basic human needs taken from Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

The Need to Survive

The most fundamental human need is to stay alive. As children we see our parents and guardians as leaders, showing us right from wrong, teaching us how to look after ourselves. Once we reach early adulthood and are ready to leave home, we will have acquired enough knowledge to keep ourselves alive and stay healthy.

When this point comes, we will typically go to college, enter the workplace, or perhaps go on an adventure of a lifetime. This creates a new set of challenges that we haven't encountered before and we're not to sure how to deal with them.

So we seek new leaders to show us how to behave, what to do, and what results to expect. These leaders could be friends, lec-

turers, or an immediate boss, and you may not think of these people as leaders in your own mind, but in effect you seek these people out to guide you and to keep you safe.

The Need for Purpose

Since the dawn of time man has asked, “why am I here?”. Of course we still don’t have an answer but that doesn’t quench our insatiable thirst to find the answer. For people who are religious, they will turn to a religious leader to show them the way.

On a more mundane day-to-day level, we turn to our colleagues, bosses, and lovers to help us make sense of the world and clarify our thinking. We do this because the “why am I here?” question is innate.

The Need for Esteem

After our basic survival needs are met, and our need for love and friends, the next need is the need for esteem. This desire to be successful is natural, as successful people are more likely to have a good job ensuring their safety is secure, and also more likely to attract and keep a good mate, increasing the chance of maintaining a sense of purpose.

From an early age we are taught to seek out leaders to help us achieve this. It starts in school when we use teachers and parents to orientate us towards success. Later in life it means orientating towards good bosses and colleagues to help us grow and achieve success.

Summary

The point of this section is to encourage you to think of leadership not as something which is imposed on people within an organization, but as something which humans grow up with and then seek out as an innate part of being human.

It also means that as the leader leads others, so too the leader is human and must seek out leadership, guidance, and council, to ensure they steer the right path for their themselves and their followers.

Styles of Leadership



“Debate is common about which leadership style is most effective. The answer, of course, ... it all depends.”

Thomas Kohntopp

Styles of Leadership

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2. Autocratic Leadership
3. Democratic Leadership
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2.1 Introduction

Everyone has a default leadership style. A leadership style is how someone uses their power and authority to lead others. Your default leadership style then is the way you feel most comfortable leading others to achieve your vision.

There are many different styles of leadership, and understanding which type you are will make you better equipped to avoid the common pitfalls of that particular style.

The best leaders are able to adjust their style based on the situation they find themselves in, for example, turning around a failing organization might require a more forthright approach than being asked to grow an already successful organization.

Let's now examine the different styles of leadership.

2.2 Autocratic Leadership

Autocratic leadership is centered around and focused on the leader. With this style of leadership all of the decision making resides with the leader, and decisions are made by the leader without consulting subordinates.

An autocratic leader will reach a decision themselves, communicate it with their team, and expect the team to execute, with no questions asked. With autocratic leadership, authority is in the hands of a single person, the leader. Examples of autocratic leaders include Donald Trump and Martha Stewart.

Advantages

- Decision making is fast. With no consultation required the leader can make quick decisions.
- Improves performance in certain situations. Managers are motivated to perform due to a “leader is watching” feeling.
- Less stress in certain circumstances. For managers and other subordinates it can result in less stress as the leader is shouldering all responsibility for outcomes.

Disadvantages

- Frustrating for subordinates. Communication is one way which can be frustrating for subordinates.
- Fear and resentment is common as people don't like being bossed about and criticized more often than praised.
- A paralyzed organization. The organization is paralyzed when the leader isn't present, as the entire organization is dependent on the leader for instructions.
- New Opportunities Missed. Unless the leader keeps pace with new trends as time goes on, new opportunities could be missed. Additionally, the the lack of flexibility in autocratic leadership doesn't lend itself to planning for long term initiatives.
- Communication breakdown. Because directives flow downwards from the leader to the subordinates, misunderstandings and confusion can arise because of the lack of feedback allowed from subordinates.

When to Use

- When quick decisions are needed. Autocratic leadership works best in situations where quick decisions are needed, such as turning around a failing organization.
- When close supervision is required. Autocratic leadership can work well when existing management is too lenient and workers are not pulling their weight. The autocrat will issue directives to be followed and the activities performed as a result of these directives will be closely followed.
- When workflows need to be streamlined quickly. Autocratic leadership works well when things just need to get done, and this style enables subordinates to get things done without worrying about the bigger picture. This explains why autocratic leadership is very common within the military.

2.3 Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership (often called participative leadership) is focused around the leader's team, and is characterized by decision making being shared across the team. In stark contrast to autocratic leadership, ideas are shared freely and open discussion is encouraged.

Although discussion is encouraged it is the role of the leader to guide and direct these discussions, and ultimately make a decision as to which way to proceed. Democratic leaders expect their subordinates to have in-depth valuable experience and to be self-confident. Examples of democratic leaders include John F. Kennedy and Larry Page.

Advantages

- Decreased risk of catastrophic failure. As decisions are made with the involvement of the entire group, it provides a group check resulting in it being less likely for the leader to make a disastrous decision.
- Good working environment. Subordinates at all levels can feel engaged and take on responsibility to challenge themselves because they are involved in decision making, and it is

this sense of engagement that can lead to the creation of a good working environment and increased job satisfaction.

- High performance teams. Subordinates are encouraged to solve problems under their own initiative, which in turn can create a higher performing team. This higher performance in turn leads to greater productivity.

Disadvantages

- Slow decision making. By involving subordinates in decision making you can dramatically slow down decision making. This can be a real problem in situations where the organization needs to be turned around urgently, or where maintaining first mover advantage is necessary.
- Over-dependence on the team. The leader can become over dependent on the group or hidden within the group, allowing the group to make the decisions. This can result in decisions being made which drift the organization towards its strategic goal rather than rapidly and purposely moving towards its goal.
- Collaboration burden. Leaders can become overly burdened with the overhead of ensuring experts meet and collaborate

that they take their focus off key metrics and the urgent need to move towards the strategic vision.

When to Use

- When subordinates are experts. Democratic leadership works well when working with subject domain experts, for example, technology experts or pharmaceutical experts.
- When subordinates are professionals. For an experienced and professional team, a democratic leadership style can bring out the best in them, by building on their existing strengths and talents rather than just expecting them to perform.
- When it's necessary to create ownership. By involving the team in decision making and planning, you implicitly create buy-in to both the decision and the plan. This makes team members much more committed to the plan, and much more likely to overcome or workaround barriers to execution as they arise.

2.4 Transformational Leadership

A transformational leader is one who models the behavior they expect to see, sets clear goals, and has high expectations, whilst at the same time supporting and emotionally guiding subordinates to achieve.

At the very foundation of transformational leadership is the consistent promotion of a compelling vision, along with a set of values to live and work by. Transformational leaders create a culture of no-blame where the focus is on the problem at hand and how to solve it.

Examples of transformational leaders include Peter Drucker and Barack Obama.

Transformational leaders are sometimes known as the “quiet leaders”, known for possessing a willingness to lead by example. They often don’t make detailed strategic plans, but instead facilitate conversations between key people to achieve this end.

You can think of transformational leaders as having four key characteristics:

1. They know their followers and demonstrate concern and empathy for them.
2. They encourage their followers to think for themselves
3. They motivate their followers to perform to their potential by inspiring them.
4. They model the behavior they expect from others, and are thus great role models.

Advantages

- **Balanced goals.** Transformational leaders balance the need for short term and long term goals.
- **Trust.** Subordinates feel supported and deeply trust their leader because they behave with integrity and build strong coalitions.
- **Vision focused communication.** Transformational leaders are very focused on the long-term strategic vision, and by communicating the vision regularly with passion and clarity, they keep everyone on-side, bought-in, and motivated to reach it.

Disadvantages

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- Can be ineffective in the beginning. Transformational leadership is built on trust. Thus, transformational leaders can be ineffective at the start of their leadership journey as they have yet to obtain the trust of their team or build strong collaborations.
 - Not detail orientated. Whilst transformational leaders are characterized by inspiring others, they can struggle with the detail of day-to-day implementation.

When to Use

- When it's necessary an inspiring long-term vision of the future. Transformational leadership works when you have a strong vision of the future and are willing to work within the system and bring diverse people together to make it happen.
- When the right to lead has been earned. Transformational leadership is often not appropriate when you're new to an organization and both your leadership is unproven, and you've yet to build up trust.
- When an urgent short-term focus isn't necessary. Because transformational leadership focuses so much on a vision for the future it isn't appropriate when all the focus needs to be on the short term.

2.5 Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership is where the leader doesn't actually lead the team, but instead allows the team to entirely self-direct. This style of leadership is also known as the "hands off" style, where all authority is given to subordinates including goal setting, problem solving, and decision making. From the leader's perspective the key to success is to build a really strong team and then stay out of their way.

A common question people ask upon learning about laissez-faire leadership is "what does a laissez-faire leader do?". Well, this will differ from leader to leader but typically they are more concerned with the creation and articulation of their compelling vision. They are also typically concerned with which steps to take to help achieve the vision. It is they obviously left to the team to work out how to achieve a particular step.

Examples of laissez-faire leaders include Warren Buffett, due to the hands-off approach he takes in the companies he owns, and Andrew Mellon.

Laissez-faire leadership typically works best near the top of the organizational tree where senior leaders appoint other senior leaders to run their respective departments and let them get on with it.

Advantages

- Creates personal responsibility. Laissez-faire leadership challenges subordinates to take personal responsibility for their work and the outcomes of their work.
- Supports fast course corrections. Motivated people working autonomously are typically able to overcome roadblocks and adjust course far more quickly than when they need to seek approval.
- Supports higher retention. When successful it can result in higher retention as motivated professionals and experts thrive in their work environment which supports autonomous decision making.

Disadvantages

- Lack of accountability. There is nobody accountable to take the credit in cases of success or to take the blame in cases of failure.
- Higher stress levels. Subordinates can suffer from high levels of stress if they feel unsupported by their leader or unsure of their capabilities.

- Missed deadlines. Self organizing teams without oversight or direction are prone to missing deadlines.

