## **Mustafa Zunic – Develop A Leaders Mindset – Application Challenge and Reflection**

**Application Challenge**

**Evaluator:** Mustafa Zunic

For this challenge, you will draft a 30-day onboarding plan for the new team.  This plan should include, but is not limited to:

a.     Setting Expectations, Norms & Standards

b.     Getting to Know Your Team Members

c.     Training & Development for self and team

d.     Vision Painting

Be prepared to share your mindset and approach in creating the plan as well as the actual tactical pieces.  Your leader will ask questions and provide feedback on this assignment during your Leadership Coaching 1:1.

Check this off when you have taken all the steps

**Week One and Two:**

* **Meet with Team (1:1’s and as a whole).**
* **Meet with Leader**
* **Meet with organizational counterparts (other leaders in org, product support, support staff, etc.)** 
  + All initial meetings should be geared towards meeting the individuals you’ll be working with and getting to know them and for them to get to know you.
  + Make sure to share your personal and professional history when asked.
  + Discuss cadence of future meetings if appropriate.
  + For team members the expectation should be business as usual for the time being. If asked, be vulnerable and admit that you don’t understand the role enough to set appropriate expectations.
* **Other:** 
  + Ask for resources to dig into the culture and mission of the company, what we do, how it helps or solves problems for our clients and who our competitors are.
  + Ask for resources to find out what the mission is of the sub-org your team is and how it adds up to the overall mission of the company.
  + Ask for resources to really dig into the mission of your team and find out how it adds up to the overall mission of the company.
  + Start attending team ceremonies and get a handle on what recurring meetings need to be attended.
  + Study org charts and learn who the key stakeholders are across the organization. Create an action plan for meeting with some of them.
  + Study the culture of the company.
* **Mindset:** 
  + The first couple of weeks should primarily be for meeting all your fellow TM’s and getting to know them with a focus on making a good first impression.
  + Ask lots of questions and take lot of notes.
  + If you see something you want to change, write it down for later. There will be time for addressing those things later.
  + The first 30 days needs to be approached with observation and orientation in mind. There will be time to direct and change things later.

**Week Three and Four:**

* **Meetings** 
  + Continue meeting w/ TM’s you met with in week one and two as appropriate making sure to meet with your leader at least once a week if available.
    - Reporting team member meetings should be focused on learning the personalities of each TM and what they are passionate about, what makes them tick.
    - Ask questions that dig into mindsets. Figure out what TMs would be doing if they weren’t working at the company.
    - Ask TM’s what they expect of their leader and what they would do if they were the leader.
    - For team members, the expectation should still be business as usual for the time being.
    - Counterparts and support staff should be asked about their thoughts on your team and how the team fits into the overall mission of the organization.
  + Reach out across the organization and meet with the stakeholders identified in the first couple of weeks.
    - Find out what their role is, what teams they are responsible for, and how those teams add up to the mission of the organization.
    - Find out their thoughts on your team and what they think your team fits into the organizations mission.
    - Find out where there is overlap or resource utilizations between teams. Dig into this further for strategy building later.
    - Find out their thoughts on the culture, what it means to them, how they see it affecting the day to day.
  + Team ceremonies and meetings:
    - Build trust with the team. Help them where you can. Don’t make any changes or directives.
    - Observe team dynamics, personalities and how team works together.
      * Cross check this with the profiles you’ve built from your individual meetings. Does your profile hold true or are there gaps? If there are gaps, why are they there?
    - Work on putting together a picture of how the team does what they need to do.
      * What are the inputs?
      * What are the outputs?
      * What processes does the team follow?
      * What tools and resources does the team rely on?
      * Who are the clients?
        + Identify clients in the org to set up meetings for later.
      * What are the teams common pain points? What makes their job difficult?
      * What does the team like to do? What do they not like to do?
      * How does culture play a role?
* **Other**
  + At this point you should either have or be close to having a good handle of how to get organized around this role.
  + Start building a daily/weekly cadence to prepare for the coming days and weeks.
  + 1:1’s should have a recurring cadence at this point.
  + All 1:1’s and recurring meetings should have a cadence for preparation.
* **Mindset**
  + At this point you should start really getting to know the people you’re working with from a professional standpoint.
  + Start to build trust with the team. Assist and help where you can.
  + Be curious! Continue asking questions.
  + Look for points where culture is used in the day-to-day. Does it fit your understanding? If not, what are the gaps?
  + As a leader be mindful of the pressure your team will feel to try and impress and please leadership. This will impact their priorities and focus during this time.
  + At this point you should understand what your team does and how it fits into the organization and companies’ mission.
  + At this point you should start thinking of strategies and visions for the future. Don’t share anything yet as you still don’t know anything but start preparing and thinking about it if asked.

