Becoming a Powerful Leader: Distinguishing Between Leading and Managing

In this lesson, you will:

- Differentiate between leading and managing while identifying the benefits of each approach
- Review key elements needed to build and strengthen relationships in your organization
- Identify common leadership myths using a tool that provides corrected frames of reference

Table of Contents

Distinguishing Between Leading and Managing

Watch: Identifying Differences between Leading and Managing

What is the difference between leading and managing your staff? Both are essential to running a high-functioning operation, but each serves a different purpose and provides different benefits. Examine these leadership approaches with Professor Walsh as she explains how they are unique and how each drives different performance outcomes.

Transcript

One of the myths of being a really effective leader is that you need to control your operation. And that's just not true. There are some very distinct differences between being a really effective manager, and a really effective leader.

So a great manager really controls and provides stability to the operation. He or she organizes everyone, plans the schedule, problem solves, just makes sure everything goes the way it should on a day-to-day basis.

A really effective leader on the other hand shakes up the status quo, believe it or not. So what he or she does is they create a desired future state, a vision, an idea of where the operation needs to go. But what's really important to remember is that creating a vision does not mean you have to be a visionary. What a great leader does is they engage in a conversation with their team on, where do we need to go? How do we get there? And then they make it happen. Their job is to communicate

a lot, to listen to the team, to share his or her ideas. The other way in which a leader makes that happen is through how he or she shares the power with the operation, with all the people involved, because the more you share the power with your team, the more your team is going to want to work with you and really be inspired to continuously improve. And then the third way in which a leader creates a continuous improvement operation, if you will, is by how he or she motivates the team, gets everybody excited through meeting their individual needs.

How can you actually be a great manager and simultaneously a really great leader? In healthy organizations you need both, and we're going to talk about how you can actually create a very healthy operation through how you control the operation, but inspire your team.

Back to Table of Contents

Activity: Distinguishing between Leading and Managing

As a leader, you encounter situations throughout the day where you must lead or manage your team. How do these differ from one another? This ungraded activity gives you an opportunity to check your understanding of these concepts while you identify which responsibilities fall under managing versus leading others.

Back to Table of Contents

Read: Leading versus Managing

Leaders collaborate while managers control

Your actions and intentions influence others

Trust is essential in leadership

Being in charge is more of a challenge than managers realize when they accept new assignments. The skills required for their success are vastly different from those required when individuals are only responsible for their own work output. Often newer managers run into problems early on. They have the title, responsibilities, and authority, but no one seems to recognize that. And it seems as if they put out fires (or problem solve) all day long. They become micromanagers, and because they are technically competent, they keep control over all operations, failing to realize that when doing so they are suppressing the members of their team each and every day.

The truth is that being a manager and being a leader are very different skills. A good manager directs staff and takes control of the daily operations. He or she plans and solves problems. A strong leader engages his or her team in a conversation about the vision (or desired future state) they hold for the department. The leader then encourages

individuals to continuously grow and improve through how he or she communicates, motivates, and shares power and influence. Healthy organizations need both managers and leaders—and high-functioning managers are both.

So how can you be both a manager and a leader? It all begins with you and how you manage yourself. What you think and believe, how you act, and how you connect with others are all really important to the people you supervise. Every day, your staff thinks about the interactions they have with you and they ask themselves, Can I trust this person? How hard they work, how committed they are, and their willingness to accept your guidance are all dependent on their answer to this question. So you need to ask, How can I productively influence others?

Trust is power-granting, and your authority will flow from it. However, your staff will only trust you if they believe in your competence and your character. The third quality essential for building trust is demonstrating that you are able to influence others, such as your boss or colleagues in other departments. All of this requires you, as the manager, to focus on building authentic working relationships with people at work.

Back to Table of Contents

Read: Running Peace Cove Resort

Peace Cove Resort

As you read through this case study, identify the challenges Mike is facing. Why did they happen and what should Mike do about them?

The Scenario

Mike recently took a new position as a front office manager of Peace Cove Resort. He had previously worked as a front office supervisor for a competing chain and had many years of experience working in line-level positions in hotels. He was ready for the new challenge, and after talking with his new boss, he made a list of changes and improvements he wanted to make. He began the first few weeks excited about his job and all he was going to accomplish, and he gave out lots of directives those first few weeks. He also made lots of procedural changes and introduced a new scheduling system. He was sure his staff would recognize and appreciate his authority.

