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Welcome to Foundations of Everyday Leadership!

Module 1

Lesson 1-1 Concepts of Everyday Leadership

Lesson 1-1.1 The Challenge of Everyday Leadership

Welcome to the first lesson in my course, the head and the heart of everyday leadership. Today we will take the first step in the journey, to learning how to become a more effective leader. Today's business environment is what I call a fast environment. In a fast environment, things happen very quickly. In particular, your organization might find itself encountering threats and opportunities. And to be a successful organization, you have to react quickly and effectively to those threats and opportunities. That's what it means to be fast. Technology is really changing the extent to which being an effective organization is about being a fast organization. Technology has effectively shrunk the world, which means yours competitors can come from anywhere. I grew up in Toledo, Ohio in the late 60's. And when I was growing up in Toledo, 45 minutes north of me was the center of the American automotive industry, and for a long time the American automotive industry thought they had a monopoly. They thought they were the only

people who would ever sell cars in the United States. Well, in the late 60's and early 70's a few Japanese companies, particularly Toyota and Honda, started to make inroads into the American automotive market. And unfortunately, Detroit did not react very quickly. If you want to be a successful organization, if you want to be a successful industry, you have to be able to react quickly in a fast business environment.

THE CHALLENGE OF EVERYDAY LEADERSHIP

- Today's business environment is **fast**
  - Technology means global connectivity, which means suppliers, customers, and workers could be anywhere
  - Technology means there's **speed** in this connectivity
- Success comes from **agility** (quick response to threats, opportunities)
- Agility is a **social** process
  - The **best managers** achieve agility via influence that gets people working together effectively (**leadership**)

Technology is not only changing the breadth of competition, it's also changing the speed of competition. Because technology has made it faster to connect to people anywhere in the world and that can bring customers but also competitors from almost anywhere into your backyard very, very quickly. So that means to be a successful organization you have to be an agile organization. That means you have to be quick to respond to those threats and opportunities. And agility is, at the end of the day, a social process. That means agility comes from managing the work force more effectively. Taking advantage of the resource represented by the people around you. The best managers achieve agility by influence that gets people working together effectively. And we can think of that as a very basic definition for the idea of leadership. Leadership is about getting people to work together more effectively.
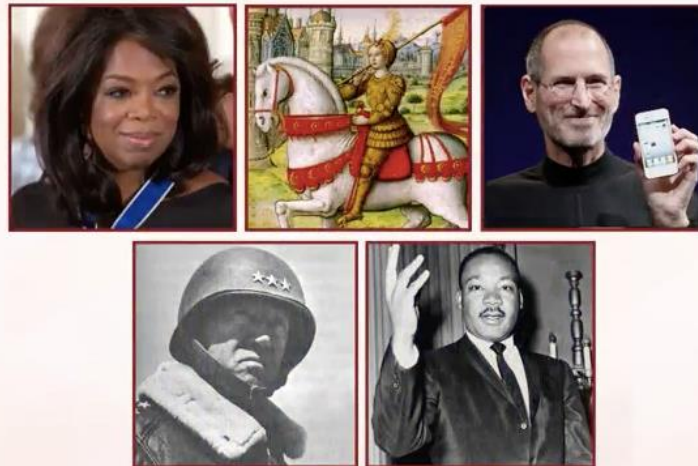
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IMAGES OF LEADERSHIP

Resources:
Lloyd, John. (2011).

Here are some leaders that you're probably familiar with in today's worlds. Oprah Winfrey, Joan of Arc, Steven Jobs, Martin Luther King, General George Patton. All of these are individuals who have displayed exceptional leadership, and they come from a variety of different industries, a variety of different walks of life. And I think, even more importantly, some have exhibited exceptional leadership in the context of a very strong authority position. So George Patton was very important in the US army. Steven Jobs was one of the heads of one of the most important computer companies in the United States. But some of these other leaders have experienced and have exhibited leadership without having authority to go with it.

