

What is a leader?

A leader cannot lead without followers or without a mission. To get both, successful leader has key skills in two defined areas— the interpersonal and task orientation. For the best possible outcome, for the organization as a whole, both areas need to be attended to religiously to obtain motivated, empowered and productive personnel while delivering a high quality, cutting edge product with efficacy. The Team Management approach, as outlined in The Leadership Grid (Blake and McCauley), is a good exemplar of this kind of systemic attention. From a task orientation viewpoint, if the leader is able to articulate a cohesive vision congruent with the values and beliefs of the organization, he will then promote a democratic community of practice in which all members have a stake in the development of a strategic and effective action plan to put the vision into play with a resultant end product in which all can stake a claim. From a personnel lens, as this is happening, a facile leader will characteristically demonstrate a thorough understanding of the knowledge base needed at his level, sponsor communication of ideas and information both vertically and horizontally throughout the total organization, be responsive and proactive to the subtle shifts in the climate of the organization in order to motivate and empower those under his care to reach the best of their potential while at the same time exhibiting growth and positive developments in himself because of the relationships he has formed in his organization. A leader must be perceived with respect not only for his knowledge but also because of his trustworthiness, honor, flexibility, and belief in the people below him and in the process itself. He is only as good as those he inspires, the quality of what he produces, and the breadth and cut of his suit of personal integrity.

Explain McGregor's Theory X -Theory Y hypothesis.

The basis of this particular theory posits two polar assumptions, by management, of what motivates people. On one side is Theory X, which assumes that people would prefer to have their work environment clearly delineated by management, so that there is little risk and no responsibility for them outside their designated tasks. Work is inherently not pleasurable in itself and both punishments and rewards are delivered externally. Theory Y, on the other hand, assumes that the need to work and feel productive is an internal human drive. People will be self-directed and work to a higher level of creative production if motivated to do so without the needs for as many external controls as affirmation is derived from internal satisfaction on a personal level. These two differing assumptions of human work attitudes are closely tied into Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, with Theory X answering the basic needs at the bottom of the pyramid and Theory Y closer to the middle and the top. The organizations who have managers with a predominate X or Y stance are easily identifiable by the amount of amount and quality, of supervision they give to both personnel as well as to the productivity and creativity each worker exhibits, with Theory Y tending to bring forth the better in most cases.

A Case Study of A Leader For X-tra Credit

Larry Paige, the thirty six year old co-founder of Google, is a perfect example of a Theory Y leader. Innovative and brilliant, he had an ah-ha moment while on a search for his doctoral dissertation topic at Stanford, to aggregate key words in web page links as a way to cull pages of similar information together. With Sergey Brin, a friend in the doctoral program, Google was established in 1998. Google is highly competitive in their hiring practices. They hire for specific needs which match their stated vision of being the best search agent they can be. Paige and Brin have hired proven, grizzled veterans from Sun Systems and Microsoft to supplement their business systems management; brilliant mid-age C.E.Os from small upstart computing companies; and fresh college grads who all have the best skill set match. To keep people of this quality, the incentives must be both

material and but also internally intrinsic. The concept of making work “hard fun” is fully demonstrated by this quote from their corporate web site of the *10 Things Google Has Found To Be True* “Google's founders have often stated that the company is not serious about anything but search. They built a company around the idea that work should be challenging and the challenge should be fun. To that end, Google's culture is unlike any in corporate America, and it's not because of the ubiquitous lava lamps and large rubber balls, or the fact that the company's chef used to cook for the Grateful Dead. In the same way Google puts users first when it comes to our online service, Google Inc. puts employees first when it comes to daily life in our Googleplex headquarters. There is an emphasis on team achievements and pride in individual accomplishments that contribute to the company's overall success. Ideas are traded, tested and put into practice with an alacrity that can be dizzying. Meetings that would take hours elsewhere are frequently little more than a conversation in line for lunch and few walls separate those who write the code from those who write the checks. This highly communicative environment fosters a productivity and camaraderie fueled by the realization that millions of people rely on Google results. Give the proper tools to a group of people who like to make a difference, and they will.” (Google) If one analyses the text of the quote, it is obvious that under Paige and Brin’s vision plan, both the task and people oriented elements are attended to in a way that fits the needs of the people and the organization well. Leadership, as I described in the first part of this paper, is evident by the type of company Google is and the innovations that it continues to institute anywhere from Google Docs, to the digitizing of ancient text in libraries for both preservation and whole world access, to the flexible maternity and paternity leave options and on-site Montessori trained day care options.

Works Cited:

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