When to Use

- When you're working with creative experts. Use with creative professionals who have solid skills and lots of experience in their jobs.
- When people are proven. When your team has a proven track record of high performance and achievement on certain types of project.
- When your team is driven. When your team is motivated and driven to succeed on their own and are comfortable working without supervision.

2.6 Making Sense of Leadership Styles

There are many other styles of leadership in addition to the ones we have described, including amongst others:

- Strategic leadership
- Affiliative leadership
- Coaching leadership
- Bureaucratic leadership
- Cross-cultural leadership
- Servant Leadership

To make matters more complex, no two leaders will be exactly the same and may in fact have characteristics borrowed from other leadership styles to suit their needs.

The following diagram can be really helpful in thinking about where each leadership style has its main areas of focus.



You can use this framework to think about any leadership style you encounter. As you can see:

- Autocratic leaders have a high task emphasis and low people emphasis.
- Democratic leaders have a high task emphasis as well as a high people emphasis.
- Transformational leaders have a low task emphasis and high people emphasis

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- Laissez-faire leaders have a low task emphasis and low people emphasis

There is a reason the boxes in the diagram area labeled 1 to 4, and it has to do with subordinates. The higher the skill level of our subordinates the higher the box number and the more appropriate that style of leadership is for those subordinates, so autocratic leadership is good for people with a very low skill level, whereas laissez-faire leadership works for people with a very high degree of skill. Essentially, the leader's behavior should change according to which quadrant the followers' capabilities fall.

Another point to note from this diagram is that the abilities of the leader, both in terms of soft and hard skills, must increase as we move from box 1 to 4.

Later we will use this diagram look at how to match your leadership style to the situation you find yourself in. This is known as situational leadership.

2.7 Leadership vs. Management

You will often hear the terms leadership and management used interchangeably, so let me state this explicitly:

“LEADERSHIP IS NOT MANAGEMENT”

The best definition I have come across about the difference between management and leadership is by Peter Drucker:

“MANAGEMENT IS DOING THINGS RIGHT; LEADERSHIP IS DOING THE RIGHT THINGS”

Let's analyze this statement for a minute. Management is about doing things right. This means that managers have their responsibilities and it is their responsibility to get them done correctly and as efficiently as possible.

Conversely, leadership is about doing the right things. This means that leadership is about choosing the right vision and then choosing the right steps to take to achieve that vision. The leader will then empower managers by giving them responsibility to do things right.

Managers will typically be stronger at directing others than leaders, as well as being more execution and process lead. Leaders will be stronger around communication, and around knowing where the organization is and where they want it to go (vision).

Your Emotional Intelligence

3

“CEOs are hired for their intellect and business expertise - and fired for their lack of emotional intelligence.”

Daniel Goleman

Your Emotional Intelligence

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2. The Components of Emotional Intelligence
3. Improving Your Emotional Intelligence
4. Upgrade Your Beliefs
5. Political Awareness

3.1 What is Emotional Intelligence?

Most of us at some point in our lives will have taken an intelligence quotient (IQ) test. An IQ test measures a person's cognitive ability compared to the population at large. The average IQ is approximately 100.

People with higher IQs tend to do better academically than those with lower IQs. From this knowledge it would seem sensible to suggest that people with higher IQs will be more successful both in the workplace and in life.

This assumption has been proven to be incorrect. There is more to success in both the workplace and in life than simply being intelligent. In fact, according to Warren Bennis, emotional intelligence is the biggest factor in workplace success:

“EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, MORE THAN ANY OTHER FACTOR, MORE THAN IQ OR EXPERTISE, ACCOUNTS FOR 85% TO 95% OF SUCCESS AT WORK... IQ IS A THRESHOLD COMPETENCE. YOU NEED IT, BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE YOU A STAR. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE CAN.”

This makes a lot of sense. We've all met or worked with someone who is very clever but isn't great at relating to people, and vice versa.

Emotional intelligence or EI is the ability to recognize your emotions, process and understand them, and observe how they affect those around you. Having a high emotional intelligence means you not only understand your own emotions, but you also understand other people's emotions. You understand other people's emotions not just individually but also within groups.

There is no link between IQ and EI. Whereas IQ doesn't change much over time, it is possible to improve your EI. Before you embark on a conscious effort to improve your EI it is worthwhile taking an EI test to determine your starting point. There are many free EI tests available online. Unlike an IQ test it is quite easy to cheat in an EI test, so it is important to answer all questions as honestly as you can.

3.2 The Components of Emotional Intelligence

In his book, *Emotional Intelligence - Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, Daniel Goleman developed a framework for understanding EI, consisting of five components split between personal skills and social skills.

Components of Emotional Intelligence

Personal Skills

Self-awareness:

- Emotional awareness
- Accurate self-assessment
- Self confidence

Self-regulation:

- Self-control
- Trustworthiness
- Conscientiousness
- Adaptability
- Innovation

Motivation:

- Achievement drive
- Commitment
- Initiative
- Optimism

Social Skills

Empathy:

- Understanding others
- Developing others
- Service orientation
- Leveraging diversity
- Political awareness

Social Skills:

- Influence
- Communication
- Conflict management
- Leadership
- Change catalyst
- Building bonds
- Cooperation
- Team capabilities

Let's examine each of the five components within the framework in more detail so we obtain a basic understanding of all the components that make up emotional intelligence.

Self-awareness:

People with high emotional intelligence are aware of and understand their emotions. They understand their strengths, but they also understand their weaknesses and work on them to improve them. The sub-skills of self-awareness are:

- Emotional Awareness: being able to recognize our own emotions and the impact they have on how we behave.
- Accurate Self-Assessment: being reflective enough to have awareness of our relative strengths and weaknesses.
- Self-Confidence: having belief in our own abilities. This confidence means we are not scared to take a contrary view if we believe it is the right thing to do.

Self-regulation

Self-awareness allows us to be aware of our emotions, but it is self-regulation that gives people with a high EI the ability to con-

trol their emotions and behavior. The sub-skills of self-regulation are:

- Self-Control: our ability to manage our negative or disruptive emotions and stay positive and in control.
- Trustworthiness: we are relied upon as being honest and truthful.
- Conscientiousness: refers to taking accountability for our own actions and workplace performance, and not blaming others for any shortcomings.
- Adaptability: makes us adept at handling change, and gives us the ability to manage the different and often conflicting demands on our time.
- Inventiveness: our ability to both seek out and create new ideas.

Motivation

People with a high emotional intelligence are motivated to succeed both in life and in the workplace. They are committed to achievement, and are prepared to undergo short-term difficulties to achieve a long-term gain. They are optimistic by default and most importantly are resilient, enabling them to bounce

back from the inevitable setback that occur on the way to achieving their goals. The sub-skills of motivation are:

- **Achievement Drive:** a measure of our desire to deliver and meet results, and our desire to want to do succeed.
- **Commitment:** our commitment to meet the goal both for ourselves and our team. Being prepared to make personal sacrifice to ultimately meet our goal.
- **Initiative:** our get-up-and-go and our ability to hustle to get things done.
- **Optimism:** our ability to remain positive and continue pursuing our goals despite the obstacles that arise. This gives us the ability to bounce back from setbacks.

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to sense other people's emotions, along with the ability to imagine what the other person is thinking or feeling. People with empathy are good at listening, managing relationships, respecting the feelings of others, and understanding the agendas and motivations behind people's words and actions. The sub-skills of empathy are:

- **Understanding Others:** our ability to get under the skin and understand how another person sees and experiences a situation.
- **Developing Others:** our ability to understand the strengths and weaknesses of others, and then create a plan to help them develop their weaker areas.
- **Service Orientation:** refers to our capability to anticipate and then meet customers needs.
- **Leveraging Diversity:** how strongly we see diversity as a positive, and even create opportunity through it.
- **Political Awareness:** understanding the power networks that exist within groups and knowing how to work within these structures.

Social Skills

People with good social skills are easy to talk with and know when to make eye contact and smile. They are often considered to be great team players because they put the interests of others ahead of their own. Good social skills are rooted in self-assuredness and it is this connection that makes people with good social skills adept at managing conflict. The sub-skills of social skills are:

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- Influence: our ability to persuade and build consensus amongst co-workers.
 - Communication: the ability to clearly communicate with others through the most appropriate channel.
 - Conflict Management: the ability to manage and resolve disagreements.
 - Leadership: our ability to get others motivated by our vision and wanting to achieve it.
 - Change Catalyst: our ability to recognize quickly that change is needed, and then our capacity to initiate and manage that change.
 - Building Bonds: our capacity to build and then maintain mutually beneficial connections to others. This can be thought of as the sum of our our personal and professional networks combined.
 - Cooperation: our ability to work with others as part of a team to achieve a shared goal.
 - Team Capabilities: our competence in building a team spirit and to bringing often diverse team members together.

3.3 Improving Your Emotional Intelligence

Improving your emotional intelligence isn't something that happens overnight. In fact, it's a process that lasts a lifetime.

No two people are the same, and so what works for one person to improve their EI will not be appropriate for another. You'll need to tailor your EI learning to your own personal situation and needs. If you have a coach or mentor it's a good idea to work out with them what components of your emotional intelligence should be improved, along with how to go about improving them.

Below you'll find specific strategies you can investigate further to help improve each area of your emotional intelligence.

Self-awareness:

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator test
- 360 degree feedback
- Disc profile
- Johari window model

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- Positive affirmations
 - Transactional analysis
 - Personality tests
 - Martial arts training
 - Regular reflection
 - Meditation

Self-regulation:

- Follow through maps
- Practice delayed gratification
- Develop time management strategies
- Develop your work ethic
- Set goals
- Cognitive behavior therapy
- Turn your automatic negative thoughts into performance enhancing thoughts (ANTs -> PETs)
- Anger management

- Stress management

Motivation:

- Set goals
- Create a plan
- Find your purpose
- Reward yourself when you reach goals and sub-goals
- Use an accountability buddy
- Identify obstacles in advance
- Turn ANTs into PETs
- Try something new / change your scene

Empathy:

- Practice empathetic listening
- Networking
- Customer chain mapping
- Value chain mapping

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- Influence mapping
 - Counseling skills
 - Challenge yourself to have a deeper conversation today

Social Skills:

- Become a coach
- Networking
- Identify your own and others Belbin profile
- Identify your own and others Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
- Communications skills training
- Assertiveness training
- Relationship skills training

3.4 Upgrade Your Beliefs

We all have beliefs. A trust, a faith, or a confidence that something is true. Our individual beliefs play an enormous role in how we see and interpret the world around us and our own place in it. The beliefs we hold give us a scorecard against which we can measure everything in our lives.