MANAGERS VS. LEADERS

MANAGERS

- Managers rely on **authority** for implementation.
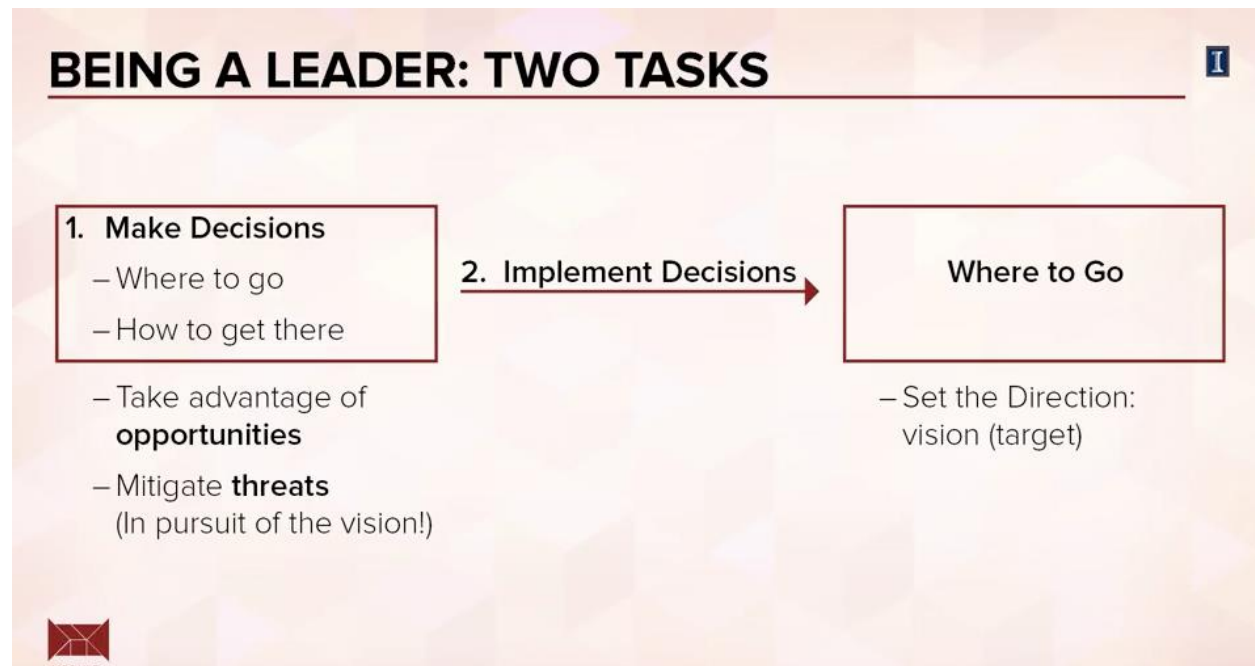 - **Coercion** (When you have to do what the boss says!)

LEADERS

- Leaders rely on **persuasion** for implementation. (You're better off if you do go along!)
  - **Transformational** (Achieving the goal is the reward)
  - **Transactional** (Reward in exchange for achieving the goal)

Leaders get followers to **want** to do what the leader needs them to do. (Dwight Eisenhower)

And that really brings up a very important distinction, the distinction between leaders and managers. Managers rely on their authority to implement, to get things done. In effect, they can implicitly coerce the people around them. When authority figures ask you to do things, you often do them because if you don't, you may lose your position. Leaders on the other hand, rely on persuasion implement. They try to convince you that what they want you to do is something that will make you better off, is something that you should want to do anyway. We can think of a couple of different ways in which leaders accomplish this. Transformational leaders achieve this by making the goal the reward. So whatever goal they are trying to achieve, they make you feel that, that's in your best interest for you to achieve it as well. Transactional leaders, on the other hand, reward you in exchange for achieving the goal that they are intending. But at the end of the day, what this means is that leaders get followers to want to do what the leader needs them to do. And that's really the essence of good leadership. You don't have to rely on authority, you get people to want to do the things that you need them to do.

Module 1

Lesson 1-1.2 The Tasks of Everyday Leadership

BEING A LEADER: TWO TASKS

1. **Make Decisions**
   - Where to go
   - How to get there

   - Take advantage of **opportunities**
   - Mitigate **threats**
     (In pursuit of the vision!)

2. **Implement Decisions**

Where to Go

   - Set the Direction:
     vision (target)

We can think of leadership as really involving two critical tasks. One of the critical tasks is to make decisions. Leaders have to make decisions about where to go, and they have to make decisions about how to get there. The other critical task for leaders is to implement those decisions. Where they want to go is something that we might think of as the vision of the organization. We'll have more to say about that later, but for the moment let's just think about the fact that even setting the target, setting the direction. Identifying the vision is actually a decision that has to made as well. So for leaders there are really two things they need to do, they need to make decisions and they need to implement those decisions.

INCLUSIVENESS

- Getting others involved in a leader's decision making
  - Participative: opening up channels of communication
- Offers two kinds of benefits
  - Information benefits (the head)
  - Motivation benefits (the heart)

Turns out that one of the biggest levers that leaders have is inclusiveness. Inclusiveness is about getting other people involved in a leader's decision making. We can think about this as participation, opening up the channels of communication, asking other people to get involved in the decisions that leaders have to make. This immediately offers two kinds of benefits, there are information benefits and there are motivation benefits. Information benefits, are where I think of as the head of effective leadership. Motivation benefits are what I think of as the heart of effective leadership. And remember inclusiveness doesn't need to be everyone, so if you want to be inclusive that doesn't mean you have to ask everyone in your organization to get involved. One of the best ways of being inclusive, one of the most manageable ways of being inclusive is what's known as representative inclusiveness. Representative inclusiveness means getting a subset of individuals involved. People who reflect or represent everyone in a way that allows the leader to get the benefits of talking to everyone without necessarily having to talk to everyone.

