

Improvement Initiatives

Unquotable Quote:

"Find the members of your team that need motivation, and fire them."

October 2010

Easy there, fella!



Leadership – Good to Great to Inspirational by Asma Zaineb

Following are a few qualities that lead a good leader to become a great leader:

- Those who have the passion for their vision, zeal and enthusiasm to succeed and do something different and at the same time be compassionate. They genuinely care about other people's well being and work.
- Everyone wants to display their strengths and not weakness. Most people think that leaders can do no wrong. When a leader shows a weakness or two, people will realize that leaders too are human beings and not gods.
- Leaders are those who have the ability to think, foresee future opportunities and more. They rely on their intuition for timing and course of action for present and future opportunities. They keep themselves updated with minutest of information and use it when it is needed the most.
- What makes inspirational leaders different is that they do things in a different manner and achieve great results.

To inspire ...

a great leader needs to lead people towards a vision that he/she wants to achieve. He/She must be able to convince his fellow workers towards achieving the goal and vision he/she has in mind and make them follow him/her willingly.

An inspirational leader is one who:

- **Motivates the team and also inspires them to follow what he/she preaches.**
- **Allows the team to function in stress free and friendly environments.**
- **Is focused on what needs to be done in an appropriate manner.**
- **Provides clear understanding of the happenings in the organization.**
- **Chooses the right path in decision making and problem solving especially while resolving issues.**
- **Works side-by-side with team mates, never considers any 'tasks' below their dignity and inspires others to do the same.**
- **Possess sound judgment skills during the critical decision making process and in unforeseen crisis.**

Every person can choose to lead a team, but the one who inspires others can be the one who provides a vision for the future and also offers an encouragement to others to achieve the same goals that lead towards the success of a business. He/she should possess strong leadership qualities and be an example.

Lean Thinkers are Different

Lean thinking is the starting point. Lean thinkers are the key resource for any lean manufacturer on its success of operation. There are many differences in the thinking patterns to the traditional manufacturing methods. A lean thinker poses some key differences to the traditional manufacturers and managers.

Lean thinkers are the prime movers of the lean organization. They share their knowledge with the other team members and use them to get the desired results. Everyone in the organization are actively participating in the decision making process. On the other hand, traditional managers make the decisions and ask the subordinates to do the job. Subordinates follow these decisions because they have to follow them and not with a great concern on the desired result.

Lean thinkers identify problems as possibilities for improvement. Traditional managers hate problems and they do not want to face the real problems. They only focus on the result they want to get, not on the process in which these are achieved. Therefore, in the traditional management context, problems are never really solved but sometimes bypassed to achieve short term goals. But, in the lean context every problem is analyzed in detail and then root causes for those problems are identified and eliminated from the system. Goal is to solve the problems forever. This is where mistake proofing comes in.

Lean manufacturers treat the full organization as a single unit. The customer is expecting the outcome from the organization itself and not from the individual departments or people. Therefore the decisions are always better for the organization. In contrast, traditional managers want to make individual departments efficient. This might not give any good result to the customer. This is known as sub-optimization in lean manufacturing.

Lean thinkers are change facilitators. They will lead change for the betterment of the organization. Unlike traditional management method of “management by exception” which proposes not to change anything if there is not a problem, lean thinkers will change things around even they seem to be working fine. This is where continual improvement comes in.

Team working is another key aspect of lean. Team formation and using it to the objectives of the organization are very important lean concepts. This will build the synergy in the organization and make the work smooth.

Lean thinkers continuously learn and update themselves. They will lead the lean transformation and importantly the mental aspect of it. They also will facilitate the communication in the organization, constantly promoting success. Feedback loops in particular will be facilitated by the lean thinkers at least in the initial stages of lean implementations.

Learn more at: www.leanmanufacturingconcepts.com

Thank You, Team!

Team rewards present a great opportunity to help foster team bonding. With the proper application of a reward and recognition program, you can help build a high-performance team, and foster cross-organizational cooperation. But team rewards are not to be treated carelessly: misapplication could lead to unhealthy competition, lack of cooperation, and ultimately severe financial consequences for the organization.

Team motivation and rewards programs should make up part of your overall [employee recognition program](#). You need to consider a mix of team and individual rewards, and balance the mix between awards that encourage both cooperative and competitive behaviors.

With a balanced strategy, you can then prepare a blend of monetary and [non monetary rewards](#) that will help you achieve your goals in a cost-effective manner.

The desired outcome of recognition programs is to improve performance and improve employee retention.

Learn more at:

<http://101rewards.com/>



A Taste of Leadership

William Johnson, the man who oversees H.J. Heinz, the \$10 billion food company, may taste 300 to 400 products in development during a given year.

But he's usually the last person to taste a product, and he doesn't even have a vote. "I've never believed in the rule of the 'golden tongue,'" he says.

Ten years ago, when he stepped into CEO shoes, he thought that knowing how to execute and run the business would propel him to success. A couple of years into the stint, though, he realized that he needed to step back from operations.

When he did, he "really began to focus on leadership, on having the right people in the right place, and on making sure people were properly motivated, incentivized and directed."

Weighing in on whether a mung bean drink (for the Indonesian market) tastes good enough for the Heinz label, then, no longer fit with the job description.