Beliefs can come about in two ways. They might be formed logically as a result making deductions from observations. They can also be formed when we experience powerful emotions that seem supported by logic, for example, perhaps we failed a mathematics exam as a young child and shortly afterwards one of our parents told us that we were no good at math.

From this beginning, beliefs are ingrained into our brains due to repeated exposure to situations which prove their correctness. Once established within our brains, beliefs are accepted as fact and rarely if ever questioned.

Once your beliefs are in place, everything you think and feel will be adjusted to agree with your beliefs. Our entire reality as we experience it is a creation of our belief system. This can explain why two seemingly identical people can experience the world so differently. Where one person may be happy to have already achieved so much in their career, another in exactly the same position might resent having achieved so little.

In addition to helping us make sense of the world, beliefs also give us a framework to understand what is possible. Henry Ford put it like this:

“WHETHER YOU THINK YOU CAN, OR YOU THINK YOU CAN’T. YOU’RE RIGHT.”

Because beliefs are at the very core of who you are, beliefs influence every aspect of your life. Beliefs influence whether you make a good decision or a bad decision, whether you choose to eat well, whether you jump at the chance of giving a presentation or run away from it. Beliefs even determine how you feel about yourself and the labels you give to yourself.

In a nutshell, your beliefs will play a large role in whether you are successful or unsuccessful, happy or unhappy, and satisfied or dissatisfied with your overall life experience.

Some of our beliefs don’t serve us. Perhaps they were formed many years ago during childhood. They may have helped us during childhood but are no longer relevant today, and are holding us back. These beliefs are called negative beliefs. They constrain and impoverish our lives.

To help you identify your limiting beliefs you can ask the following questions:

- Make a list of what you are good at. Now make a list of what you are not good at. Why are you no good at each of these?
- Is there an activity you know you should do but haven’t (you’ve been putting it off)?
- What is your least favorite work activity?
- What area of your life is holding you back? Why haven’t you done something about this area already?
- When meeting new people in a professional capacity, what aspect of yourself, your background, or your personality do you try to hide?
- In what areas do you avoid helping others?

Write down your answer to each question and why you believe this to be the case.

Another way you can identify limiting beliefs by listening to the internal monologue going on in your head. Those little phrases and sentences you say to yourself mentally as you go about your day and encounter situations.

Most people aren’t aware they’re talking to themselves as they go about their day. It’s fascinating to listen in on what we’re saying to ourselves. Why not give it a go for the rest of today? In particular, look out for sentences in your head that start with:

-
- I don't - for example, "I don't do sports" or "I don't deserve to be successful".
 - I can't - for example, "I can't do math" or "I can't sing".
 - I am - for example, the belief "I am intelligent", might lead us to conclude that "I'm not very good at practical things". Other negative beliefs might be "I'm rubbish at job interviews", or "I'm not successful."

There are many more ways in which limiting beliefs make themselves visible within our internal monologue too. Keep your mind open to catching these thoughts as they happen. Soon you will become very adept at quickly catching these negative thoughts as soon as they occur.

I hope it's apparent how thoughts such as those given in the examples above can really impact the quality of both your life and career.

Now that we understand what negative beliefs are and how to spot them, let's look at a simple four-step process to remove them.

Step 1: Isolate One Belief

The first step in the process is to isolate a single belief that you want to alter. Pick a belief that is limiting your growth and happiness. Maybe you don't think you're smart? Maybe you don't think you're good enough? Perhaps you don't think you can give a presentation? Pick just one and write it down.

Step 2: Understand the benefit of this belief

In this step you want to understand exactly exactly how you are benefiting by holding on to this belief. Ask yourself:

- What is the benefit to me of this belief?
- What price have I already paid by believing this?
- What price will I pay in the future if I continue to believe this belief?
- How did I get this belief?

Write down all the answers you can think of. If there is no benefit to the belief and you want to replace it with a more empowering belief then move to the next step.

Step 3: Undermine the Belief

Look for examples from your life where the belief wasn't true. Perhaps you once did well in an exam, or perhaps you once gave a presentation that wasn't terrible. Here we're looking for evidence to help us believe that the belief isn't always absolutely true.

Collect as much evidence as you can before moving on to the next step.

Step 4: Build a new belief

Now that we're beginning to see that the old belief might not hold true in all circumstances, we've created the space to allow us to create a new, more empowering belief. But deciding to create the belief, "I'm great at presentations" isn't enough, we need genuine evidence so our brain believes it.

Think of ways you can start to accumulate evidence to reinforce your new belief.

- If you don't like public speaking maybe you could start by giving a speech to your partner, or perhaps join a local Toastmasters club where you can practice in a safe environment.

- If you don't like numbers maybe you could take a course or spend 10 minutes learning something new every day. If you begin by benchmarking where you are then very soon you'll start to see real progress.

The key is to regularly and repeatedly reinforce your new belief.

By slowly building the strength of your new belief your results will begin to change for the better. Being attentive to these improved results will further help reinforce your belief and create even better results, creating a virtuous circle of improved results and belief.

Whilst the four-step process is easy to understand, to implement it properly will take time. You have to reinforce, reinforce, and reinforce your new belief. We're not talking about something learning something by rote, we're talking about trying to retrain our brain, and that takes time.

This section serves as a very basic overview to limiting beliefs and their retraining. If you feel this is an area that is holding you back then there are many books dedicated to the subject. Two of the books I'd recommend are *The New Psycho-Cybernetics* by Dr. Maxwell Maltz, and *Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing The Way You Think*, by Dennis Greenberger and Christine A. Padesky.

A key takeaway from this section is to remember that by upgrading your beliefs you're going to increase your resilience. An increased resilience is going to make you a better leader, less likely to suffer from stress, and more likely to bounce back from the inevitable setbacks and disappointments that occur on the road to achieving your vision.

3.5 Political Awareness

As we are concerned with emotional intelligence in the workplace we'll spend a little time now specifically looking at political awareness.

As a leader, the higher up the ranks of an organization you progress, the bigger the range of stakeholders you will need to work with. Each of these stakeholders may have different goals, priorities, agendas, and personal style to your own. They may even have hidden agendas - ulterior motives that they are not willing or able to share with you.

Political awareness is the ability to understand different people's hidden agendas, and use this knowledge to your advantage. Essentially, by understanding the lay of the land you can influence more effectively and with more sensitivity to different viewpoints.

Many people see politics as something underhand, devious, and sneaky. This is increasingly becoming an old fashioned view. Political awareness should be viewed as an important element of leadership, and used well it can be used to get things done. No leader who wants to get things done can afford to turn a blind eye to the political dimensions that exist in their organization.

Organizational Politics

An extension of political awareness is organizational politics. Organizational politics may sound complex but it just means the power relationships that exist when any group of people come together. Organizational politics is a natural part of life, and of life within an organization.

When we think of organizational or office politics we often think of someone with a big ego arguing their opponents into submission, however, people who quietly succeed in their careers are not unpolitical, they just do it better.

Organizational politics is not about the organization chart, it's about how things really get done, who holds the real power to make decisions, and who are the key people that these decision makers listen to and take guidance from.

It is important to understand office politics not just in terms of getting things done but also in terms of your own career advancement. Harvey Coleman in his book, "Empowering Yourself", asserts that how well you do in your job has little to do with how well you will do in your career. He asserts that your career performance is based on a combination of Performance, Image, and Exposure (PIE).

- Performance (10%): this is the day-to-day results you deliver.

- Image (30%): this is what other people think about you. It is your personal brand. Are you perceived as someone who brings a positive attitude and gets things done, or are you perceived as a negative influence on any team or project.
- Exposure (60%): This is who knows about what you do. Does your boss know? Does their boss know? Are you known outside of the organization within your industry?

Coleman estimates (I'll leave it to you as to whether you believe the ratios are accurate) that the factors that influence your success are 10% performance, 30% image, and 60% exposure.

A Political Awareness Model

A political skills model developed by Simon Baddeley and Kim James can be useful to understand who is playing politics, and if they are, are they doing it for self-gain or for the good of the organization. The model works by considering two dimensions:

Reading:

This is the skill an individual has at reading the organization around them. Where are the power bases? What are the covert agendas? What is the culture of the organization? How much influence does the individual wield within the organization?