INCLUSIVENESS: DECISION-MAKING BENEFITS

- Managers often overestimate their ability to make high-quality decisions without the input of others
- Or perhaps they fear it is their job to make decisions without help
  - To ask others for assistance (information!) feels like a sign of weakness?

So the decision-making benefits or inclusiveness are that managers often overestimate their ability to make high quality decisions without the input of others. Or in some cases perhaps they fear it is their job to make these decisions without help. In other words to ask others for assistance might be perceived as a sign of weakness. But inclusiveness provides u, more information and more information means better decisions.
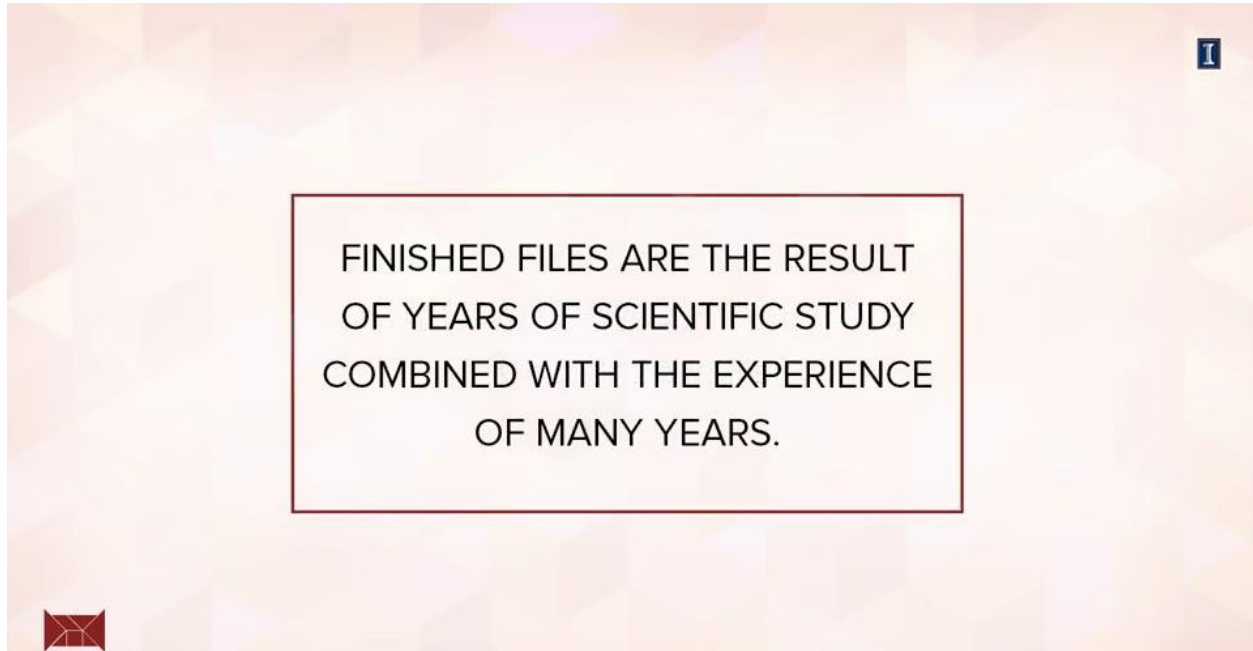
FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT
OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY
COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE
OF MANY YEARS.

Let's do a quick demonstration to show why this is true, this is a little task I call counting the F's. What I'm going to do is I'm going to show you a very short sentence, I'm going to ask you to read the sentence, and count in the sentence the number of occurrences of the letter F. Ready, go. Okay, how many Fs did you find in that sentence? It turns out that when we do this with large groups of people, the numbers are pretty broad. They vary from people who find 2 Fs all the way up to people who find 6 Fs and everything in between. So for example, most people when they read this sentence immediately notice the two Fs in the two words finished files. Some people also manage to detect that there is an F buried in the word scientific. And the people who are really on the ball may actually notice that there are three Fs that are cleverly disguised in the words of. Yes, so all together, there are 6 Fs in this sentence. But it turns out that when you ask people to read this sentence and look for the f's most people can't find six f's. Now why is this important? It's important because it demonstrates a very important principle and that principle is that everyone sees the world a little bit differently.

DECISION BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVENESS

- We all see the world a bit differently
- Everyone brings to the table a unique constellation of experience, expertise, and perspective
- **Inclusiveness** – Asking others to participate in making decisions provides the opportunity for leaders to make **more informed decisions**
  - More **information** means more perspectives, more creativity, and makes for better decisions!

We all bring to the table our own unique constellation of experience and perspective. And that means we can all look at the same thing, in this case the sentence, and see very different things. Turns out those differences are a very important organizational resource. In fact, they are a critical organizational resource. Because what that means is when somebody is making a decision, if they can tap in to other people's experience and expertise and perspective. They can make a much better decision than they would have been able to make on their own. Inclusiveness is simply about asking others to participate in the decision making process. And that provides a leader the opportunity to make more informed decisions, because that leader's going to have more information from more perspectives. And that means more creativity, and that means better decisions at the end of the day.