—Adapted from "You Have to Take a Risk," Richard M. Smith, *Newsweek*



TIPS and TRICKS

No Need to Sell "Change"

Start with one or two volunteers who are willing to try a new way of going about things, achieve success with them, and have them testify to the value of the new techniques to everyone else.

In product terms, the organization will start with the pioneers, then persuade, in order, the early adopters, mainstream, and skeptics. The last hold-outs will either hold out until natural selection does its thing, or until they retire or are fired.

So if you are having a problem with leading people you are not alone. President Clinton once said running a country is a lot like running a cemetery; you've got a lot of people under you and nobody's listening. — in a speech at Galesburg, Ill.



Free Team Reward Book:

http://www.project-team-rewards.com/read_online.php



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Problem Solving Wisdom

1. Take time to examine and explore the problem thoroughly before setting out in search of a solution. Often, to understand the problem is to solve it.
2. Breaking the problem into smaller parts will often make solving it much easier. Solve each part separately.
3. The resources for problem solving are immense and ubiquitous.
4. You can always do something.
5. A problem is not a punishment; it is an opportunity to increase the happiness of the world, an opportunity to show how powerful you really are.
6. The formulation of a problem determines the range of choices: the questions you ask determine the answers you receive.
7. Be careful not to look for a solution until you understand the problem, and be careful not to select a solution until you have a whole range of choices.
8. The initial statement of a problem often reflects a preconceived solution.
9. A wide range of choices (ideas, possible solutions) allows you to choose the best from among many. A choice of one is not a choice.
10. People work to implement their own ideas and solutions much more energetically than they work to implement others' ideas and solutions.
11. Remember the critical importance of acceptance in solving problems. A solution that is technologically brilliant but sociologically stupid is not a good solution.
12. When the goal state is clear but the present state is ambiguous, try working backwards.
13. Procrastinators finish last.
14. Denying a problem perpetuates it.
15. Solve the problem that really exists, **not** just the symptoms of a problem, **not** the problem you already have a solution for, **not** the problem you wish existed, and **not** the problem someone else thinks exists.
16. A maker follows a plan; a creator produces a plan.
17. Creativity is the construction of something new out of something old, through effort and imagination.

“It’s not that I’m so smart, it’s just that I stay with problems longer.”

- Albert Einstein



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Off the page ... (From the BLOGS ...)

What according to you could be the 5 key components for 'service quality'?

Typically in Telecom or any other Service Domain:

V.B. Manian

- 1) Reliability - Right resources for delivery of service
- 2) Assurance - Knowledge proficiency for apt delivery of service
- 3) Tangibles - Service should give Value for money
- 4) Empathy - An eye &/or ear for the customer's concern
- 5) Responsiveness - receptive to feedback for performance review & improvement.

Ray Young

- 1) The customer is not always right
- 2) Your job is to make him believe he is
- 3) Never over sell
- 4) Never under deliver
- 5) Be sincere

Vikas Sethi

A service company should be evaluated for quality from two aspects-

1. Functional & 2, Technical

where Functional part gauges the process of service and technical side measures the overall output of the service.

From overall Operational excellence perspective, few individual components of Functional /service Quality are:

Competence ,Quality of proposals ,Courtesy, Responsiveness, Reliability Access
Credibility ,Understanding of Customer/ Customer needs, communication, Personnel
policies ,Culture, Feedback processes

Service Quality Audit Process, Investment in Tools ,Appearance of Physical properties,
Infrastructure Security and Access.....

Timothy Brinks

1. Receptive - all customer contact should be receptive to the customer's needs both proactively and reactively, listen to the customers.
2. Knowledgeable - Service personnel should understand their business and how it functions in the eyes of the customer.
3. Consistent - Customers should have their needs attended to according to their experiential expectations, with the exception of continuous improvement and delighters
4. Personable - Service personnel should be appropriate in their communications, empathy, manners, professionalism, respect, tone of voice, etc. understanding cues in the customers speech and striving for clear understanding both directions.
5. Credible - Service groups need to have a priority in the organization so that the customers needs are met. Delays in follow-up or resolution will kill the good work in numbers 1-4.

None of these 5 things can truly be accomplished unless an organization has a strong customer focus and Continuous Improvement strategies in place.

Randy Lipnicky

1. Link to organizational strategy
2. Link to organizational brand image (support consistent customer experience management)
3. Measurement and feedback systems (service quality data collection)
4. Knowledge management system to include, but not limited to prioritized (by 1, 2, 3) comprehensive issues and opportunities list
5. Research - including competitive benchmarking, evolved and progressive practices

Jody Bicking

Some excellent answers expressed; most right out of the textbook. Interestingly, most seem to be internally based. By that I mean, observing internal needs and thinking how those can be matched to the customer.

If we are truly concerned about service quality, I think the process can achieve highest and best results by considering the question from the outside looking in. How are we engaging the customer emotionally? That may sound a bit fluffy, but until we have them engaged emotionally, we stand no chance of creating the "Raving Fans" that are needed in highly competitive markets.

Several have mentioned the idea of measurement/audit. I was wondering, what measurements should be used to study, measure, and manage to which will give true insight into customer engagement (similar to what Gallup has done) rather than customer satisfaction (which studies are beginning to show is becoming meaningless).

I apologize for not offering "5 things", but thought there might be another question or two that needed to be asked first.