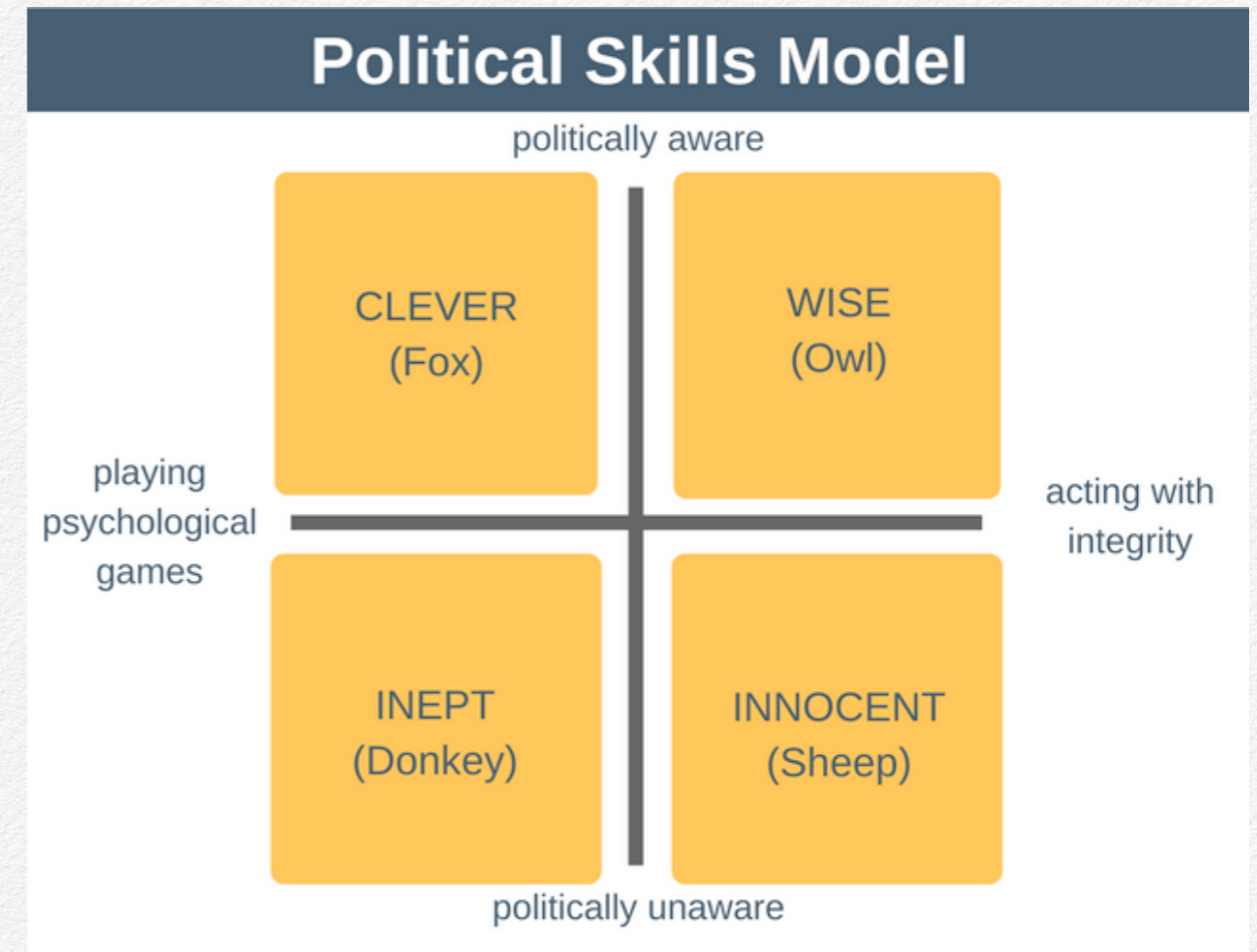
Reading essentially means having the awareness to turn outwards and understand context. The two ends of this dimension are 'Politically Aware' and 'Politically Unaware'.

Carrying

This is the skill of managing what's being carried into the situation, meaning it's about what the individual brings to the situation, with their internal understanding of the situation and what they intend to do.

Carrying runs on a scale from "acting with integrity" to "playing psychological games".

Drawing this political model in a 2 by 2 matrix, Baddeley and James developed this model:



People with excellent political skills not only understand the need to turn outward and read the situation, they also have the skills to do so.

It is important to note that this model isn't designed to define individuals. The model is flexible, meaning we have the ability to use different behaviors at different times. This is because our ability to read and carry are in constant flux as the organization and our power position within it constantly change.

Use the model regularly and quickly check where you are right now on a particular topic or issue. You can obviously also use it to attempt to understand others.

Note that the two states on the left of the model are associated with selfish behavior whereas those on the right are associated with organizationally focussed behavior. Let's examine each of the behaviors in turn.

1. Innocent Behavior - The Sheep

The Sheep approach is built on a foundation of implied innocence. Sheep are suspicious of politics and want everything to work out well for all concerned. They are often oblivious to office politics and because of this will struggle to get anything done.

They believe that the best idea or solution will always be selected, and that only formal channels of process and persuasion exist. Sheep tend to be poor networkers, and often listen to what others are saying but don't hear the real message.

Many of us begin our careers as sheep, and some people will even stay this way for their entire career, but if we want to progress we need more than just integrity, we need to understand group power dynamics. Remember the English proverb:

“AGE AND TREACHERY WILL ALWAYS OVERCOME YOUTH AND SKILL”

Sheep are most likely to be heard saying:

- “Could we get on with the reason we are in this meeting”
- “If [person] would just let us know what they really want then we could do it”

2. Inept Behavior - The Donkey

Similar to sheep, the donkey is politically inept, but they lack the integrity of the sheep. Donkey's are determined to get what they want, but because they aren't politically astute they will ignore the established political power bases when trying to achieve something.

This often means they have a reputation for “putting their foot in it.” I'm sure we've all met people who think they're very political, perhaps mentioning who they know or their inside knowledge. Sadly, this is just illusion and the donkey's beliefs leave him both lacking in team support and vulnerable to be taken advantage of by someone more astute or ruthless.

Donkeys are the kind of people who hate to be ignored and like to feel important. They will often make judgements based on how they feel rather than understanding the organizational context. They are not good at making strong coalitions.

Donkeys are most likely to be heard saying:

- “Let’s agree in this meeting what we want, and then I’ll sell it to them as what they want.”
- “You know me, I’ll just have to tell them they can’t have it.”

3. Clever Behavior - The Fox

Foxes are politically astute but they use this intelligence for their own personal gain. They are good at forming coalitions and winning support for their ideas.

Maybe you recognize this behavior from your career experience? Someone who will put their project first, even if it means jeopardizing everyone else’s project and the bigger objectives of the organization.

Foxes tend to change job before their mistakes are discovered. They are excellent at manipulating situations so that they are never at fault. They are unprincipled, but excellent at exploiting weakness in others to get what they want.

Foxes are most likely to be heard saying:

- “Leave it to me. I’ll have a private word with them.”
- “I’ve discussed this with all the key people and everyone verbally agreed.”

4. Wise Behavior - The Owl

The owl understands the politics of the organization, but their ethics make them use this political awareness for the benefit of the organization *and* themselves.

Owls are excellent listeners and are aware of other people’s viewpoints, however, they are not afraid of being disliked if necessary. They are excellent at building support and forming strong coalitions.

Owls like to create win-win scenarios. Unlike the fox, they are not afraid to share their emotions. They are overt, and willing to openly share information where appropriate. They are guided by both ethics and doing what is right for the organization.

Owls are dynamic and able to balance managing their profile, image, and exposure, with the ability to gain the trust and support of others.

Owls are most likely to be heard saying:

- “Let me to repeat what you’re asking for back to you so I can make sure I understand it.”
- “Let’s look at ways we can accelerate this work and mitigate the obstacles.”

-
- “Let’s examine the underlying reasons behind being asked to do this.”

Develop Your Inner Owl

Owl like behavior is obviously the quadrant you want to frequent as a leader. Use the tool above to check where you are on an issue by issue basis.

Later, we’ll look at some key skills you need as a leader, but here are some specific tips to help you improve your political skills:

Tip 1: Let that which is most important to you be your guide

Here, we want to unite what is important to us and what is important to the organization and align our politicking with those goals.

First, write down your top three priorities for the organization. Now write down your top three career priorities. Finally, write down what you spend most of your time doing or stressing about. Do they align? If not, they maybe you are helping someone else achieve their goals.

If your goals and the organizational goals do align, the next step is to think about who needs to be aware of your achievements and progress? It can be easy to think that you just need to put your head down and work hard. Don’t been a sheep! Remember that exposure and image play a huge part in getting ahead.

Tip 2: Build the network you need to help you achieve your goals

Successful politics revolve around communication and networking. If you build a good relationship and help someone out it’s likely they’ll return the favor when you need it. Likewise, if you block or obstruct them it’s likely they’ll return that favor too.

When building your network of allies, look to build allies above your level, at your level, below your level, and even outside of your organization. Are you neglecting any of these groups currently? If so, make a plan to rectify this.

The payoff for this regular effort to build and maintain your network may take years to bear fruit, but once you’ve built the relationships, little effort is required to maintain them.

Finally, think about how you can bring onboard stakeholders with whom you have a history of poor collaboration. Can you at least think of a way to establish a good professional respect even if you’re never going to be best friends?

Tip 3: Watch and Learn

Who holds the power? Who holds little formal power but has lots of authority? Who has the ear of the person with the authority? Who is being promoted and who is being ignored? What do people in power like and dislike?

Observing and trying to answer these questions can not only help you identify who could make a strong ally, but it also helps you determine the organizational culture.

If forthright people are holding the power and forthright people are also getting promoted, they perhaps you should consider adapting your style if it doesn't already fit this mold.

Likewise, if you observe that presentations starting with the big picture before moving to the figures are always better received than when the key figures come first, then think about changing your presentation style if it is not already aligned.

Tip 4: Handle Gossip Tactfully

In every organization you're going to encounter gossip. This is especially true when you're aware of the need to build and maintain your network.

Don't get sucked into other people's gossip. If someone is frustrated about someone else then frame your answer around

them and their frustration, and how you understand their frustration, but don't ever criticize others via a peer.

Tip 5: Promote Yourself Tactfully

Nobody likes a show off, but counterbalancing this is the need to promote your image and exposure to propel your career. One way to do this is to practice the subtle art of show but don't tell. This technique comes from creative writing, where rather than tell someone how it is, you show them. For example:

- Rather than saying, "He was a carpenter.", we might say "A saw hung from his belt and wood dust filled the air."

This can translate to the workplace as:

- If you've had a success and achieved an outcome, don't tell people about it, instead offer to repeat that success for another department or client. They're learning about your success but you're not bragging, you're offering to help them.
- If you do want to tell someone about a success use "we" and not "me". Everyone will still see it as your success but you don't look like you're bragging and you still maintain the trust and loyalty of your team and coworkers.
- Let others spread the word for you. In a gossip situation let people know how well your project is going and how much

you love doing what you're doing. You'll often find that they will spread the word for you.

Your Motivation

The tragedy in life is not in reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.

Benjamin E. Mays

Your Motivation

Contents

- 1. What is Motivation?**
- 2. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**
- 3. Personal Goal Setting**

4.1 What is Motivation?

Why do we do what we do? Why do some of us work harder than others? What is it that causes one person to behave differently to another even though they both have the same job?