IMPLEMENTATION BENEFITS OF INCLUSIVENESS

- The quality of a decision is limited by your ability to implement it
  - The success of implementation is hostage to the enthusiasm and knowledge of the implementers
  - Implementers need to **know** what to do (information)
  - Implementers have to **want** to do it (motivation)
- Inclusiveness increases implementers' understanding of
  - **Why** a decision has been made
  - **How** to implement it successfully
- **Ownership** (via participation) breeds enthusiasm and support
  - Particularly when it allows the implementers to shape a decision to reflect their concerns at implementation

Beyond those informational benefits, though, there are also motivational benefits and some informational benefits as well at the level of implementation. We need to keep in mind that the quality of a decision is always limited by your ability to implement. No matter how good a decision you make, if the targets of implementation will not implement your decision. You might as well have not made a decision at all because your decision is not going to solve the problem.

It's not going to achieve the goal that you set out to achieve, and remember that the success of implementation is always hostage to the enthusiasm and knowledge of the implementors. Implementors need to know what to do, that´s obviously a head issue, an information issue. But the implementors also have to want to do it, that´s a motivational issue. So inclusiveness increases implementors understanding, when we get them involved in a decision, their more likely to understand what the goal is. They're more likely to understand why a decision has been made, and they're more likely to understand their role and how to implement that decision successfully. But simply beyond those informational benefits are the motivational benefits of getting people involved in decision making. Ownership by a participation in the decision making process breeds enthusiasm and supportive implementors at implementation. Particularly when we allow the implementors to shape a decision that is when we invite people in and ask them to participate in the decision making process then that decision

is more likely to reflect their concerns. And they are more likely to support that decision during the implementation process.

Module 1

Lesson 1-1.3 The Levers of Everyday Leadership

SPIRAL OF DESPAIR

1. **Hope**   energized, engaged, committed
   - want to belong
   - want to contribute

2. **Despair**   frustrated, confused
   - feeling forgotten
   - feeling powerless

3. **Apathy**   indifferent, alienated
   - "tuned out"
   - drugs/alcohol
   - counterproductive games, accidents

4. **Anger**   rejected, worthless, taken for granted
   - stress, turnover, absenteeism, sabotage

What happens if we don't allow people to participate? Well, we find that people often fall victim to what I call the spiral of despair. The spiral of despair happens when people are not involved in decision making and over time become a little alienated from the organization. Most people when you hire them, when they start a job, they start out feeling energized and engaged and committed. They want to belong. They want to contribute. They're hopeful about their role in the organization. However, if they're not really included in the process, if they don't really feel like they're contributing. If they don't really feel like they belong, if they don't really feel a strong sense of partnership in the process, they can become frustrated, confused, forgotten, even feel a little bit powerless. And eventually, of course, this can lead to apathy. When people start feeling indifferent or alienated, they may tune out. In real organizations sometimes when people reach the level of apathy, they may resort to drugs or alcohol. Or even counterproductive games or accidents. In fact, if this goes far enough, people can become subject to feelings of worthlessness, they can feel taken for granted. They may feel rejected. And this can result in things like stress and turnover and absenteeism.

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The key here is that participation in decision making, letting people feel involved in the process. Not only gives a leader more information and helps build a sense of ownership, it also prevents alienation. It helps people stay engaged and that engagement can be critical. Let me give you an example from my own life history.
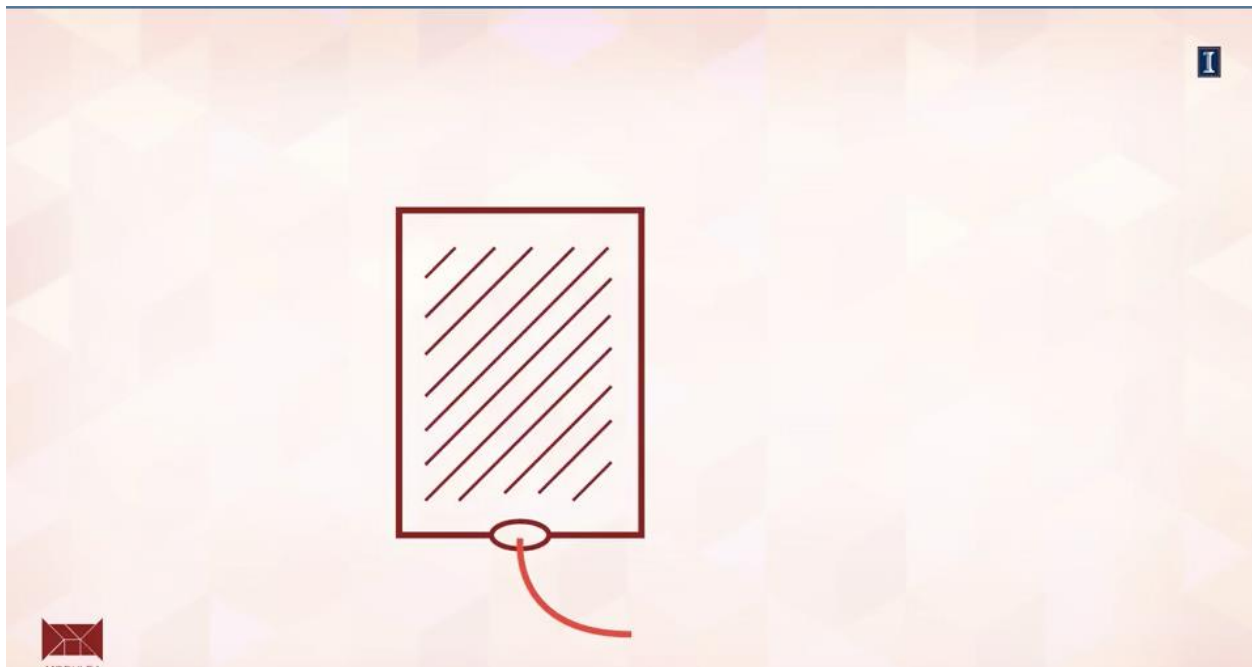
One summer I worked in a factory, and in this factory my job was to help build doors. The way these doors worked was we started out with four pieces of wood that formed the frame of the door. Then over these four pieces of wood we overlaid two pieces of aluminum that could be pressed into all sorts of interesting shapes and wood grain, whatever, to make the door a little prettier. And then there was a hole in the bottom piece of wood and we would stick a foam gun in the hole and foam this in with fire-retardant foam that was very light but fire-retardant. If you knocked on the door it sounded just like wood, it looked just like wood but it was a lot lighter and a lot more effective as a door. want to guess what my job on this assembly line was? My job was to drill the hole in the bottom.