**Week Five and Six:**

* **Meetings**
  + Continue meeting with reporting TMs on a recurring basis.
    - Continue learning about TM’s personally and building trust.
    - Start assessing skillsets and gaps.
    - Ask for ideas on how to improve their work experience? Are there products or processes/process changes that could make their jobs easier?
  + Continue meeting with leader on a recurring basis
    - Ask for thoughts on your own skillset currently and what the gaps are from where the leader thinks I should be.
    - Ask for recommendations on how to fill those gaps.
    - Use these meetings to gain an understanding of future vision. Think about how we could get there.
  + Continue meeting with counterparts and stakeholders where responsibilities touch or overlap
    - Dig into their team’s mission and how it affects what your team is doing?
    - Identify the touchpoints between respective teams?
    - What are their pain points? Could your team help?
  + Meet with clients identified previously
    - What is the client’s mission?
    - What processes and tools does the client use to achieve goals?
    - What are the clients paint points? Where do they run into roadblocks?
    - How do we help the clients?
    - Solicit feedback on what we provide to the clients. How does it help? How could it be better?
* **Other**
  + Asses your team’s role descriptions. Do the skillsets of individual TM’s meet the role descriptions?
  + Asses your team’s compensation ranges in private. Who is highest paid? Who is lowest paid? What is the mean?
  + Assess skillsets and gaps against those compensation ranges. Do they fit? Are there TMs in range or out of range? What training might the team need?
  + Asses the teams overall team costs which should include any tools and process costs as well as any vendor contracts?
  + Asses your team’s product. Is it adequate and does it meet the clients needs? Could it be better?
* **Mindset**
  + At this point you should start to bring all the information you’ve collected over the past 5 to 6 weeks together.
  + At this point you should understand the company’s culture and business function, who are its competitors are and how it performs in the market.
  + At this point should understand your team’s function, their product, who they produce it for and how it adds up to the overall mission.
  + Once you have everything in front of you, you can start building a vision board for your team. The vision board should include:
    - Where we are as a team?
    - Where we need to be?
    - What are the gaps?
    - What are the goals?
    - How will we fill those gaps and meet those goals to get where we need to be?
  + In the following 6 weeks you should share your thoughts and ideas with leaders, team, and clients for feedback. Implement feedback where pertinent and think through processes that will need to be implemented to bring your vision to life.

**Activity Reflection**

* **What was the most valuable part of this exercise?** 
  + For me the most valuable part was taking myself back to when I became brand new leader and thinking through that experience. Learning from that experience, I created the above plan based on what worked and what didn’t work previously. Thinking back through it, it would have been even more valuable to do this right before I started both of my leader roles to not only compare between experiences but also better prepare myself for the role.
* **What was the most difficult part of this exercise?** 
  + The most difficult part of this exercise was that I didn’t really agree with the way it was structured. I don’t believe that you should be setting expectations, norms, and standards in your first 30 days. The first 30 days should be all about meeting the team, making sure to make a good first impression and learning as much as you can. You can’t set expectations and standards if you don’t know how your team operates day to day and you certainly can’t create visions for the future without understanding where you have been and where you are first.
* **What questions do you want to explore to feel more confident in starting a new team, specifically in the first 30-days?**
  + What are my team’s goals? Both individual and as a team?
  + What are my team members concerns?
  + What do I need to learn to support my team better and faster?
  + How do I become a force multiplier? Do I need to be a force multiplier in this role?
  + Am I utilizing my teams time effectively and efficiently?