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WAYS LEADERS GET RESULTS



American Management
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TRAINING SOLUTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS & ORGANIZATIONS

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Introduction

It's a fact of organizational life: To lead well, one must communicate well. No communication, no leadership—no question about it. Leaders spend an incredibly high percentage of their time communicating every day.

They must engage in speaking one on one, addressing groups, listening, coaching, delegating, motivating, advocating, and negotiating—not to mention reading and writing.

“ How are you doing as a communicator? ”

“ Are you getting your message across? ”

“ Are you having the impact you want? ”

“ Are you getting the results you need? ”

“ Are you building loyal, trusting relationships with colleagues? ”

Even when they say nothing, leaders are communicating symbolically.

No matter what else you may do as a leader, if you are not communicating at a high level of impact, you will not be effective. In this eBook, we'll reveal some of the tactics effective leaders use to set their direction and vision, and to establish inspiring values and a clear mission.

We'll also cover one of the most crucial things a leader can do, which is to give useful feedback to team members. That includes recognizing and rewarding good work and coaching for work that needs improvement, providing the kind of feedback that will bring about positive change. Put these tactics to work to establish an authoritative voice of leadership that gets results.



What Leaders Talk About: Key Messages

Effective leaders discuss their ideas about a group's purpose, direction, responsibilities, and progress. At a minimum, leaders provide clarity on the following topics:

Who We Are, What We Do, and What We Value (Our Identity)

- Our organizational identity, mission and values
- Our products, services, and core competencies

- Where We Are Going and Why (Our Strategic Direction and Motivation)
- Our long-term vision
- Our customers' expectations of us
- The benefits of our success and the consequences of our failure

How We Can Proceed Together (Our Operational Direction)

- Our key results areas, goals, and performance expectations
- Our operating principles, policies, priorities, procedures, plans, and processes
- Our available resources and operating constraints
- Our customers, end users, working relationships, and stakeholders
- Our monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and reward systems

How You Can Help Us Get There (Your Performance Expectations)

- The benefit, importance, and urgency of your work
- Your specific roles and responsibilities
- Your level of authority and its boundaries
- Your measures of success (goals and expectations)
- The potential problems you may encounter
- The support you can expect to receive

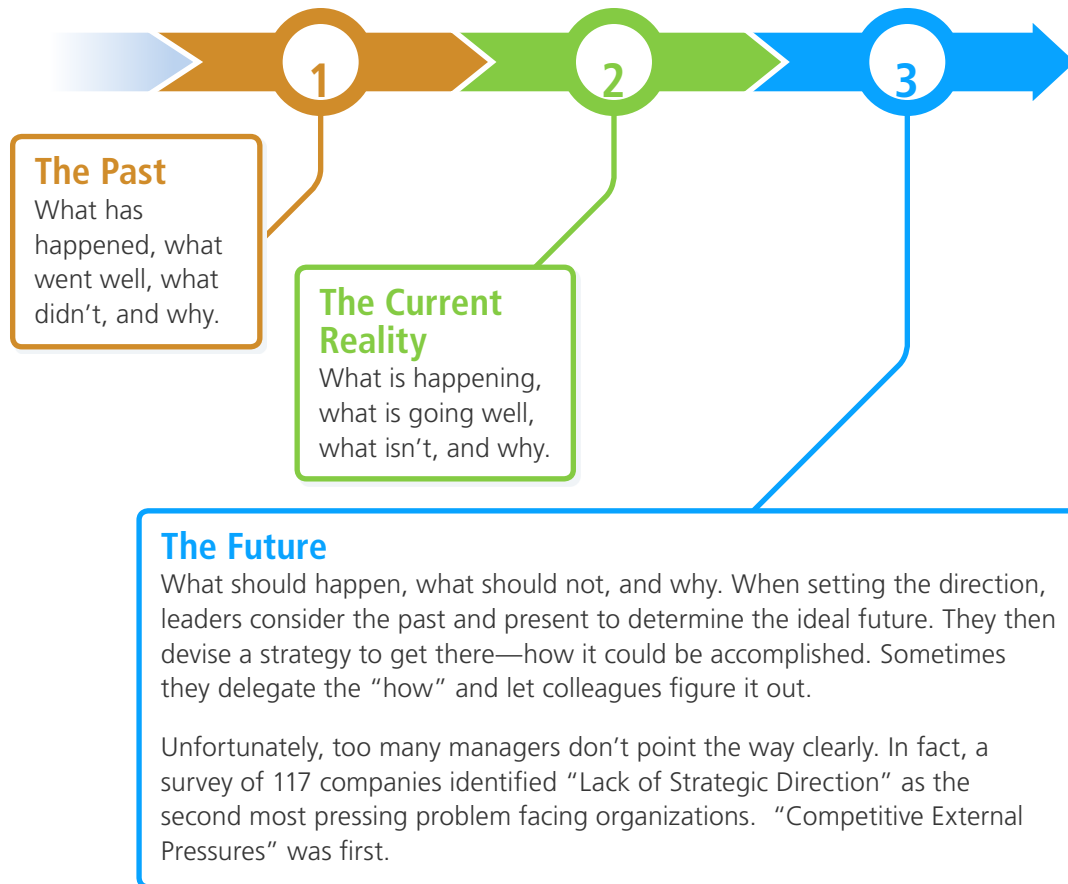
How We Are Progressing (Feedback and Coaching)