And at one point I figured out I could drill up to 1600 of these holes a day. This was a mind-numbing job. The first day that I took this job I had actually re-engineered my job by lunchtime and that first afternoon, I was already bored out of my mind and started to slide down that spiral of despair. Now, the way this worked for me is that I fell into that category of starting to play counter productive games to make the job more interesting. So one of the things that I would do is I was at a very large drill press and I would put pieces of wood into the drill press and they would punch the hole in the piece of wood. I would have one pallet of wood on my right that was filled with wood. And I would take pieces out of the pallet on the right, put it into the drill press.

When it punched the hole I would clean the hole up a little bit, and then I would put the piece over on the pallet on the left. When the pallet on the left was filled up, some guy with a forklift would come by and replace it with an empty pallet. When I ran out of wood in the pallet on the right, the guy with the forklift would come by and take that pallet away and replace it with a new pallet of wood. Well, one of the games I used to play is I tried to make it look like I had plenty of wood left where I was actually running out of wood. And the way I did this was working from the back of the pile. So when the fork lift guy came by, he would leave me alone thinking I had plenty of wood then I would finish up all the wood I had left very quickly, and go hide somewhere else in the plant.

When they found me I would always say that I was looking for the guy with the fork lift because I had run out of wood. And that worked pretty well for a while until one afternoon when they caught a couple of us. We were out back of the plant trying to shoot pigeons off the water tower with a pneumatic nail gun. And after that they kept pretty close eye on me to make sure I didn't wander very far away. The point of telling you this story is to drive home the idea that people want to feel like they have the opportunity to contribute. They want to feel like their human element, their intellectual resource is being utilized, not just their labor. And to the extent that that is not being utilized often it surfaces in other unproductive ways. And so a part of a leader's job is not only to get people involved in order to create a sense of ownership and to get better information and to keep people informed about their role in implementation. But it's also to keep people from slipping down that spiral of despair and starting to feel like they're not engaged in what the organization has to offer them.
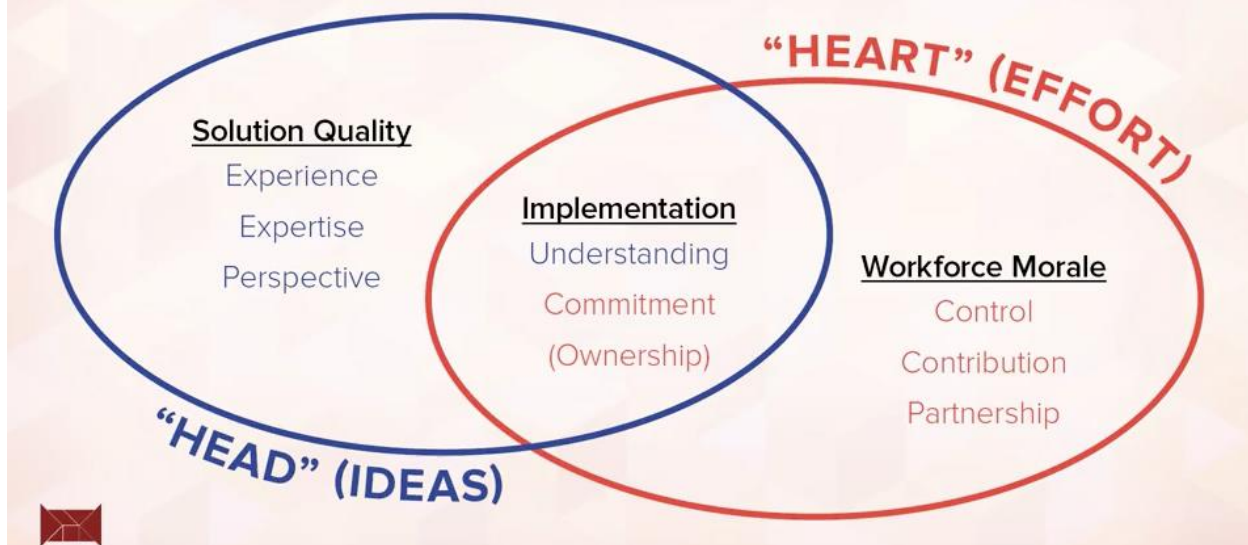
So we can think about the benefits of inclusiveness in two of these big circles, the head circle and the heart circle. The head is really about two things, it's about solution quality. When we include people in the decision making process, we tap into their experience, expertise and perspectives. That allows us to make higher quality decisions. At the level of implementation when people participate, they get information which gives them better understanding of what their role during implementation is. And what, whatever we're deciding about is intending to achieve. Those are both informational benefits. At the heart level, we have implementation benefits as well.

