

“You can accomplish anything in life, provided that you do not mind who gets the credit.” *Harry S. Truman*

YOU RUN A COMPANY. BUT ARE YOU LEADING IT?

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No matter how well your (or any company) company is doing, it could do better. How much better yours is doing - and will do - depends in large part on how well you develop your company's leadership. These are the people who will be able to run the company so that it grows to realize a vision - and continually improve its ability to do so.

A great leader is one who enables more and better leaders to emerge, one who helps them create and sustain great companies. While there are many different to paths to developing great leadership, there are certain steps to follow. We have identified seven that have worked for clients of ours.

Look ahead. The time to invest in developing leaders is now, not when a crisis comes, which it assuredly will. Developing great leaders is a strategic priority, as, if not more, important than developing great products or services.

Examine closely. Be scrupulously honest about where you stand, as a leader and as a company. What sort of structure and process – if any – do you have for developing leaders? Identify what is working, how leadership is encouraged, as well as where your leadership development is lacking.

Align with proven expertise. Your knowledge is your business or profession. Firms like ours specialize in developing leaders for any business or organization. We don't pretend to have the answers. We do know the questions and the process – and the level of trust required for it to work. Openness is a critical factor – and one that is earned. Caution: beware spending large sums on comprehensive organizational analysis. They don't always produce an accurate picture that a trusted partner can create using well constructed questions and careful listening.

Define behaviours. Determine exactly how you want your leaders to change. Define the competencies and culture you seek. Use event based activities that integrate the desired behaviours in the workplace. Defining behaviours allows observation and evaluation for continuous adjustment.

Engage and expand. Get going – with any group. Where in your company leadership development starts is not as important as the fact that it gets started. Sometimes middle management has to get going before the executives recognize the need – and value. Expanding leadership development as quickly as you can, will provide greater impact. Caution: be sure to link with internal HR practices to support communication. Great leaders always communicate how changes express and embody company values and vision.

Repeat. Forget pilot programs and workshops. Embed continuous learning, adjustment and development of leadership. A pilot tests only the delivery of the leadership facilitators during the workshop, NOT the impact of leadership development. Make learning leadership a continuous process. After the first group, work with your expert partner to adjust the design based joint learning and the different needs of each subsequent group.

Stand back. It's not about you. It's about your company and the leaders you help develop. By focusing on leadership development, you've started your company on a path to greatness. Once the process is in place, your company will reap the benefits down the road, even if no one knows it was you who took the first steps. As Harry S Truman said, "You can accomplish anything in life, provided that you do not mind who gets the credit."

Why settle for running a company when you can develop the leaders who will make it great? We can guide you through the seven steps to creating leaders.

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