- Our strengths, accomplishments, and their positive impact
- Our issues and areas for growth, development, and improvement
- Recommended changes, improvements, and corrective actions



Setting the Direction for Others

Leaders have triple vision. They see three things clearly:



LACK OF STRATEGIC DIRECTION INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

- Unclear direction from top management
- Conflicting messages from members of the top management team
- Ambiguity about what is truly valued at the top of the organization
- Shifting organizational priorities
- Ever-changing initiatives in the organization
- Absence of a compelling corporate vision



Setting Your Strategic and Operational Direction

The Strategic Direction (Mission, Vision, and Values)

Leaders define an organization’s strategic direction—its mission, vision, and values. These provide the high-level guidance that orients and aligns people within an organization.

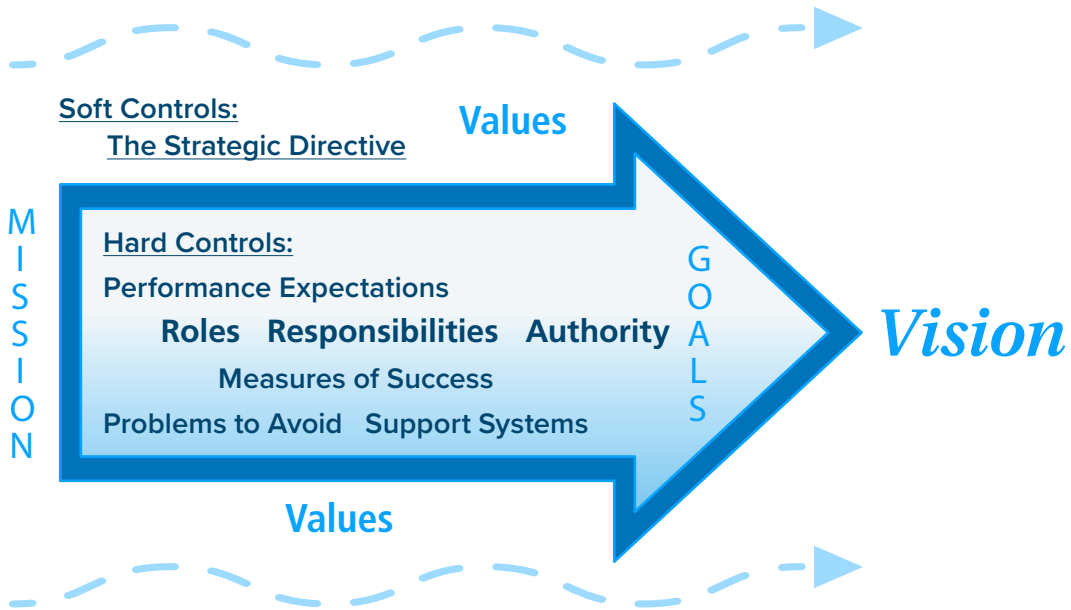
These are the “soft” controls that broadly define what people should do and how they should act within an organization.