When people participate in the decision making process, they feel more committed to the decision, they feel more ownership of the decision. That's going to make them more supportive of implementing that decision. But in more general sense, participation also creates a stronger sense of control, contribution and partnership. It increases workforce morale, and that means that people are more likely to feel engaged in the organization as well as engaged in the decisions that we make.

REPRESENTATIVE INCLUSIVENESS

- Having **everyone** participate may be too time consuming
- Or perhaps just impractical if the targets of implementation are geographically dispersed
- But you can get many of the benefits of inclusiveness by getting a few representatives of the targets of implementation involved
  - Particularly if representatives are carefully chosen!

Once again, representative inclusiveness is a very important piece of this. Because getting everybody to participate in the decision may be impractical. So what we want to do is make sure that we get some people to participate, even if it´s impractical, or too time consuming for everyone to participate. You can often get many of the benefits of inclusiveness just by getting a subset, a few representatives of the targets of implementation involved.

Particularly if they are carefully chosen. Just to give you an example of this, one of the mechanisms that I use in a lot of my course is something called the course committee. And the way the course committee works is usually during the second session of my classes I ask the class to elect a group of representatives which will be the voice of the class during my course. So they elect 2, 3, 4 people, whatever they're comfortable with. And the idea is these people become the spokesperson for the class. They talk to me about what's going on in the class. And I usually meet with them once a week, or once every two weeks, to find out how the class is going. To make sure that the class stays on track to be a good learning experience for the students and a good teaching experience for me. Now why do I use course committees? Well, they are a form of inclusiveness. But they are form of representative inclusiveness. I could talk to all of my students, but some of my classes are 40, 50, 60 students. That's a lot of people and that would take a lot of time.

So what I do instead is I use that representative group, the course committee, as a funnel to create the benefits of inclusiveness, without necessarily begging some of the logistical nightmares of having everyone participate.

REPRESENTATIVE INCLUSIVENESS

The course committee
- In all the classes I have taught in the last 20 years, I always ask the students to elect a committee of 2-4 students to act as the "mouthpiece" of the class, to help me make decisions about the course

Information (head) benefits
- I learn about problems quickly because there is a process in place to share information
- I learn about the students' issues and they learn about mine
- The students help me create solutions that satisfy both of us
- The students understand why things are changing because
  - Their representatives raised the problem
  - Their representatives helped create the solution

So at the informational level, I learn about the problems, and quickly, because there is a process in place to share information. If something comes up, the students tell me about it right away. I learn about the students' issues They learn about mine so they start to understand more about the constraints professors are under as well. The students also have the opportunity to help me find solutions to problems, which are not only good solutions for me, but also solutions for them. And they understand why changes are being made, because their representatives have raised the process. They can give that information back to the class and everybody learns a little bit more about why things need to be the way that they are.

REPRESENTATIVE INCLUSIVENESS

Motivation (heart) benefits
- The students own (are on board with) the solution because their representatives helped create the solution (which means it's their solution)

If done well, representative inclusiveness gains the informational and motivational benefits of participation in decision making without begging the logistical problems of everyone participating

At the motivational level, of course, the students also own the solutions to the problems. Because their representatives raise these issues with me and they participate in the resolution of these problems. Even the students who don't themselves participate in those discussions, know that their voice has been represented. And they are much more likely to support implementation of whatever changes I make in my courses. Because they know their representatives have had an important voice in coming up with the decision that solves the problem. So if done well, representative inclusiveness gains the informational and motivational benefits of participation in decision making, without begging some of the logistical problems of having everyone participating.