Things seemed to be going well at first, but by the end of the first two

months, Mike felt as if he was losing control of his team. He would give instructions to people he supervised, but every time he walked away, he would hear whispering and laughing. Sometimes his staff would do what he asked; other times they said they forgot or that they encountered problems. Three employees had quit and the ones who remained often seemed unhappy; his staff was complaining all the time to him about their co-workers—both within the department and in other departments in the hotel. He felt as if his team was fighting all his efforts, and every time he tried to talk with them, it seemed they pretended they didn't know what he wanted them to do. His boss expected Mike to have a high-functioning department, and he could tell she was supportive, but she was getting impatient. Short of firing his entire department, Mike was at a loss. He decided to take even tighter control over how things were run. That meant he made sure he was involved in all major and even some minor decisions. Mike felt as if nobody was taking any initiative, except for him. He was working 12-plus hour days, and every evening he went home exhausted. Mike began to wonder if he really had what it takes to manage people.

Read: Recognizing Cultural Differences

Realize that cultural differences
drive behaviors

Identify perspectives to strengthen
relationships

Challenge individuals to take action
contrary to their preferences

As you strive to both lead and manage those who report to you, it is important to recognize the role culture plays in the workplace. Cultural differences play an essential part in how people interact.

Research has identified two extreme orientations, including an individualistic versus a collectivist approach to work. An employee embracing more of an individualistic orientation will exhibit action focused on outcomes, whereas a collectivist will be focused more on process and long-term relationships. Knowing how these differences transpire into workplace behaviors is critical to decision making and interpersonal relations.

In the realm of managing, knowing what types of tasks an individual innately prefers—and excels in—can aid you in doling out tasks in the most efficient way. In the realm of leading, discerning between various

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behaviors—and distinguishing communication patterns—can aid you in creating and building strong relationships. Recognizing the natural orientation of each individual you lead will allow you to acknowledge these differences and challenge individuals to take action outside of their natural orientation.

Back to Table of Contents

Watch: Acknowledging Cultural Differences

To expand on research findings surrounding cultural differences, Professor Walsh provides a framework that outlines individual tendencies on a continuum.

As you consider the role of cultural differences in your workplace, contemplate where the individuals who report to you fall on the continuum shared. Through observation and interactions with the people you oversee, you will glean their natural tendencies. Use this information to steer workplace decisions and interactions with the individuals who report to you.

Transcript

I once worked in a hotel where there were 34 different cultures represented. It influenced everything from how people work together to the decisions they made. Could you imagine trying to supervise people from that many cultures? I would also imagine that you probably can or have some similar experiences. And I'd like to offer you a framework that might actually help you understand these cultural differences that people bring to the work that they do.

If we were to take every culture and put each culture on a continuum, we could actually see two extreme poles. And those poles are called individualistic versus collectivist And why that matters is because people from an individualistic culture will tend to take care of their own needs ahead of the group's or even the company's. They are

focused on their own individual performance. Alternatively, people from a collectivist culture will always put the group's needs ahead of their own. And so they really think about the impact of their particular decision on the overall group, or even department or company. People from the US tend to have an individualistic orientation, and people from more Asian-based cultures tend to have a more collectivist orientation. And every other country around the world falls somewhere on that continuum. Now that individualistic, collectivist orientation impacts lots of different things.

One is the decisions that get made. People from an individualistic orientation tend to focus in on outcomes. They get the job done no matter what and they tend not to think about how they go about doing that. Alternatively, people from a collectivist orientation are very much focused on process. They pay attention to making sure everyone's voices are heard. Everyone has input into a decision. It can slow the decision making down but it's much more inclusive process if you will.

Another difference that's influenced by these two orientations is risk adversity. People from an individualistic culture tend to be risk takers. They try out ideas and see what happens because again they are focused on their individual performance. People from a collectivist orientation don't necessarily want to do that. They don't want to take a chance that will impact everybody negatively so they have what's called a high risk avoidance. They are hesitant to take chances.

It also impacts how people think about their time frame. So people

from an individualistic orientation really focus in on the here and now, what needs to get done today. And alternatively, people from a collectivist orientation really tend to think long term into the future. So again, you can see how people's orientation might influence their decisions.

And the last one to think about is called power distance. People from an individualistic culture tend to be very casual and very "me" centered. So when they make decisions they focus in on getting it done, as I mentioned, and they may tend to actually interrupt their boss or other people doing their own work to get the information they need, or the help they need. People from a collectivist orientation really follow a protocol and process around how they interact with one another. And there's a formality to that. And again, they would actually give great thought to the impact of their behaviors on everybody else, and how they approach others for help or assistance.

So all of these orientations or differences are going to impact how people interact with one another, how well they work together and how frustrated they might get with one another. And you want to be observant of it. You want to understand these differences exist, you want to even acknowledge them with the people you supervise. And help people learn to take chances and understand other people's perspectives to get the job done.

Back to Table of Contents

Watch: The Value of Trust

Trust is a critical factor in the success of your operation. In order to establish and maintain trust of those you lead, you must possess confidence, character, and influence. As Professor Walsh discusses each of these elements, consider how you manifest these qualities.