Motivation is what pushes us to try and achieve the goals we set for ourselves. Motivation pushes us to work hard and to succeed in our careers.

Motivated employees improve efficiency and reduce turnover and as leaders we spend large amounts of time thinking of how to motivate our team. Yet as a leader it can be all too easy to forget to clearly articulate our own motives and desires. We need to take responsibility for ourselves and ensure we're motivated to stay the course and rise to any challenge that comes our way. It will also help us to better understand and manage the motivations of others.

4.2 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform a task to achieve some reward or avoid some punishment. Examples of behaviors arising from extrinsic motivation include:

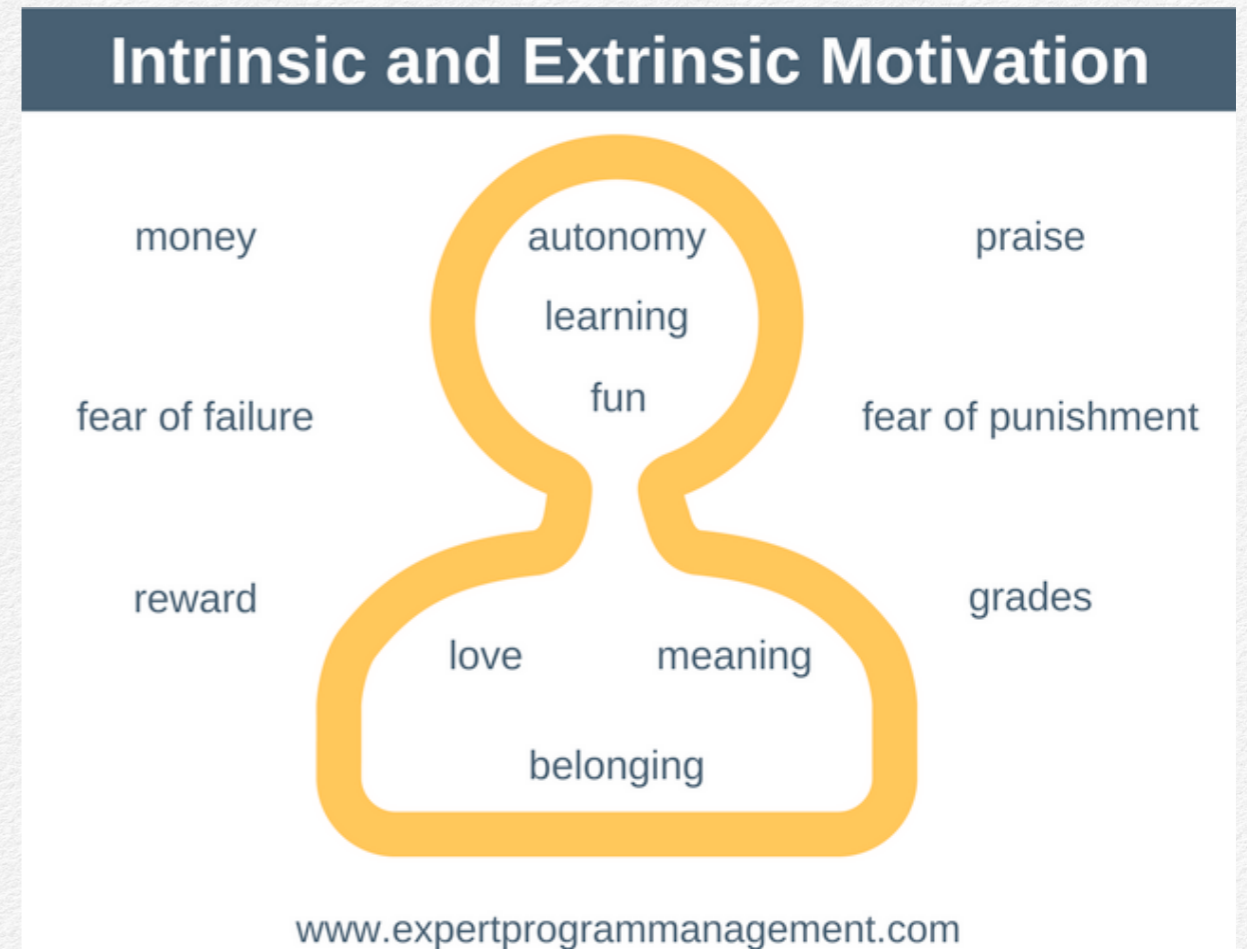
- Working hard to earn recognition and more money.
- Playing sport to win medals.
- Tidying your desk at the end of each day to avoid being reprimanded.

Intrinsic motivation occurs when we are motivated to perform a task because it is fun, enjoyable, or personally rewarding in and of itself. We perform the task for its own sake rather than needing some form of external reward.

Examples of behaviors arising from intrinsic motivation include:

- Working hard because we enjoy being a productive member of society.
- Playing sport because you find it enjoyable.
- Working hard because you find your job enjoyable.

One of the joys of intrinsic motivation is that it does not come with any pressure to perform, whereas extrinsic motivation is often associated with performance pressure.



In a nutshell, intrinsic motivation arises from within you, whereas extrinsic motivation comes from outside of you.

To develop the best motivational outcomes for yourself, such as persistence, resilience, a positive attitude, and great concentration, it is a good idea to use a blended approach consisting of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

Before we move on to the next section where we look at personal goal setting, take some time to identify what motivates

you. Are your motives both intrinsic and extrinsic? If not, what can be changed to rectify the situation?

It's going to make it much easier for you to get out of bed each morning, and remove some of the performance pressure, if you can find an appropriate balance of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

4.3 Personal Goal Setting

In this section we're going to use two techniques to set our personal goals and keep us on track. The first technique we're going to use is to plan like an athlete using outcomes, performance, and process goals.

The second technique we'll use is to plan in thirteen week timeframes. Thirteen weeks is a long enough block of time to allow us to achieve something meaningful, but also short enough that we don't lose our motivation or our focus.

Plan Like an Athlete

The process of goal setting based on outcome, performance and process goals comes from the world of athletics, but is equally applicable to business and personal development.

Why Should We Set Goals?

In the 1960's, two psychologists, Edwin Locke and Gary Latham, discovered that goal setting is one of the easiest ways to increase motivation and productivity. Over multiple studies Locke and Latham found that setting goals increase productivity by between 11% and 25%.

Having short and long term goals can have a number of benefits, including:

- Helping us to focus on what is important.
- Providing motivation.
- Giving a real sense of personal satisfaction upon achievement.
- Giving purpose.
- Helping us develop the resilience to persist when the going gets tough.
- Encouraging us to develop strategies and tactics to achieve our goal.

The goal setting process forces us to take stock of where we are now. It is important that goals are set in a way such that we focus on the process and performance rather than the outcome of competition.

There are three types of goals: outcome, performance and process goals. We break goal setting down in this way as it makes it easier to organize our thinking around how we're going to achieve our goals.

Outcome Goals

An outcome goal is the singular goal that you are working towards. Outcome goals are very often binary and involve winning, for example, wanting to win a gold medal or wanting to be the largest company in your sector. Whilst outcome goals are hugely motivating, they are not under your control as they are affected by how others perform.

In a sporting sense this might mean that someone outperforms you on the field of play, and in a business sense this could happen if one of your key team members was ill or your competition outsmarted you.

Examples of outcome goals include:

- To win a gold medal at an event
- To finish top 10 in a local race
- Get on a 40 under 40 list for my business achievements
- Achieve \$1m in sales in November

Performance Goals

A performance goal is a performance standard that you are trying to achieve. These are the performance standards you set

for yourself to achieve if you are going to build towards your outcome goal.

Over time, performance goals build upon one another to help you achieve your outcome goal. As an example, consider an athlete with the outcome goal of coming top 10 in a local running race. Their first performance goal might be to:

- run 5k in 20 minutes.

Their 2nd performance goal might be to:

- run 5k in 18 minutes.

Their final performance goal might be to:

- run 5k in 16:30.

It is this final performance goal achievement that makes them ready to attempt to hit their outcome goal of coming top 10 in a local race. By stacking performance goals in this manner they can be used to track performance towards your ultimate outcome goal over time. Performance goals are building blocks towards your outcome goal.

Examples of performance goals include:

- Run 10k in 40 minutes
- Cycle 10 miles in 25 minutes

- Convert website visitors to newsletter subscribers at a rate of 1%
- Convert 1 in 3 sales calls to a sale
- Call 100 prospects this month

Process Goals

Process goals support performance goals by giving you something to focus on as you work towards your performance goals. Process goals are completely under your control. They are the small things you each and every day to eventually achieve your performance goals.

Examples of process goals include:

- Train 4 days per week
- Eat fewer than 1,800 calories per day
- Ensure every new article on the website has a call to action for newsletter signup
- Call 5 prospects every day before midday

By taking consistent action every day on your process goals you will get to where you ultimately want to be, and not burn yourself out in the process.

One of the big advantages of goal setting using outcome, performance and process goals is that it makes it possible to be satisfied with your performance even if the final outcome wasn't what you wanted. This is why you often see post-race interviews with athletes where they say they're happy or proud of what they achieved in the race even though they didn't win or get a medal.

Using SMARTER Goals

Both athletes and business people frequently set goals that are very difficult to measure towards, for example, "win a gold medal" or "win on mobile". To avoid this trap make sure that all of your personal goals are SMARTER:

- Specific: your goals need to be well defined.
- Measurable: it must be obvious when you have reached your goal.
- Agreed Upon: stakeholders need to agree the goals through negotiation.
- Realistic: all parties must believe the goals are achievable.
- Time-bound: the goals must have a deadline.

- Exciting: the goal must be exciting and give people energy to achieve it.
- Recordable: progress towards the goal must be recordable, for example, using KPIs.

An Example from Sports

Let's look at a complete example to really make this concept sink in. Suppose you wanted to finish top 10 in a local 5k running race, then your goals might look like this:

GOAL SETTING EXAMPLE: SPORTS

OUTCOME GOAL:

Finish in the top 10 for a 5k race by the end of the year.

