Chapter 2
Understanding Teams and Your People

ABSTRACT

Great leaders set the bar at a very high level by getting out front, setting the standard, making decisions, and either willing or convincing people to follow and achieve. They successfully focus on satisfying needs and taking care of people with integrity. If you satisfy people's needs, there will be performance benefits. If you can't satisfy needs, create an environment or a process by which this can be done. The latter part of this chapter focuses on achieving dynamic change, which is a continuous and productive activity that departs from accepted or traditional courses of action.

INTRODUCTION

- **Emerging Research:** Understanding of the team and its people is achieved as the team passes through the five stages of conflict: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning (Tuckman and Jensen). Storming is the most critical stage, and it is in this stage that conflict can grow. As the brainstorming and other deliberations become more intense, leaders need to manage and attempt to resolve conflict. In group interactions, we find incompatibility between people and we discover their behavior is characterized by two dimensions: assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness is the level at which people work to satisfy personal concerns. Cooperativeness is the level at

which people try to satisfy another person's concern. These dimensions clarify the approaches to managing conflict: accommodating, collaborating, avoiding, competing, and compromising (Dalal, 2017). Accommodating is low on assertiveness and high on cooperativeness. Collaborating is being equally assertive and cooperative. Avoiding is being neither assertive nor cooperative. Competing is being assertive but not cooperative; in other words, this person pursues their own concern at another's expense. Finally, compromising is being mildly assertive and cooperative; this is like collaboration on a low level, because the person might not want to take any real risks of being either right or wrong. These are key considerations that can help when getting to know your people. *SOURCE: An Exploratory Study on Conflict Management with the Perspective of Education as a Variable (Dalal, 2017).*

SET THE LEADERSHIP BAR

Great leaders set aggressive goals for themselves and others. You can certainly learn from others and use their approaches as an example for success. Leadership effectiveness comes from being ready to set standards and make decisions. The way to do this is through need satisfaction, creating energy, putting people first, acting with ethics and integrity, and making a connection with people.

Satisfy the needs of people and they will follow you anywhere. If you can't satisfy their needs, create an environment or a process by which this can be done. Emphasize relationships that are physically, spiritually, and emotionally beneficial. Recommend that your team members focus on the importance of family first, believing in something beyond themselves, and seeking to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Enthusiasm, passion, and commitment are contagious when they are public. Let your team gain energy as they emulate this kind of drive in their leadership. Don't mistake activity for energy. Do the things that matter and the positive energy that is created will spark your organization to do great things. In many cases, this will be the leading factor in retention of your most valuable asset: people.

Always, always, always put people first. Instead of deciding on courses of action and then assessing how people will adjust, think of how it will affect people first. A friend of mine once told me that the solution to a problem should never be that one person loses at the expense of another. The solution

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