



Welcome to Issue 9!

Welcome to issue 9 of the MOHSW Leadership Forum. We have created a Google group for this information exchange network – by sending an email to MOHSWLeadershipForum@googlegroups.com your email will automatically and immediately be forwarded to everyone on the list.

The objective is to share information on leadership and management. The leadership forum newsletter will be circulated to everyone on the list on a regular basis and is designed to stimulate comment and reflection. We will be looking at topics such as influence, power, self-management, self perception **and anything else that you'd like to cover** so please send comments and ideas to MOHSWLeadershipForum@googlegroups.com

Useful Model: Fundamental values for success

Schein (1992) notes several requisites for organisational success that organisational culture must now take into account: Culture must:

- be proactive, not just reactive.
- influence and manage the environment, not just adapt.
- be pragmatic, not idealistic.
- be future-oriented, not predominantly present/past oriented.
- embrace diversity, not uniformity.
- be relationship-oriented, not just task-oriented.
- embrace external connectivity, as well as promote internal integration.

These fundamental assumptions are key to eliminating obstacles that will inhibit the kinds of internal and external organisational adaptations necessary for future success. They are not, however, sufficient. They must be reinforced by values, behavioral norms and patterns, artifacts and symbols, as well as accompanied by a particular mission, set of goals, and strategies. Others emphasize more specific cultural mandates, such as that the modern organisational culture must be:

- Team-oriented (Sherriton and Stern 1997)
- Knowledge and learning oriented
- Alliance and partnership oriented
- Know when to emphasize and how to balance cultural maintenance and cultural innovation (Trice and Beyer 1991; Collins and Porras 1994).
- keep the existing organisation culture relevant to the present and future while maintaining some sense of continuity with the past. Collins and Porras (1994) found that companies with long-term success had a limited but strong set of timeless core values that did not prevent organisational change over time. These companies were able to preserve the core while stimulating progress.

Useful Ideas : The emotions of Conflict

“In a world of pattern, events are primarily triggered by [the perception of] difference rather than by force and energy” – Gregory Bateson

Organisational participants can expect to experience many different manifestations of conflict in response to change or threat of change. These experiences range from passive-aggressive 'ignoring' to active displays of rage, physical violence and sabotage. People instinctively know that conflict always precedes change and this is probably an important reason for the emotional content of these interactions in companies. In effect, these conflict processes may remind people of conflicts and power dynamics in their homes of origin – an important cause of some of the deep emotions that are felt. Here are some useful ideas - partially adapted from the work of Abraham H. Maslow - about how you can best deal with the powerful emotions experienced during conflict.

- The sympathetic nervous system is stimulated during times of conflict. This is associated with the release of Adrenaline which causes rapid breathing - so consciously slow down. Breathe deeply into your belly through your nose and let it out sloooooowly through your mouth. Do this a few times.
- Give yourself some self-nurturing with a long, loving self-hug. Wrap your arms tightly around yourself and smile. (Do this in the cloakroom or people may think you're strange).
- Take a hike... yourself. If you feel out of control angry, say 'I need some time to think' and go for a 10- minute walk or play a mindless computer game for a few minutes. Then sit down, gather your thoughts and plan to state your case in an assertive, purposeful and constructive way.
- Meet at a neutral place, preferably at a table.
- Watch your posture - don't cross anything. Unclench your jaw. Unclench your fists. Relax your eyes.
- Keep your language simple. We live in a cross-cultural society, so there may be a language problem. But even if there isn't, simple language has the most power.
- Remember that more than anything, conflict is caused by bad communication.
- Say 'I' instead of 'you'. For instance: 'I disagree' 'This is how I see it...' 'From what I understand, this works best' 'I've learnt than customers expect us to...' NB - 'I think *you're* wrong' is cheating.
- Listen - really listen to what the other person has to say.
- Turn down the inner voice that says you're being attacked/disrespected/made a fool of. Be aware that it's there, but don't take it seriously. Think words like 'interesting... curious... fascinating'. For instance: 'She's accusing me of being a control freak... how interesting'.
- Be truthful about your feelings when you're being attacked. Speak it - for instance: 'I'm taken aback; can I think about this for a while?' 'I have no idea how to respond to this right now.' 'I'm shocked that you feel that way.'

Tips:

- Become aware of the physical signs that you're becoming angry.
- Once you know the feeling, STOP and identify what it is that is making you angry.
- Ask yourself: 'Can this anger be useful to me?' If you get angry in the traffic, understand that you are making no impact on the other person, but you're making an enormous impact on your own state of mind.
- If the anger is not useful, **DROP IT**. Try to see it from the other person's point of view. 'He's just trying to earn a living.' 'He didn't see me.' 'I've made mistakes like that before.'

- Identify and express feelings that came **before** the anger. Maybe you got a fright. Maybe you felt humiliated, frustrated or unacknowledged. Express **those** feelings instead and the anger will dissipate.
- **If the anger can be useful, take control of it, relax and plan how you're going to respond assertively to make things happen differently.**