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Organizational Consulting LLC

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The Many Sides of the Leader-Manager

“What do they want from me? Am I a leader or a manager?” my client Cheryl asked. I answered, “Yes you are.” She continued, “How do I reconcile the two aspects of my role so it doesn’t take a toll?”

As a manager and leader Cheryl faced extraordinary pressures to perform. So we worked on integrating each aspect of her job using the following:

Leadership starts with the vision and builds relationships with the people who share the vision and who will take on the task of achieving the vision.

Management uses structure, rules and processes in order to control and predict results and to stabilize the situation.

The competencies of leading and managing can be blended to produce a complementary combined effect. The effect produces greater business and personal outcomes than using the singular skills of either leading or managing:

- First, the Leader-Manager initiates. You must be able to articulate, initiate, and when necessary, implement the strategic direction of an organization. Simultaneously you must be able to direct the operations so that order, among the organization's systems, is crystal clear.
- Second, many followers want comfort, stability and solutions from their leaders. Real leaders ask hard questions and sometimes push people out of their comfort zone. Then you need to manage the resulting distress. Adaptive challenges don't reside in the executive suite, but in the collective intelligence and contributions from all employees.
- Next, the Leader-Manager facilitates connections between people. You must be able to rapidly develop relationships with people inside and outside the organization. By doing you will create alignment between the structures, practices and relationships that yield the best decisions and outcomes.
- Finally, the Leader-Manager galvanizes support and encourages effective performance to influence outcomes. Be prepared to seize the moment to inspire others, building credibility and personal commitment while simultaneously reinforcing effective performance. This creates a balance between organization-based outcomes and the employee's sense of inclusion.
- A Leader-Manager must sequence and pace the work. In my consulting practice, too often I see senior executives communicate that everything is important. They overwhelm and disorient the very people who are responsible for the work.

In the modern workplace, Leading and Managing means learning to support and influence rather than control. Workers, for their part, need to take responsibility and accept accountability.

Peak "Leader-Manager" performance demanded that Cheryl integrate role responsibilities and learn, change, and improve. The goal of today's Leader-Manager is to achieve balance between each pairing of competencies and to be aware of areas of strength and needed improvement.

Forward this to
your friends and
colleagues.

Defining and identifying specific behaviors really helped Cheryl improve her performance and clarified how she itemized her priorities. I hope this helps you too.

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