The Operational Direction (Performance Expectations)

Leaders also define performance expectations for getting things done. They provide the concrete mechanisms to ensure the desired results are achieved.

A well-developed set of performance expectations can include roles, responsibilities, levels of authority, goals, performance measures, deadlines, processes to be followed, support to be provided, and measures to monitor progress.

These are the “hard” controls that prescribe and manage people’s day-to-day efforts.





Templates for Setting Your Leadership Direction



STRATEGIC DIRECTION

To establish a vision of our long-term destination, discuss:

Our current reality—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

Our desired future state:

- Accomplishments that will have been realized
- Positive changes that will have been implemented
- Values that will have been upheld



MISSION STATEMENT

To establish a mission statement of our day-to-day reason for being, discuss:

Our deliverables: the products and services we provide

Our customers: the people who receive our deliverables

Our value: the benefits of our deliverables to our customers



VALUES STATEMENT

To establish our values statement—the core principles we will live by—discuss:

Our core values: the few core principles that will guide us in all we do

Our values in action: stories of how people have upheld those values



OPERATIONAL DIRECTION

To create an operational plan, answer the following questions:

Purpose: What is the plan we're trying to accomplish?

Goals: What specific targets are to be met, and by when?

Action steps: What specific actions must be taken, and by when?

Responsibilities: Who must perform which actions?

Coordinating instructions: How will work be coordinated?

Support to be provided: What resources will be provided?



Tactic 1: Establish a Clear Mission

A mission defines an organization's basic purpose; its reason for being. It answers the question:

"What are we here to do, day in and day out—for whom, and why?"

IDEALLY A MISSION STATEMENT ANSWERS THESE THREE QUESTIONS:

What is our core purpose?

To provide _____
The product or service you provide

To whom do we provide it?

To _____
Your core customer demographic

What is the value for our customers?

So that they _____
The value your product has for your customers

To define your mission:



Describe the basic purpose of the organization or work unit.



Focus on the day-to-day activities of your work.



Be clear and concise. Make it immediately understandable to everyone.



Tactic 2: Create a Compelling Vision

A vision is an image of an innovative, unique, desirable future state. In practical terms, it is what you want the organization to become or achieve. It can be expressed in terms of a reachable dream or desired future state for the organization, its products, or its services.

It is rooted in the current reality—the present-day strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)—but takes a bold leap to describe a desired future state.

Our current reality is that we presently have these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats: _____ . But our dream is that one day we will have _____ .

To create a vision:

Think boldly about what needs to be created or improved.

- Identify positive changes that can be made.
- Dream of breakthrough approaches, processes, services or products.

Take a quantum leap forward, years into the future.

- Write your vision as if it were an annual report for the year _____ .
- Think about what would truly amaze customers.

Create specific images of the future.

- Talk in concrete detail, as if it has happened or is happening.
- Describe what things will look like when we get there.

EXAMPLES OF VISION STATEMENTS:

I foresee a day when our company will be offering our _____ not just in _____ but throughout _____. We will have become the third largest _____ company in our field in the _____ with revenues at _____ .

We will have grown our customer base by ____%. But most importantly, our customers will be telling us that we are an indispensable partner in their growth and success because of the value we bring them.

We will have pioneered the use of _____ technology in the area of _____. We will have become widely respected for _____ .



Tactic 3: Establish and Communicate Inspiring Values

Values are statements about the beliefs and behaviors you cherish. They guide how you want people to think and act in pursuit of the mission and vision.

