

Short Notes

From Measured Success Inc.

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Leadership is not a title or a special set of characteristics. It is not related to your position in an organization and it can't be given to you by someone else. Leadership isn't something that you are born with; but rather it is something that can be learned, optimized, and utilized by absolutely anyone. Leadership will help an organization to both grow and compete in the marketplace. Leadership enables individuals to chart their own course and make powerful decisions impacting themselves and others. Given the value of leadership why, for the most part, are our organization's filled with managers (those that maintain the status quo) rather than leaders (those that create the vision for the future and develop the path to get there). Could it be that we presume that there is a one size fits all path to leadership or that we fail to provide the big picture vision we are trying to achieve so that our leaders can align the actions of all with our vision?

The purpose of leadership is to achieve results. Leadership isn't just about being it's about getting the things done that are both necessary and sufficient for the achievement of the big picture vision. It is not a theoretical exercise it is a focused set of directed activities that evoke self-motivation in those that you directly influence. Your leadership abilities are your biggest competitive advantage as an individual and as an organization. Do you see any of these conditions in your organization: excessive meetings, a preponderance of consensus driven decision making, lack of accountability, difficulty terminating poor performers, failed communications, power struggles and conflicts, low employee motivation, reactive thinking, micro-management, duplicated efforts, or a fear of making decisions? These are indicators of leadership issues that can and should be addressed. So how do we develop effective leaders and change our outcomes?

Leadership truly begins with the end in mind. In other words, we need to define the desired results through strategic and business planning. We then must grow the people and processes that ensure the achievement of those results. Our personal leadership characteristics will vary, but each of us has an intrinsic ability to lead that must be optimized and utilized. Leadership is situational and as such we need to recognize when to lead, when to follow, and when to get out of the way. Effective leadership processes that allow people to lead must be in place so that our internal leadership can thrive and grow. Effective leadership development processes align people, processes, and strategy; incorporate the development of skills, attitudes, and the ability to set and achieve goals; and are sustainable over time.

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This month's book review: "Mr. Shmooze" by Richard Abraham (available on our website)
Look for my column in *The West "O"*, *The Midtown "O"*, *The Bellevue*, and *The Bluffs*.

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