

Functions of Leaders and Managers

A lot of people like the idea of being put into a leadership and management job... But soon discover they may not know how to lead or manage, because it is something they must learn before they can really be successful.

Learning how to lead and manage is learning how to efficiently and effectively perform the functions of a leader and a manager.

Functions Defined

Functions are nothing more than the activities that a manager engages in his or her job.

If we look at all the activities he or she does we find they can be divided generally into two types of activities and functions. These are the leadership function and the management function.

Leadership and Management Functions

Leadership functions cover setting vision, inspiring and coaching while the management functions cover planning, organizing and directing.

In the past few years, experts have stressed the importance of the leadership functions.

This is a popular topic for books, seminars, and consulting services.

Overemphasis on Management Functions

Experts say that the empha-



sis on the management function during the past decades made organizations inflexible and slow to adapt to change – making them less able to compete. Organizations now must pay more attention to the leadership functions to succeed in a competitive and rapidly changing climate.

Experts agree that the management functions of planning, organizing and directing are sustaining activities that serve well in times of relative tranquility. The management functions encourage adherence to established procedures and policies.

Setting Vision and Inspiring people

On the other hand, in times of rapid change and a chaotic marketplace, like the periods we are currently in today, it is by setting a new vision, inspiring and coaching people to follow the vision that breakthrough results are produced. Leadership functions encourage innovation and creativity, which leads to new ways of doing things.

We can say then that depending on the nature and the purpose of the organization, every leader, supervisor and manager performs both the leadership and management functions. Which function should be emphasized would entirely depend on their unique organizational need.

While all leaders and managers do both of the functions, the degree of each function depends on the job they have in the organization. It would depend on whether he or she is a president, a manager, supervisor, team leader or specialist manager.

For instance, we would expect to find the president spending the majority of his or her time setting a vision and inspiring key managers to follow strategic direction or implement organizational re-

Functions of Leaders and Managers

Continued...

structuring.

While on the other hand, the manager, foreman or the team leader or specialist manager would be spending the majority of his or her time communicating the vision, project planning and directing performance.

So, let's see what we mean by each of these functions...

Leadership

"Setting vision" is developing a vision of the future and producing the strategies to make the changes to achieve the vision.

"Inspiring" is communicating direction and collaboration

and energizing people to overcome obstacles to



change and the realization of personal goals and group vision.

"Coaching" is mentoring and training workers so they acquire the skills and attitudes required to accomplish the change.

Management

"Planning" is deciding what is to be accomplished by the group, and then determining how it is going to be done.

"Organizing" is putting together a new organizational structure of people and jobs or modifying an existing one, to do the things that have been planned.

"Directing" is checking to see if the work being turned out meets the predetermined standard - and taking remedial action if it does not.

Reflect on these questions:

Which of the functions do you do the most? If you were to make a change to get better results, which of the functions would you do more of?

Vignettes
for Training
Copyright 2000

605 West Huntington Drive, Suite 115
Monrovia, Ca 91016, USA
Email: support@vignettestraining.com
Phone: (626) 930-0160
Fax: (626) 930-0617
www.VignettesTraining.com