We believe in and will act in line with these principles under all circumstances.

To establish values, take the following steps:

- Define a few key, unalterable principles.
- State what is always expected.
- Include values that prescribe two important issues:
 - How well work should be accomplished
 - How well people should treat one another
- Choose wording that provides guidance in the gray areas.
 - Select principles that will help people make decisions in the face of uncertainty, consistent with the organization's intent.
- Use precise adjectives to add an emotional dimension to the values.

SAMPLE VALUES STATEMENT

Every day and in every way and in everything we do, we will demonstrate integrity, quality, teamwork, and safety:

- Unquestionable integrity
- Consistent quality
- Selfless teamwork
- Vigilant attention to safety



Tactic 4: Recognize, Reinforce and Reward Good Work

“The job of a leader is to walk around with a pump and pump self-confidence into people.”
– Jack Welch

Good performance or good behavior needs reinforcement just as much as weak performance or unacceptable behavior needs redirection.

While observing performance, seek out the positives to reinforce.

- Look for the things that people are doing right.
- Pinpoint the specific effective behaviors you want to reinforce.
 - Achieving goals, showing improvement, living the organization’s values.

When delivering reinforcing feedback, recognition, and rewards:

- Make it immediate and enthusiastic.
- Reinforce specific behaviors that advance organizational goals and values.
- Deliver a three-part message emphasizing the word “you.”



PRAISE

Provide sincere recognition for the person’s good work and efforts.



FACTS

Describe the specific behaviors that were effective.



RESULTS

Describe the positive impact or benefits of the effective behaviors.

EXAMPLE:

You did a terrific job in writing this marketing plan, Meryl. Your plan is thorough and covers every element of the Five Ps of Marketing. You made it so easy to read, and you put in some striking visuals. I love that! But most of all, your ideas are totally practical. Every aspect of them makes sense. You have definitely impressed me, and I am sure the management team will be impressed and buy into it quickly, too. Thanks for an excellent job!

Provide an unexpected, tangible, personalized reward they will truly value.



Tactic 5: Coach for Improved Results

When employees are on the wrong track, it is necessary to redirect their behavior. Before you do this, get their permission. Ask if you can make a suggestion. Then proceed with care.

Consider using the **Past-Future-Present Model** below. It is a simple, positive, non-threatening approach that will allow you to guide someone to make a positive change.

Before starting, do things to minimize a possible defensive reaction.

- Be in a calm, positive frame of mind. Remember that coaching is about caring.
- Open with a gentle statement about the difficulty of the conversation.
- Be specific and nonjudgmental. Stick to the facts. Tell the story.

As you begin, set the stage and identify your purpose.

- Provide a gentle warning.
- Describe your intent.
- Ask for permission to discuss the issue or give feedback.

As you proceed, cover the past, future, and present.

- Discuss the past events that have occurred.
- Discuss the ideal future goal to be achieved.
- Discuss the present actions that can be taken.

Use the right approach: the facilitative approach or the directive approach.

- If possible, facilitate a self-assessment and self-improvement plan.
- If time is short, provide your assessment and a plan for the other person to follow.

Wrap up the conversation.

- Review the key points.
- Verify understanding and commitment.
- Schedule a follow-up.



Conclusion and Resources

From outlining your key messages to establishing a clear vision and mission, you now have tangible strategies to hone your voice as a leader. You also have a list of tips to deliver useful feedback. Put these tactics to work to inspire and influence your team and get the results you're aiming for.

Ensure Your Ongoing Success as a Leader with AMA's Total ProfessionalSM



Building skills in these four areas is key:

Professional Effectiveness includes self-management skills that increase productivity, boost confidence, and build stamina to achieve goals.

Relationship Management is about leading and influencing others to achieve common objectives with a clear vision, effective communication and persuasive interpersonal skills.

Business Acumen is essential for taking on more diverse responsibilities and making decisions about complex matters.

Analytical Intelligence is necessary to think in a clear, systematic manner, and uncover insights from data and complex situations.



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