PERFORMANCE GOALS:

1. Run 5k in 20 minutes
2. Run 5k in 18 minutes
3. Run 5k in 16.5 minutes

PROCESS GOALS:

Based on Performance Goal #1:

1. Train 4 times per week
2. Eat fewer than 1,800 calories
3. Get a sports massage once per month

Based on Performance Goal #2:

1.
2.
3.

Based on Performance Goal #3:

1.
2.
3.

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to work towards running 5k in 18 minutes. For this reason only one process goal is being worked towards at any one time, because we won't commit to our process goals for achieving an 18 minute 5k until we have the first building block in place and are able to run a 20 minute 5k.

An Example from Business

Let's look at a complete example from business to further build our understanding. Suppose our revenue is currently at \$500k per month and we wanted to generate \$1m revenue per month, then our goals might look like this.

In this example the the performance goals are stacked, meaning that you need to run 5k in 20 minutes before you can start

GOAL SETTING EXAMPLE: BUSINESS

OUTCOME GOAL:

Generate \$1 million in revenue per month by the end of the year

PERFORMANCE GOALS:

1. Get website visitors to sign up to newsletter at a rate of 2%
2. Convert newsletter subscribers to a sale at a rate of 5%
3. Close leads at a rate of 1 in 2

PROCESS GOALS:

Based on Performance Goal #1:

1. Ensure every article on website has a call to action to newsletter sign up
2. Ensure there is an exit popup on every page asking users to subscribe
3.

Based on Performance Goal #2:

1. Ensure every newsletter has a call to action for a telephone conversation
2.
3.

Based on Performance Goal #3:

1. Call 5 leads every day before lunchtime, and record and implement what seems to be working.
2.
3.

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Setting Goals in Real Life

In addition to setting SMARTER goals as described above, when setting outcome, performance and process goals, it can be a good idea to break down the timeline of achieving your outcomes into smaller blocks of time. A 2007 study by psychologist Richard Wiseman showed that 88% of people who make New Year's resolutions fail. For this reason it is not a good idea to make detailed long range plans focusing a year out or more. Instead stick to a shorter timescale like 13 weeks. There are a number of reasons to use a 13-week timeframe:

- A shorter 13-week timescale will help keep you focused, committed, and excited about achieving your goal.
- 13 weeks fits into a year 4 times, meaning it's a great way to plan a quarter.
- Your 13-week goal is not so far away that you lose your motivation.
- Not too much will (hopefully) change in 13 weeks so you stand a good chance of hitting your goals which will help you to build and sustain momentum as you head into the next 13 week planning block.

When we combine planning like an athlete and 13-week planning we end up with a planner that looks something like this:

GOAL SETTING TEMPLATE

OUTCOME GOAL:
.....

PERFORMANCE GOALS:

1.
2.
3.

PROCESS GOALS:

Based on Performance Goal #1:

1.
2.
3.

Based on Performance Goal #2:

1.
2.
3.

Based on Performance Goal #3:

1.
2.
3.

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WEEKLY OBJECTIVES:

1	1. 2.
2	1. 2.
3	1. 2.
4	1. 2.
5	1. 2.
6	1. 2.
	1. 2.
	1. 2.
13	1. 2.

As you can see, we've created a mechanism to set goals 13-weeks out, and then set and track our progress weekly towards them. You should also plan daily what you plan to achieve each day to help you towards your weekly goal.

Over time, as we use this technique to consistently take action towards our goals we build great momentum and give ourselves a great chance to meet our ultimate objectives.

Your Skills

5

“The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.”

Kenneth Blanchard

Your Skills

Contents

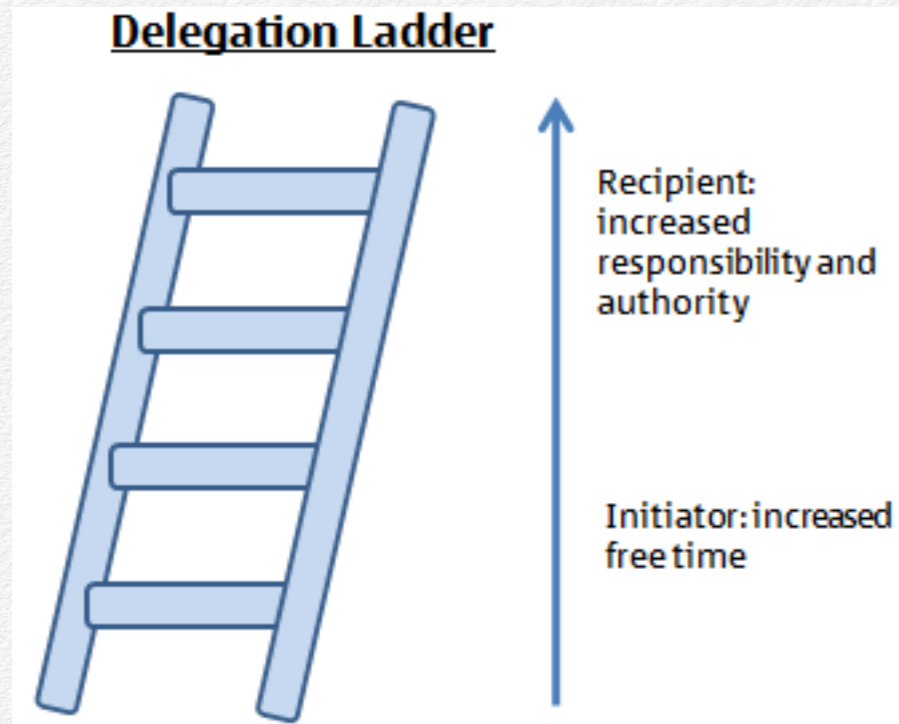
- 1. Delegation Skills**
- 2. Coaching Skills**
- 3. Giving Feedback Skills**
- 4. Influencing Skills**

5.1 Delegation Skills

The objective of delegation is to get a task done by someone else to save yourself time. As a manager and leader it is your responsibility to grow the maturity, authority, and capabilities of those within your team. Understanding the different levels of delegation available to you can be a very useful tool in helping to achieve this aim.

By gradually increasing the delegation level over time we can help develop individuals within the team. When we delegate there are a number of ways in which we can do it, each giving the recipient increased freedom. It is common sense to suggest that the most solid and dependent members of your team can be given much more freedom than new and untested members of the team.

You can think of the levels of delegation of being similar to a ladder. New members of the team start at the bottom rung. Over time they earn your trust and you bring them to the next level of delegation. You continue in this way until they reach the maximum level of delegation. If at any time things don't work out you can bring them back down one or more levels on the delegation ladder as necessary.



You may also want to bring even experienced and trusted team members down the ladder if the task is particularly important or business critical. In this instance it is important to communicate your reason for doing so with the individual to avoid any misunderstandings or bad feelings.

Let's move on and work through the different levels on the delegation ladder, starting at the bottom rung on the ladder, Level 1.

Level 1: "Follow these Instructions"

When you write down a list of instructions you expect to be followed precisely you allow no freedom to the recipient of the task. Writing down instructions in detail also consumes a significant amount of your time.

Level 2: "Look into [X] and then I'll decide"

This level is giving the recipient the authority to investigate the problem, but no authority to decide on what course of action to take. It is not clear from the above statement if recommendations or options are to be provided by the recipient.

Level 3: "Look into [X] and then we'll decide"

This option gives more responsibility to the recipient as it involves them in the decision making process. It is a good option to use if you are coaching or mentoring a member of the team, as it enables you to discuss the decision options together, and gives the recipient insight into your decision making process.

Level 4: "Look into [X] and give me your recommendation. Check with me before proceeding"

This is providing the recipient with more authority to analyze the situation, collate the options, and then to make a recommendation. You will provide a final hurdle to clear before they can proceed with their recommendation. You still ultimately will make the final decision.

Level 5: "Email me your decision. Proceed unless I intervene in 24 hours"

This option gives yet more freedom to the recipient and does not necessarily have to involve you at all. However you still have the option to intervene if you so wish.

Level 6: “Investigate, make your decision, and proceed. Let me know your decision and the outcome”

With this option the the recipient of the task has complete freedom to choose and action their solution to the problem. They notify you after the event of their decision and its results.

Level 7: “Investigate, make your decision, and proceed. No need to check with me”

Here the recipient has complete authority and control over the decision made. To use this option you must have a high level of trust in the other person’s ability and competence, especially as their decisions may come back to bite you months later. It may still be useful to use regular 1-to-1 meetings to catch-up with the other person and their progress across key tasks.

Level 8: “This area is now your responsibility”

Here you are handing over long-term responsibility for an area. They will decide how to align with corporate strategic. They will decide what projects are needed and how they will be measured. They will decide on the structure and people needed within their organization. This level of delegation might be asso-

ciated with handing over to a successor or handing over responsibility for an entire business unit.

Exploring the Ladder

As you move up the delegation ladder the recipient gains more freedom, control, and authority. You move them up the ladder as both their maturity and your trust in them grows. From your perspective as the person doing the delegating, each step up the delegation ladder has the benefit of freeing up and releasing more and more of your time.

Obviously, there are many more levels of delegation than those described above. That is why the real art of delegation is to determine what your own delegation ladder looks like. It may have just 3 rungs, or it may have 15. There is no golden rule or formula, simply choose what feels right for your situation. If you lead a team of seasoned senior executives then you will probably need fewer rungs on your ladder than if you lead a group with varying degrees of experience and authority.

To avoid any misunderstandings and to avoid issues falling down gaps, it is always good practice to write down what level of delegation you want to give each team member. You can then discuss this with team member so that they are clear as to what you expect from them.

Summary

Delegation is something you do to get things done and free up our time, but thinking carefully about how you delegate is something many will not have done. By defining and using a delegation ladder you can improve your delegation skills, your team and people management skills, avoid delegation mistakes, and increase your available time.

5.2 Coaching Skills

As a leader it is important to develop your team. Don't just take my word for it – here are some quotes by leading figures on the importance of developing your team:

“THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE IS THE HIGHEST CALLING OF LEADERSHIP.”

