



1,000 THINGS BOARDS & MANAGERS SHOULD KNOW

Good Governance Tip #2

Leadership in Co-operatives

LEADERSHIP IN CO-OPERATIVES

Leadership is the most pressing need of our co-operative businesses, our communities, and our nation. We need more and better leaders to manage our co-operatives and we need a special type of leader to break new ground, chart new seas, and to go where no one has gone before.

Leadership may be defined as 'the ability to get followers' or 'any attempt to influence the behavior of others or groups' or 'action not position' or 'ahead of the pack'.

Once you accept the role of a leader, you also accept the responsibility for channeling the behavior of others toward achieving results. Leadership style is how the leader appears in the eye of the beholder. It is not how people see themselves that matters, but how they come across to others.

Followers have changed. It is much more difficult being a leader today. Followers today:

- ★ Think and analyze more
- ★ Are less meek
- ★ Are less grateful for their jobs
- ★ What to know what is going on
- ★ What and need to participate
- ★ Need to be involved and have a say
- ★ Are more expensive
- ★ Have more potential than ever before

Leaders must correctly diagnose the follower's readiness. The follower is more ready to follow in as much as they possess experience, skill, and ability. In addition, the more the follower has the necessary confidence, commitment, and motivation, the more ready they are to follow. The combination of these factors influences the readiness of the follower:

- ★ Necessary confidence
- ★ Necessary commitment
- ★ Necessary motivation

The more they have, the more ready they are to follow.

The leader's behavior is directed in two ways; one to do the task, and the other in the relationship with the followers. The task aspect is the extent to which the leader engages in defining roles, telling the follower what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and where to do it. The relationship aspect is the extent to which the leader engages in the setting of goals with the follower, organizing the work, time schedules, directing situations, and controlling the enterprise.

Task Behavior

- ★ Defining roles
- ★ Leader telling how, what, when, etc
- ★ Who is to do what
- ★ Goals
- ★ Organizing
- ★ Time lines
- ★ Directing
- ★ Controlling
- ★ Relationships

Relationship Behavior

The relationship of the leader is dependent on the extent of:

- ★ Two-way communications
- ★ Listening skills
- ★ Facilitating behaviors
- ★ Socio-emotional support

Stages in Behavior

New employees start with a low relationship from the leader, but with a high task behavior from the leader. The follower, in time, moves to the second level, which is a high relationship behavior and a high task behavior. This stage is referred to as the selling stage.

If the leader has been effective, the follower will then move to the third level called the participation stage. In this level, the leader has high relationship behavior and low task relationship behavior. It is at this level the organization begins to realign profit from the efforts of the follower and the follower begins to receive greater personal rewards from the job.

The ultimate stage, and the best stage, for the leader to operate from is stage four. In this stage the leader delegates all the responsibility to the follower. This is a low relationship and allows task behavior from the leader.

The following gives the leader four behavior styles, and should choose the most appropriate style to suite the readiness of the follower:

- ★ The leader makes the decisions
- ★ The leader makes the decision with dialogue with explanations with the follower
- ★ The leader and the follower make the decisions together with encouragement
- ★ The follower makes the decision alone
- ★ Determinations, keep on going
- ★ Discipline, Self-mastery and self-control

The Three C's

85 percent of leadership success is based on interpersonal skills. The three C's of leadership position are:

- ★ Command (tell them)
- ★ Consult (ask for advice)
- ★ Consensus (everyone discusses and agrees)

Seven steps to effective leadership are:

- ★ Desire, must want to
- ★ Decisions, be prepared to pay the price
- ★ Role model, study and emulate great leaders
- ★ Study, read and take training
- ★ Practice

For further information on this and other related topics, as well as many co-operative development subjects such as governance, finance and marketing, strategic planning, management, etc, contact the Nova Scotia Co-operative Council at the address below. Our knowledgeable staff of Business Development Officers, located in Truro, Sydney, and Yarmouth are available to assist you in all areas of co-operative development. You can also visit us on the web at www.nsko-opcouncil.ca.



Nova Scotia Co-operative Council

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