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CONCLUSIONS

- Leadership is about
  - Making decisions
  - Implementing decisions
- Two key levers
  - Information (the head of leadership)
  - Motivation (the heart of leadership)
- Inclusiveness helps!
  - Yields better (bilateral!) information
  - Yields better motivation
- Make inclusiveness more manageable by making it representative

So a few conclusions to wrap up our first lesson today. Leadership is about making decisions and implementing decisions. Leaders have to make decisions to address the threats and opportunities that face their organizations. And they have to implement those decisions to make sure that the decisions actually solve the problems and achieve the goals that the leader has set for their organization. The two biggest levers that individuals have are the management of information, that's the head of leadership, and the management of motivation, that's the heart of leadership. Inclusiveness is really the key to both because inclusiveness yields better information. When we are inclusive, when we allow people to participate in the decision making process, we not only get information, we can also share information. So both sides learn a little bit more and that means better decisions get made. But inclusiveness also gives us a head start on implementation because it yields better motivation. Inclusiveness helps foster a sense of ownership, and that creates a very strong foundation for effective implementation. Making inclusiveness more manageable by making it representative is one of the ways to make sure we can achieve inclusiveness without necessarily begging the logistic nightmares of trying to get everyone involved in the decision making process. By using representatives we can get the benefits, both motivationally and informationally, of getting people to participate without necessarily doing something which makes the process less manageable. That's it for today and I will look forward to talking to you again soon.

Module 1

Lesson 1-1.4 [Leading in a Virtual World]

Today we're going to to talk about leading in a virtual world. And to help us with that discussion, I've invited one of our local experts to come speak with us. Here today we have Ravi Gajendran, who is a professor in the Department of Business Administration at the College of Business. Ravi, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself and how you got interested in the whole topic of leading in a virtual world? >> I have a PhD in Organizational Behavior from Pennsylvania State University, and I got interested in this topic when I was working in Singapore for Procter and Gamble. So I was working in a location where we were in the regional headquarters and we had people and teams all over, from India to Australia and everything in between. And we had to manage across these distances.

And I was often in telecoms where there were people from different countries trying to do something very complex, execute something very complex, marketing plans, at times. And having to do this with a combination of text, instant messenger, telecoms and occasional face to face meetings. And they were trying to, perhaps, do the same marketing plan, have the same marketing plans implemented across seven different countries, and having to manage this complexity, especially over distance, with people from different cultures, was a very unique experience.

And that got me thinking about how can you lead effectively in a world where people are no longer in the same room, or in the same office and yet have to accomplish incredibly complex activities, working together in an interdependent way. And that got me thinking about leading in a virtual world. How do you do this? What are the challenges? What happens when people are no longer together? How do you be effective in this context? >> So why is leading in a virtual world such an important topic today? >> Increasingly, because of advances in communication technology. Laptops are very affordable, you can access the internet anywhere, and the kind of work many of us are doing can be done anytime, anyplace, we don't have to come to the office. What this means is that it's given rise to an incredible variety of work arrangements. Let me just talk about two. Work from home or telecommuting, where people who would otherwise work together in a co-located fashion decide to spend the day, or maybe more a week working at home or maybe in a cafe instead of coming into office.

Another arrangement is virtual teams, globally distributed teams, where people who are in different places are brought together to work on the same team precisely because the experts on a given topic may not always be in the same office as you. They may be in China, they may be in India, they may be in California. They may be in different locations, and instead of bringing experts to one location, you have experts come in virtually and try to get work done. And often this work is complex, rich work. It's not modular work, it's not work that has been piecemeal distributed to people in different places. This is complex collaborative, inter-dependent work. And understanding how to manage this new work arrangement is really critical for all of us. >> What are the biggest concerns a leader should have about managing or leading in a virtual world?

So I think there are two broad challenges, one is an informational challenge, because you're working with people across distance and often across time zones. What this means is you may not be able to communicate in a synchronous fashion. You may be using email or some kind of text-based communication to coordinate pretty complex work. Even if you're able to work synchronously, whether it's over phone or over video, you don't really get the richness of information that you can communicate in a face to

face context. So for example, you don't see my intensity or my passion as clearly over video or distance as you might in a face to face context. I can look into your eyes, I can shake your hand, we can have a meal together, and all that provides a rich variety of very intangible information that is very hard to communicate, even over Skype, even over video. And so there's a lot of information exchange that happens in face to face communication that does not happen when you're working over a distance, when you're working virtually.

And as you span time zones, and as you span cultural context, there are bigger information gaps that are harder to span using virtual communication technology. So simply because of this, because of the technology and the constraints that it imposes, there is an informational gap. But more importantly there is also sort of a motivation gap or an energy gap or a relationship gap, if you will. It's hard to build relationships, it's hard to be energizing and motivating when you're working across a large distance. Imagine you're a manager and you have and employee and every day you come to work and you acknowledge the employee by saying hello, hi, how are you, how are things. Even though that might be a simple interaction that could be very meaningful and motivating for the employee because the employee now feels that you notice them. You know they are working hard.