Harry S. Firestone

“TAKE CARE OF OUR PEOPLE AND THE BUSINESS WILL TAKE CARE OF ITSELF.”

Ray Kroc

“BEFORE YOU ARE A LEADER, SUCCESS IS ABOUT GROWING YOURSELF. WHEN YOU BECOME A LEADER, SUCCESS IS ABOUT GROWING OTHERS.”

Jack Welch

“WHEN IT COMES TO BUSINESS SUCCESS, IT'S ALL ABOUT PEOPLE, PEOPLE, PEOPLE.”

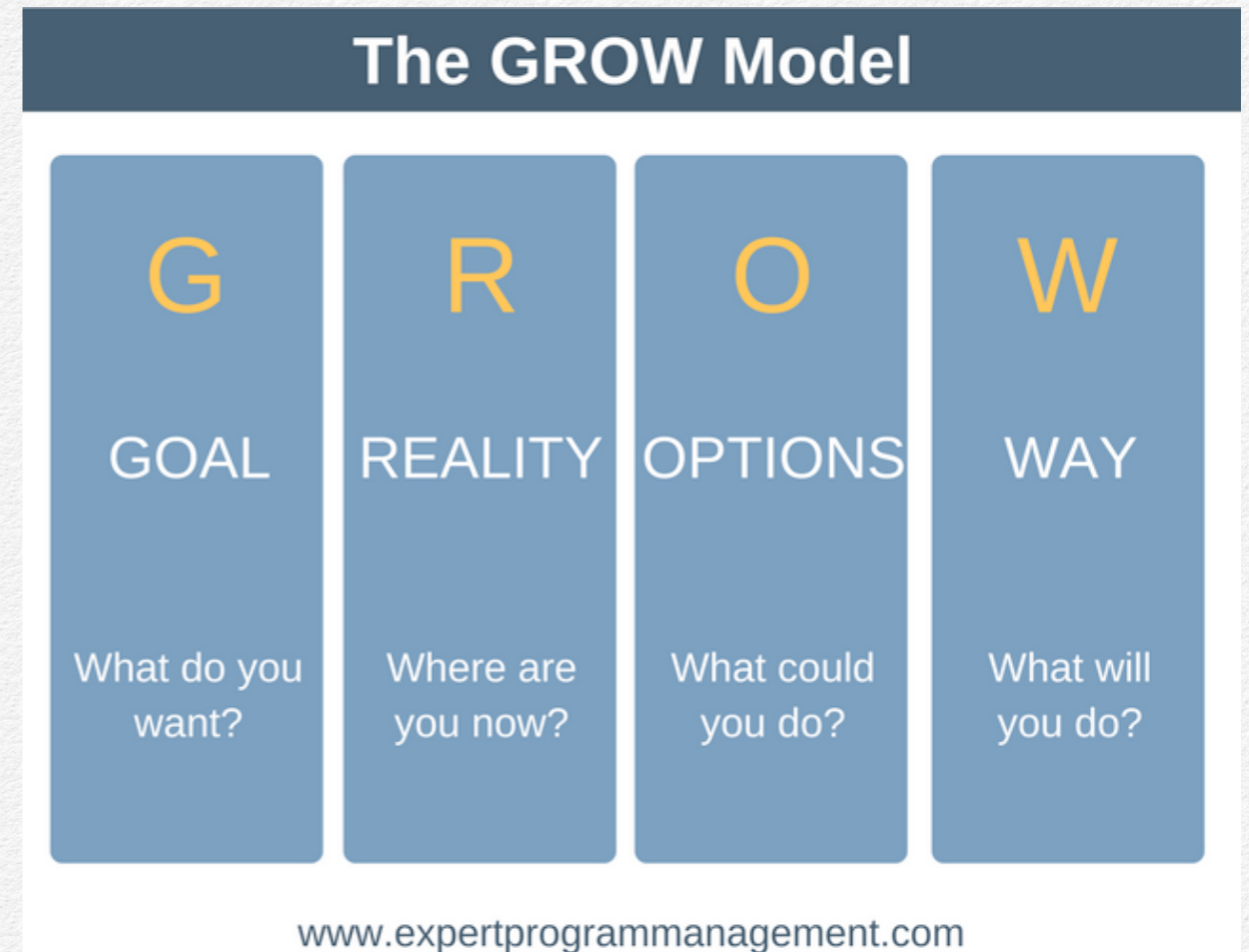
Richard Branson

We can see from these quotes and hundreds more like them, that coaching and developing your people is important. But if you are new to coaching and haven't coached people before, how do you get started?

There are actually lots of frameworks and resources to help you, but the one we're going to be looking at is called The GROW Model. The GROW Model provides a simple framework which can be implemented over a series of one to one coaching sessions, to help a team member develop particular skills or reach their potential for a given goal.

The GROW Model Overview

GROW is an acronym standing for Goal Setting, Current Reality, Options, and Way Forward.



An easy way to think about the model is to imagine you're going on a holiday. First you must decide where you would like to go (your goal) leaving from your current location (your current reality).

Once you've decided where you want go and from where, the next step is to investigate the options for the journey (Options), for example, is flying best and if so which airline is best for you? Finally, you must commit to take action (way forward) to ensure the trip happens, for example, getting time off work if neces-

sary, booking a hotel etc. Essentially, this stage is about committing to what will happen and when.

Let's examine each of the stages in more detail.

1. Goal Setting

The first stage of The GROW Model is to agree with your team member what goal they want to achieve.

It is important to help your team member select goals that are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound.

As coach you may not be overly familiar with what your team member wants to achieve. They may not even be clear of what they want themselves. Because of this, a big part of goal setting will be to ask probing questions around what they want to improve in their career or on the job performance, to guide them towards selecting a goal.

Finally, if you are also the team members boss as well as coach, you have to balance choosing goals to develop their skills, but which also contribute to near-term business performance. This means you shouldn't coach someone to leave your organization – we don't want to coach them only for them to immediately leave.

2. Current Reality

Once the goal has been selected and agreed, the next step of The Growth Model is to reality check the team member's current situation.

This step is important as without understanding exactly where they are right now, it will be difficult if not impossible to accurately assess if they have made progress.

Useful questions for you as coach to ask during this stage include:

- What action have you already taken to achieve this goal? If no action has been taken then explore why not.
- How confident are you of achieving this goal?
- Is there anything that scares you, or evokes an emotive response, about the steps which need to be taken to achieve this goal? Essentially we're trying to understand what barriers might stop them from achieving the goal, or if they have assumptions in place that are not helpful.

It can also be useful sometimes for the coach to collect colleague feedback and examples of previous performance in advance of the meeting.

3. Options

Once your team member is aware of where they want to go and fully aware of their current situation, it's time to explore all the different options at their disposal to equip them to reach their goal.

There are two parts to this stage. The first is to make a list of all options, and the second is to evaluate and rank each of the options in turn.

This conversation will be 2-way with both you and the team member identifying options to achieve the goal.

Some useful questions which can help you as a coach are:

- What are the advantages/disadvantages of that option?
- What is the biggest barrier to choosing that option?

Sometimes during this stage you'll hear negative feedback such as, "I don't have the time" or "I can't do that because of [X]". In this case, work around these issues by asking what difference it would make if that constraint didn't exist, and work with your team member to remove the constraint. Often the constraint will be imagined rather than real, but you'll need to work with the team member to help them reset their beliefs around what is and isn't possible.

4. Way Forward

In the final step of The GROW Model the way forward is agreed. At this stage your team member should have a good idea of what needs to be done but this stage is all about getting them to commit, so as they completely buy-in to both the goal and the actions necessary to achieve it, and feel confident they can indeed achieve it.

A good way to perform this step is to have the team member playback their plan to you along with the milestones along the way. There are lots of questions you as a coach can ask to aid this conversation:

- When will that be done?
- Do you think that action will really help you reach your goal?
- What support do you require?
- Who do you need to inform that you are taking these steps?
- How confident are you that you will carry out the steps we've agreed?
- If you're not 100% confident, then why not?

GROW Model Example

In this example we're going to consider John, who'd like to be promoted to a project manager.

In the first stage of coaching John we help him to set his goal by making it SMART. In this case he'd like to be a project manager within 18 months.

The second stage of coaching John is to understand his current reality. John is currently working as an engineer, but has shown good team-working skills in meetings, however, he has no formal project management training under his belt and no previous experience of project management. Meeting the goal of becoming a project manager in 18 months is going to be challenging, and John's performance in his current role is 7 out of 10 (good).

The third step of coaching John is to look at all the possibilities to move forward. Should he shadow someone? Should he get some formal project management training? Should he take on a small project within his current team? Should he improve his performance within his current role to stand a better chance of promotion? During this step the coach also helps John to understand the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Once John and his coach have examined all the options, it is time for the final step of The GROW Model where John commits to a course of action. In this case it is decided that John

will improve his performance in his current job within 12 weeks, then go on a formal project management course, then shadow someone for another 12 weeks. If John's current job performance is still at the new higher level at this point then he can start taking on projects within the team.

Key Points

Developing your team is important, and The GROW Model provides a simple 4-step process to enable to coach your team members on a one-by-one basis both improve their current performance and move closer to their longer term career objectives.

5.3 Giving Feedback Skills

A self-guided torpedo has a target it is trying to hit, its goal. The torpedo has a propulsion mechanism to push it through the water. It also has sensors, such as sonar and radar, to let it know if it is traveling in the right direction. When the torpedo receives positive feedback from its sensors it just keeps doing what it's doing. When negative feedback informs the torpedo that it is off course, this feedback will cause the rudder to adjust.

If the rudder is adjusted too much or too little then more negative feedback will again be received by the torpedo and a further rudder adjustment will be made. The torpedo ultimately reaches its goal by propelling itself forward, making course errors, and then continually correcting them.

As a leader you need to be good at both giving and receiving feedback. We can learn a lot about giving and receiving feedback from our torpedo analogy. For feedback to keep people on track:

- It must be given regularly.
- There must be a goal.
- You must have metrics in place (KPIs, 360 degree feedback) to determine if you are on or off course.