Transcript

One of the things you want to be thinking about is what I call the currency of relationships, and that's trust. Trust is essential to your success. What you think and believe, how you act day in and day out, it's essential to the people you supervise. They're watching you all the time. They're watching the back of your head. Every day, your staff thinks about every interaction they have with you, believe it or not. And they're kind of asking themselves, can I trust this person, this manager, this boss? How hard they work, how committed they are to actually continuously improving your operation, their willingness to accept your guidance, your feedback, I promise you it's all dependent upon their answer to this question about can they trust you? So you need to ask yourself how do I productively, authentically, sincerely influence others?

Your staff will only trust you if they believe in three things. One is your competence, so what you do and how well you do it. And the thing I want to mention about competence is, that doesn't mean you need to know the answers to everything. It doesn't mean you need to know the ins and out of every position you supervise. What it means is that

you're willing to share things that you are competent in, or experts about, and be willing to find answers for things that you're not sure about. That lends a whole lot of credibility.

Another thing your staff is thinking about is your character. Do you intend to do the right thing? Do you want everybody to be successful? Do they feel supported by you? That's really really important because it they feel that you're supporting them, they will do anything for you, to make you proud even.

The third quality essential for building trust is demonstrating that you're able to influence other people outside of the operation. Can you actually advocate for your team with your boss, with other colleagues and other departments. That's really, really important. Can you obtain the resources your team needs, and really be their representative in the wider organization?

All of this requires you as the manager to focus on what I call authentic relationships with people at work. Now, I know this sounds daunting. You have a job to do that has a lot of day in day out responsibilities. And to be thinking about all of these relationship building can seem overwhelming. Don't worry about it. Just think about how do I actually demonstrate my competence? How do I show that I'm caring, committed, and how do I advocate?

There's also what I call "four myths" about being a leader that you want to think about. A lot of brand new managers think well, with my new job title comes complete power and authority. I actually just want you to be aware of the fact that, you don't have power and authority unless

your team provides it to you. You're dependent upon them. You can't be successful without them. That doesn't mean that you let them make all of the decisions, but just be aware that you actually have to engage with them to get their commitment to you.

Another myth lots of young managers have, is they think I must control and obtain compliance from everybody I supervise. You need their commitment to you and your plan, but control doesn't equal commitment. Trust is what is going to engage their commitment to you.

Another myth some managers have is they think their job is to manage others through how they reward and punish. So they think of it almost as a manipulation, if you will. When you do well, I'll reward you. When you don't do well, you won't get the reward, or I may even punish you. Compensation is important, but to generate trust, it goes way beyond money. You need to develop relationships with your staff, engage in what they care about, and tie that into where you want the operation to go. So that really means you have to work individually and through the team as a whole. What people care about work, I promise you, is this notion that they're making progress day in, day out towards something they care about. So figuring out what that is and how you can actually use that as part of what you're organization needs to accomplish is really important. And the final myth is a lot of managers think well my job is to make sure the operation runs smoothly. It's not, your job is to enhance the department's performance through continuous growth and improvement. And then with that comes a beautifully run operation. So pay attention to how you can actually

generate trust, be aware of how you engage with your team, how you express support, and how you share what you know and be willing to learn what you don't know. That's going to give you a whole lot of success with your team. They are going to want to be with you through thick and thin.

Back to Table of Contents

Tool: Best Practices in Leading Effectively

Use the Best Practices in Leading Effectively job aid to identify common leadership myths and the realities that should replace them.

As you work to establish and build trust with the people you work with, it's important to recognize that there are myths surrounding the concept of leadership. Your actions will demonstrate whether you believe in one or more of these common myths, as any action supporting these myths will impede your ability to influence your team.

Conversely, leaders who demonstrate the realities that exist (rather than the myths) are apt to build authentic working relationships. These include understanding the best ways to support individuals across a team or organization. In essence, the right combination of competence, character, and influence—exhibited through continuous action—is needed to generate trust.

Use the **Best Practices in Leading Effectively** job aid to identify common myths about being in charge and replace them with the realities outlined to start building and enhancing trust in your workplace relationships.

Final Assessment

As you have seen in this lesson, a powerful leader knows the importance of leading versus managing and the role culture plays in the workplace. Complete the following assessment to confirm your mastery of the key concepts presented.

Answer the following questions.
You must answer at least three questions correctly to achieve completion.
You may take this assessment up to three times to achieve a passing score.

Back to Table of Contents

Lesson Wrap-up

To become a powerful leader, you must first identify the critical elements surrounding your approach to leadership, and then identify the natural orientation of each individual on your team. It is necessary to both manage and lead your team. Determining when to apply each approach will impact your success as a leader.

In this lesson, you examined common leadership myths and the realities that should replace them. With Professor Walsh, you reviewed the key elements in establishing and maintaining the trust of your staff: confidence, character, and influence. As you delved into research on cultural differences, you explored the orientation continuum ranging from an individualistic to a collectivist tendency, compared risk taking with risk aversion, and examined power-distance and its impact on behavior.