
Simply Practical

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SYMPRAXIS, LLC
MAXIMIZING YOUR BOTTOM LINE

Productive Meetings

Make your meetings more productive with these simple steps:

1. **Project updates.** Have each person give a quick one-minute report on the status of a project. Have them mention anything that is challenging that could hinder the completion date and ask for suggestions.
2. **Follow the agenda.** Have an agenda prepared for every meeting. Stay focused. Follow the agenda and leave time for pressing issues.
3. **Focus on the most important issues.** Don't get bogged down with non-important issues that are simply urgent. The most effective meetings focus on the most important issues.

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Are your meetings productive?

Formal Leadership

This is part five of a five part series on Formal Leadership. Each concept works alone however; fits nicely with the other articles. Please contact us if you missed an article.

Authority and Power

Have you ever observed two individuals of equal position, rank, and authority in an organization?

One seems to accomplish everything successfully and with ease, while the other seems to always be "under the gun," having a crisis, and a difficult time. The true leaders in any organization are easy to recognize. They're the ones who always seem to accomplish more with apparent ease. The key is their ability to get others to accomplish more than they thought they could. The effective leader is one who makes a difficult task look easy. An ineffective leader is one who makes a simple task look difficult. This phenomenon occurs at all levels in an organization.

Improving your understanding of two concepts, authority and power, can help you to develop a more effective leadership style and help others to become better leaders. The terms authority and power have been used interchangeably over the years. However, power and authority are two very different concepts. Understanding each will help you to drive leadership skills throughout the organization.

Power may be defined as the ability or capacity to act in ways which influence the behavior of others. It is a personal talent which can be developed. It is the ability to get others to do things. It has little or nothing to do with title, rank, or authority.

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Power is a measure of personal effectiveness. It is granted to you by those over whom you have influence. Power is earned and given by those who follow.

Authority, on the other hand, defines limits and actions which you have the contractual right to take or use. It is granted to you by the organization as part of the organization's attempt to control and manage. It is the right to settle disputes, to control operations, to make and implement decisions, and to administer or manage. It has little or nothing to do with the ability to influence the behavior or others.

It is entirely possible to possess a great deal of power, while not possessing any authority. It is also possible to possess authority and very little power.



Dysfunctional leaders may have authority, but typically have little or no power. Because of this, they frequently abuse their authority, thereby diminishing any potential power, and their ability to influence and lead others. When people are subjected to constant use of abuse of authority, they will develop subtle and effective ways of subverting it to protect themselves. Excessive use of authority often produces behavior in others, which resembles the reactions of a child who rebels against severe, excessive parental restrictions. Turnover, grievances, absenteeism, and dissention may all be signs of this behavior. They diminish rather than enhance a productive, creative, positive work environment.

Formal leaders who have both power and authority are effective because they only use authority as a last resort to achieve goals. Authority is used sparingly and rarely is pushed to this extreme. If you have earned power by creating a climate of trust, permitting and helping others to maintain their dignity, their pride, and their autonomy, people will work and achieve because of the value they place on themselves and the goals of the organization.

Continued next column –

Both they and you are aware of the reciprocal nature of the relationship and recognize that everyone functions better with cooperation, than with coercion.

Authority does fill a very necessary and important function in the operation of any organization and can be an effective tool of management when used judiciously. A leader should not shun its use when the situation demands it, but should avoid creating situations in which authority is the only recourse.

Informal leaders can have a great deal of power in an organization while possessing little or no authority. They can be great assets to formal leaders and are frequently viewed as “Fast Trackers” who are groomed to quickly rise through the ranks.

Succeeding in a highly competitive, fast-paced, global environment means everyone in the organization must be focused on improving customer satisfaction, increasing revenues, improving processes, and reducing cycle time. Leadership behavior must create an environment in which people are encouraged to seek out innovative ways of doing things which will ultimately lead to more revenues or lower costs.

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he/she wants to do it.”

— Dwight Eisenhower

Check out the Leadership Questionnaire on page 3.

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Web Site of the Month

Welcome to the Longevity Game! See how your lifestyle can affect you in the years to come by answering just 12 quick questions on topics such as Gender, Blood Pressure, Family History, Exercise, Diet, etc.



Check it out at:

http://www.nmfn.com/tnetwork/longevity_game_popup.html

Leadership Questionnaire

1. Authority has no place in effective leadership.
True _____ False _____
2. Dysfunctional leaders abuse authority and demand power.
True _____ False _____
3. Power may be defined as:

Leadership questionnaire answers –

- 1) False – Authority fills a very necessary and important function in the operation of any organization and can be an effective tool of management when used judiciously.
 - 2) True.
 - 3) Power may be defined as the ability or capacity to act in ways which influence the behavior of others.
-

Failure To Success –

- Walt Disney was fired by a newspaper for lacking ideas. He also went bankrupt several times before he built Disneyland.



- When his older brother was killed during WWII, he first withdrew into a shell. Then he began to listen to the radio to ease his pain. Soon he was dreaming about hosting his own radio show. That led Dick Clark to start American Bandstand.



- After Fred Astaire's first screen test, a 1933 memo from the MGM testing director said, "Can't act. Slightly bald. Can dance a little." Astaire kept that memo over the fireplace in his Beverly Hills home.



"Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work."

– Aristotle



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Reduce Back and Neck Strain

If you ever get a sore back and/or neck while working on the computer, try these helpful tips.

1. Position the monitor at a comfortable level, recommended at a height where the top of the monitor is even with your forehead.
2. Sit in a comfortable, relaxed, and good posture position to help reduce strain.
3. Finally, take breaks often. Get up, walk around, get a drink, and stretch.



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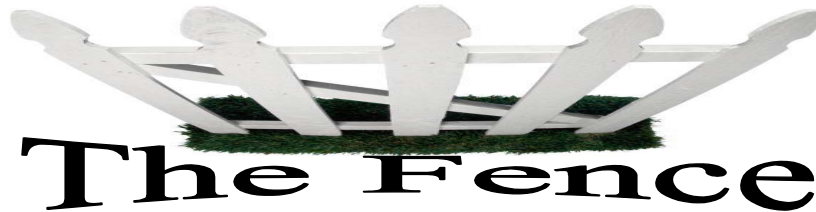
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There was a little boy with a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him to hammer a nail in the back fence every time he lost control.

The first day the boy drove 37 nails into the fence. Then it gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive the nails into the fence.

Finally, the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. His father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father led his son to the fence.

"You have done well, but look at the holes in the fence," he said. "When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like the nail holes. You can put a knife in a person and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say 'I'm sorry,' the wound is still there. A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one."

— Author Unknown

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