- Both positive and negative feedback is needed.

If done right, feedback can increase self-awareness, encourage self-development, and provide much needed guidance. This is why it is important to both give and receive feedback.

Just like with our torpedo, your objective when giving feedback is to either support existing behavior or help guide someone back on track by giving feedback that is constructive.

Giving feedback is a skill. The person you are giving the feedback to may disagree and try to argue with you. Focus on remaining neutral and do not allow yourself to be drawn into an argument, but equally don't shy away from the points you're trying to make. Essentially, your feedback must be balanced but accurate so as not to allow them to under-correct their behavior, but also not to push them towards overcorrect. Fortunately, there are some general principles for giving constructive feedback which can help you in this regard.

1. Start with a positive

Most people like to hear what they have done well. If we rush to criticize people we run the risk of leaving them crushed, which isn't what we want, we simply want them to make a course correction. By starting with a positive, the person receiving the feedback is more likely to take it on board, and make the necessary corrective.

This is a simplification of the classic Feedback Sandwich, so called because your feedback is between an opening and closing. With a feedback sandwich you start with a positive, then provide the area for improvement, and finally finish on a positive. You might simply finish by reiterating the positive feedback you gave at the start of the meeting.

Example:

“Your presentation pack looked great and you did a great job of delivering the presentation. However, I was disappointed to see the a key metric has dropped below the threshold value we agreed. I want this rectified immediately. But overall, great job on the presentation.”

2. Focus on the behavior not the individual

Make sure your feedback is always about the behavior you'd like to change. You are simply providing feedback on how they behaved, not providing feedback on them as a person. This can sometimes be a subtle distinction.

Effectively by doing this we are focusing on the description of what is wrong rather than the inference from what is wrong.

Example:

Notice how, “the presentation wasn't great”, is a lot less personal and therefore better than “your presentation wasn't

great.”, and also how “You're not meeting the dress code” is less effective than “Those clothes don't meet the dress code”.

4. Be Specific and clear

General feedback is not that useful when it comes to understanding exactly what has to be improved. General statements are also more likely to elicit an emotional response.

Example:

Consider the difference between, “we can't give this presentation - it's full of mistakes”, and “there are grammatical mistakes we need to resolve before we give the presentation”.

5. Own the feedback

Begin your feedback with “I” to show that both your thoughts and feelings are your own.

Example:

“I am concerned about progress on this project. It would really help if you could explain to me how you see progress so I can get your perspective.”

6. Focus on finding solutions

Think upfront about why you are giving the feedback. Its to correct-course and improve performance. It will be a far more

positive and energizing conversation if you focus on finding solutions rather than calling out issues.

Example:

Consider the difference between “if we don’t get our website compliant with the law we will be shut down”, versus, “what steps do we need to take to make the website compliant”.

7. Be Timely

It is best to address issues or give praise as close to the event as possible. Don’t let the moment pass and have the feedback come as a bit of a shock to the person receiving it.

The exception to this rule is when the situation is serious and emotional. It’s obviously more challenging to accept feedback in this circumstance, and you don’t want to risk either party saying something they later regret.

8. Follow up

If you reach any agreements, write them down and send them to the person concerned. Going forward, remember to look for opportunities to commend the person as their performance improves on the tasks in question.

A 7-Step Feedback Process

Now that we’ve covered the general guidelines, here is a simple 7-step process for giving feedback:

1. State Your Purpose

State the reason why you are giving feedback and why it is important. Where you’re initiating feedback this will prevent nervousness and guesswork by the recipient. If you’re responding to a feedback request then it enables you to clarify and agree exactly what is to be covered.

2. Describe What You Personally Observed

Stick with what you personally have observed and stick to specific events.

3. Describe How You Felt

Describe how you reacted when you witnessed the event outlined in step 2. By describing how you felt after observing the behavior you will help the other person to understand the impact that their actions are having on others.

4. Remain Silent

In this step you give the other person the opportunity to respond. If the person doesn’t respond, then ask “what’s your

view on the situation?”. As mentioned previously, the skill here is to avoid getting drawn into an argument.

5. Focus on Solutions

Move away from the problem quickly to focus on finding a solution. You may already have a solution in mind, but it can be productive for both of you to work collaboratively to generate a solution to the problem.

6. Summarize

Now that you’ve identified the solution, summarize the action points you have agreed, and identify when you will next meet to discuss progress towards rectifying the problem. There’s no need to summarize the problem again, just focus on the solution. Agree that you will email the action steps to the person after the meeting. Summarizing allows you to ensure that there are no misunderstandings before both of you leave the room.

7. Express Confidence

End the meeting by reassuring the recipient that you have confidence in their ability to implement the action steps and rectify the problem. If appropriate, let them know your door is open should they encounter any problems.

Yellow Flags

Sometimes, after providing feedback here won’t be the substantive material improvement in behavior you were expecting. Here are some options for how to handle these yellow flag situations:

- Use what you’ll learned from the chapter on Delegation Skills to provide simpler instructions and remove some autonomy from the recipient.
- Agree to check-in on progress more frequently.
- Get a peer to help the recipient or to model behavior and show how its done.

5.4 Influencing Skills

During our professional lives there are all kinds of people we may need to influence: our team, our colleagues, and our superiors, amongst others. Here is a simple 3 step process you can use to influence people (adapted from the book *How to Lead* by Jo Owen), which can equally be applied to selling:

1. Agree the problem/opportunity.
2. Outline a solution.
3. Gain explicit agreement on the way forward.

Let's examine each of these steps in more detail:

1. Agree the problem/opportunity

Different people and parts of the organization see the world through different perspectives. The challenge for the leader and influencer is to find the common ground behind which these different people can unite. We have two levers at our disposal we can use to assist us:

Lever 1: Fear and Greed (F&G)

Fear is a powerful motivator. Can you position your proposal so it prevents or de-risks something from happening, for example, a fine for non-compliance to a standard? An alternative is to use greed: what is in it for the organization?

Lever 2: What's in it for Me (WIFM)

Can you answer the question "What's in it for me?" from the point of view of the people you are trying to influence? Will they look good or have their status increased in some way?

2. Outline the Solution

Once you have agreed the problem/opportunity, you need to outline your solution. Here are some key elements you should consider before outlining your solution to increase likelihood of acceptance:

Pre-empt objections

Think about the objections people are likely to have in advance, and address them in your solution. For difficult or problem individuals, you may wish to speak to them one-to-one before speaking with the group to gain their support, so the meeting is not disrupted by their objections.

Reduce the risk

This is about making it easy for them to say yes. Perhaps you could suggest running a pilot before full rollout, or identify some early wins to convince everyone your idea is the right one to pursue.

Overcome idleness

This is another form of making it easy for them to say yes, but is concerned with making it easy for them (as opposed to the business) to say yes. Perhaps all you need is their approval and you will do the donkey work.

3. Gain explicit agreement on the way forward

There are many different ways to close. When thinking about how to close try thinking of yourself as a lawyer, and only ask a question you already know the answer to.

There are numerous different ways to close, including:

- The next steps close: here you focus your proposal on the next steps you intend to take and ask for approval to get on with those next steps. It's important to note you're not asking if they have agreed with everything you've shown them, just the next steps.

- The “can you live with it?” close: here you ask if people can live with your proposal. This close is giving people permission of object to your proposal only if they have a really strong objection to it.
- The alternative close: here you give people a choice. Would they prefer option 1 or option 2? This seems reasonable as you've giving them choice, but in actual fact you're not giving them that much choice. You're not asking if they would prefer no option at all.

The 4 P's of Persuasion

In addition to the steps above, there are also 4 P's to keep in mind if you want to build a persuasive argument. These P's are based around understanding and improving how you are perceived by others, rather than what is motivating others. So here they are, the 4 P's of Persuasion:

- Power
- Positioning
- Performance
- Politeness

Let's examine each of them in turn...

1. Power

By power we mean that when it comes to persuading people to do things for you, then the more power you are perceived to have, the more likely you are to be able to persuade those people. The key point here is that it is perceived power that is important, not actual power, even though they are often the same. As a simple example, it is easy to see how your ideas might be more readily accepted if you're perceived to be a senior level executive as opposed to a lower level executive.

2. Positioning

Positioning refers to how people talk or think about you when you're not there, and is different from power. Are you perceived as someone with the best interests of the company or your customers in mind? Are you dressed in a way that is appropriate for what you're asking? Each of these things can affect your positioning. As a simple example, it is easy to consider how your ideas might be perceived more positively if you are known as an up and coming executive with senior allies, as opposed to a new hire.

3. Performance

Performance is about how you perform each and every day. This refers to the competency level you display each and every day in your domain. For example, if you are a person who is

widely respected within the organization as always delivering what you say you will when you say you will, then you will obviously have far greater persuasive powers than if you have a poor reputation within the organization.

4. Politeness

The final factor is politeness. When you treat people right they are less likely to be obstructive to your ideas. If you treat people right and connect with them personally, then they may even be willing to go out of their way to help you accomplish what you want.

Summary

In addition to building your influencing skills, it is just as important to manage people's perceptions of you as a person and leader. The 4 P's can help you address the different influencing factors people will use when forming an opinion of you.

Final Words from Denis

Congratulations! You've reach the end of the guide. By implementing the new tools and skills you have learned in this book you should soon start to see improvements in your leadership capabilities.

If you get stuck

Just give me a shout! I can be reached by email at denis@expertprogrammanagement.com or via Twitter. My handle is @epmgmt.

I'm passionate about leadership. But more than that, I'm passionate about helping others to improve the skills they need to make progress in their careers. Don't be afraid to reach out to me if you need help.

Keep going

Everything that's worth chasing takes time to achieve and attain. Keep at it, and keep trying to implement what you've learned in this book, and a year from now you'll be glad you did.

Thank you!

Hopefully you enjoyed reading this book and are looking forward to trying out some of the tips. I enjoyed putting it together and anticipate making incremental improvements over time.

If you've got a moment I'd love to hear what you thought about this book, what you liked, didn't or would like to see improved. Please drop me an email at denis@expertprogrammanagement.com and let me know your thoughts.