And so that in itself can be motivating. Something as simple as this may not be available in a virtual context. How do you acknowledge an employee in a virtual context? How do you give the employee a sense that I know you're working hard and I care for you and if you have any trouble you're welcome to come talk to me. It's hard to provide that intangible feeling of comfort or security over a distance, and so what it means is creating a sense of camaraderie, creating a sense of I care for you, creating a sense of motivation and engagement. It's harder when people are not together. So, you have informational gaps that you need to span, and you have relationship motivational issues that you need to work through to be effective in this virtual context. >> Do you have some tips you could share with us about what a leader would need to do to be more effective managing in a virtual world.

I think the first thing that would help is to be aware that what works in a co-located face to face context may or may not translate to a virtual context, and that you have to account for it in some way. So you have to account for the fact that you're working through less informationally rich channels of communication, and you have to account for the fact that what may seem very simple, a pat on the back, a sign of encouragement, a smile, or even an acknowledgement of some sort may be very difficult to do in a virtual context. And the fact that you've now consciously worked at

filling those relational, motivational and informational gaps, once you're aware of that, you have a shot of addressing and figuring it out how you can address in your specific context. So, being just aware that leading in a virtual world, it requires adjustments is a first step towards being effective in this context. The second idea is to build a relationship before letting people work away from you. So if you're a manager and you have employees working from home, before they begin working from home it might be a good idea if they work with you in the office closely for maybe a month or two. So you get to know their work styles they get to know your work styles, and you build a basic trust, you build a basic relationship, before you send them off at a distance to work from home. Or ultimately, if you're managing employees that want to work from home, you can say let's start the year off working from home, one or two days a week and you're in office three or four days a week. And then over time, maybe in six months or eight months you let them work from home for larger spans of time.

So, that way there is transition, a smooth transition where a relationship, a working relationship is being built, a trust has been built before they go off into the distance. If you're a leader of a virtual team, if you have to put together a team of people who are in different places, the first thing to realize that before the team does task work, before it goes about doing its job, it needs to come together as a team. So teamwork must precede task work. And what that means is, people who are at far flung distances must come together in some form. Ideally face to face, maybe for a week, maybe for two weeks, work on something that they can get a sense of accomplishment out of. So they work on a small task. They get a quick whim that cements them as a team, that creates a basic trust that can then be used as a basis for allowing them to work together in a distributive fashion. Leaders matter more in a virtual context than in a co-located context.

So if you're a group of people working together in a co-located context, you have each other for company, you have each other for camaraderie. You don't have that in a virtual context. And so the team leader can become that critical glue that brings members together. The team leader can be critical to making people feel that they're included in the team, making them come together as a team, and as a result can be far more effective in that context than they would ever be in a co-located context. In fact, there is some research that suggests that co-location must be some kind of leadership substitute, meaning when you're co-located the leader is less important but as you become more distributed the leader becomes more critical in making sure that people feel included and feel like a team.

If it's so important to have this foundation of trust and relationship before the team actually starts to do its work, is it also important to bring the team back together occasionally to recharge that relationship? >> That's a great point, and you're absolutely right. There is only so much. There is a sort of half life to a relationship. And there is only so much that a single face to face interaction can accomplish, or getting together for like two weeks can accomplish. The team meets to come back periodically to recharge and renew its relationships with one another. And what you mentioned also brings us a very interesting question. Once a virtual team has accomplished its project right, do you let the team disband, or do you keep the team together and get them to work together on another project?

I think in a virtual context, team viability that is the ability and the willingness of the team to stick together over a long period of time is extremely critical because it's very hard building a team in a virtual context. Once it's built, organizations need to think and leaders need to think carefully about keeping the team together so that the relational learning and the learning in terms of coordination that they've got can be transferred to a different project. And the team is not spending time reforming itself as a team with a new set of people. So it's important for the team to come together periodically, but it's also important to keep the intact over a long period of time across multiple projects to maximize the gains that you can get from the team. So as a leader you need to be thinking ahead and saying okay, not only do I need to build this team for this project, but how can I keep this team, at least a core set of team members together as we move on to the next project. So, that would be a very important thing to consider in this virtual context.

So, it's kind of like building a building. You don't want to build a building for a project and then abandon the building. You don't want to build a team for a project and then abandon the team. You want to make sure you can take advantage of what you've built, and get more out of the investment you've made in getting that virtual team to work together more effectively. I couldn't have said that better. >> Okay, so are there some places, some sources perhaps that people can look at if they'd like to learn more about this challenge of leading in a virtual world. >> Absolutely, so there's a Sloan Management article by J Mulki on leading in a remote context, and there's also a couple of good articles that I could recommend and that folks read and can get up to speed on this context. Okay, well thank you very much for coming in today and sharing with us your ideas about how to manage and lead more effectively in a virtual world. Thank you. It's been an absolute pleasure.