

More Than Management: Cultivating a Leadership Environment

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This article appeared in Corporate Health Group's Winter 2002 Newsletter.

There's no such thing as watching what goes on in your organization from an ivory tower these days. If you're in a management role and or working with others, you have a responsibility to be a leader. As someone who works with employers, physicians and other customers, you're accountable for positioning your organization in its best light.

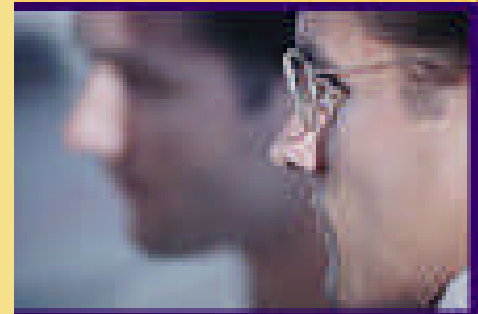
Likely, you are charged with making sure you contribute in meeting the organization's immediate and long-term objectives, all the while keeping your focus on your customers.

Whew! It's not an easy task, to say the least. As we make our way into the New Year, this is a prime time to assess your personal leadership skill set and determine how you can make improvements. You've also got a great opportunity to spread your leadership skills to your team and initiate a strategy that can energize and inspire the organization.

Today's challenge: Take a closer look at how you can implement these principles into your organization. What areas are you already strong in, and which ones could use some improvement?

Consider these elements as part of that strategy:

Listen first. Don't assume that you know what the other person will say. Many of us are great talkers but only marginal listeners. Encourage input from others. And if you ask for feedback, you need to put it to use or tell your source why you didn't.



Be a Good Leader and the Rest Will Follow

In Bob Boylan's book, "Get Everyone in Your Boat Rowing in the Same Direction", the author offers five principles to motivate and empower the people around you:

Decide "What's Important Around Here?"

Ask, "Where Are We Headed?"

Determine Your Credo – "What We Stand For!"

Understand the Need to Fall in

Love with Risk

Learn to Motivate People

Lead by example. If you're charged with getting a task done and have a hard time recruiting people to support your cause, keep focused. Above all, do what you believe is right and you'll find that others will respect you for it.

Admit mistakes. Moreover, do it quickly. One of the challenges of today's fast-paced world is that there's not enough time to do the research and be as thorough as we want. Make a decision when you need to, evaluate its correctness, admit if it wasn't the best choice, then correct it and move on.

Be organized. Meet your deadlines and be prepared for meetings, both formal and informal. Prepare what you'll say ahead of time and back up your thoughts with documentation.

Create a knowledge base. Use objectivity to make your decisions. Don't let your emotions get in the way of good decision making. Within your department, realize that others look to those with solid information. Share your knowledge graciously.

Mentor others. Within many departments, there's a hierarchy and sometimes a need to make the rookie "learn the hard way." Let that go and do everything you can to create a smooth transition for new staff. Let them shorten their learning cycle and minimize their anxiety by offering your support.



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