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Leading with Power and Authority: Energize Others with Deep Green Leadership

By James K. Hazy, Ed.D., Founder & CEO, Leadership Science, LLC

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One of the most significant aspects of leadership involves the stewardship of resources both collective and individual. People instinctively want to understand how their needs will be met in the present and in the future. When they are confident their needs will be cared for, they experience a sense of control and a feeling of power. Ironically, in the process they must acknowledge a dependence upon collective action for success. They internalize the collective agenda as their own deep sense of trust in the organization and its leadership is the result. Leading by influencing people's belief in the fairness of resource flows and their trust that they will eventually benefit, is a powerful aspect of leadership.

Like the deep green of the rainforest canopy, when leadership provides its members with the resources they need to grow, the organizational canopy is teeming with life. In this second of a series of articles exploring the spectrum of leadership influence, I address the question: how does deep green leadership energize others?

The Story Part 1: The Conundrum

One Thursday afternoon as a scheduled meeting was breaking up, Lynn, the CEO, realized he had time to stop by the field office in town. He had hoped he could as this office was one of the lower performing ones in the region. He sent his driver ahead with his luggage saying he would have the office manager drive him to the airport after his visit.

When he arrived at the plush offices, he was taken by the emptiness of the space, the quiet and relatively low energy level. The support staff seemed to be making themselves busy and the members of the outside sales team who were in the office, were busily doing paperwork between conversations with office mates. When questions were posed about how things could be run more effectively, Lynn was struck by the pervasive sense of powerlessness. Productive work was hard to identify against the backdrop of make-work activity.

Lynn regretted having become disconnected from the organization. He remembered a few months back when he visited a high performance office. It had seemed as though an "invisible hand" was guiding action, efficiently and effectively.

He remembered feeling that things were going well then, that actions seemed directed and everyone was excited and happy. They came in early and stayed late. The pace of action was quick and efficient. Now, in contrast, people seemed to be making work, active but without clear link to the organization's objectives. They were doing what they thought was right, but weren't sure. Morale, it seems, had sagged. As he left the office and headed for the airport, he made a mental note: "Our leadership plan needs work," he thought.

Analysis and Perspective

In his leadership role, Lynn was appropriately, if informally, monitoring a leading indicator of performance. When he noted the apparent confusion regarding efficient resource allocation and a

pervasive sense of powerlessness he was observing an indicator of sagging leadership effectiveness. He appropriately hypothesized that this decline was related to a reduced "velocity" of leadership across the organization, the amount of time spent on leadership activities was declining. Because a pervasive sense of powerlessness and confusion about resource distribution are indicative of a decline in a specific type of leadership influence, called deep green leadershipSM, he realized that he needed to initiate programs to reenergize this type of leadership in the organization.

Lynn knew that three steps were required: first gather information about the current situation, diagnose the issues and formulate hypotheses; second, initiate specific leadership activities designed to shore-up the deeply held sense of fairness in resource distribution across the firm and the sense of potency or power that results; and third, institutionalize change by integrating these initiatives into the organization's culture.

Lynn realized this would not be easy. His leadership teams must find ways to influence members' deeply held beliefs about their relationship with the organization and their sense of the organization's fairness. The benefits of success are great, however, because a sense of fairness enables trust and clarity of action. Both focus action on collective benefits rather than on individual comforts.

Case Study Examples

Many organizations face periods where change in the environment or to the organization's structure disrupts the flow of resources through the system. The organization's members begin to wonder what these changes mean to them and whether they will be treated fairly. During these periods, the organization's members do not feel in control of their own situation and of their organization's success. They spend time and energy trying to understand what the situation means to them and attempting to position themselves to benefit or simply to protect their interests. Sometimes they even consider leaving. To prepare for possible inequity, some members use the organization's resources to feather their nests and accumulate power in order to feel in control. Upon reflection, Lynn realized that he himself had used his driver to satisfy his personal needs even as those of the organization were not best served. When the sense of unfairness or lack of control occurs broadly across the organization, leadership intervention is required.

The success of Intel in the microprocessor business is legendary, but it didn't have to be that way. The Intel story might have been quite different if some of its managers had not been skilled at gaining access to firm resources, that is, at deep green leadership.

From the moment he joined Intel, technologist Les Kohn believed the firm should enter the reduced instruction set computing (RISC) processor market pioneered by competitors Sun Microsystems and Motorola. However, strategically, Intel had decided not to enter the market and had not allocated resources to the product.

Kohn knew he needed to garner firm resources if his dream was to be realized. He also knew that a skunk works project would not have sufficient scale and scope to build the team he needed. Therefore, he decided to "sell" the project to top-management as a co-processor to be sold along with Intel's core products, rather than as a stand-alone processor that would have competed with Intel's core product line.

With the product funded, resources flowed to the project and to those working on it. Fortunately, market momentum grew and because the product had good margins, Intel's production rules ensured adequate fabrication capacity and other resources were supplied to the product. With his focus on

providing the needed resources to his project and his team, Kohn exhibited deep green leadership influence. Likewise, Intel prospered in a new market with growing revenue¹.

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Michael Dell, founder and CEO of Dell Computer Corporation is a master of deep green leadership. His organization is famous for aligning resources with strategy and leads its industry with power and authority. In his memoirs Dell emphasizes how important it is for all employees to understand the organizations value creation strategy and to realize that their rewards are related to actions that directly support this strategy. "We explained specifically how everyone could contribute.... And we make it the core of our incentive compensation plan for all employees.²" At Dell Computer, power and authority, not to mention impressive returns over many years, were the direct result of the deep green leadershipSM programs that provided clarity and alignment about resource flows.

These stories demonstrate the power of deep green leadership and its impact on people, whether in a division or across the firm. When leadership operates to reinforce people's deeply held sense fairness with respect to resources and their access to them, they are empowered. This energizes them, so that everyone organizes the collective effort, not just a few people at the top of the pyramid.

The Story Part 2: Resolution

When Lynn arrived in his office, he immediately asked some tough questions. "How well do people understand their decision authority? and do they understand how our business works? how resources flow and decisions are made? Are we passionate that everyone has the tools and resources they need to do their jobs? Do we critically review project plans and budgets and make sure everyone controls the resources they need? Do people feel they share in our collective success? How does the situation compare with six months ago? How engaged are our people?"

These were difficult questions, but ones that could be answered. The process took several weeks, but once the data was gathered and preliminary analysis was completed, the trend was clear—leadership activity aimed at clarifying the resource distribution flows in the organization, deep green leadership activity, had fallen off in the organization.

When he had these answers, Lynn called his leadership team together to share the findings and express his concerns. "We seem to have lost our edge," he said. "I don't see the same level of self-motivation and energy in our people that I did six months ago. Data showing reduced activity levels in this area across the firm support my belief that there is cause for concern. Our leadership velocity in the areas of resources, decision authority and reward distribution has dropped off. To be the strong company we need to be, we have to do better."

The team had a difficult time at first, uncomfortable that all members of the organization could ever feel they were being treated fairly and had what they needed to do their jobs. It seemed a bit ambitious and perhaps naïve to believe everyone could be made to think the organization was fair in its resource distribution. "Life isn't fair", some managers argued.

What began as a one-hour discussion, continued into the evening. Follow-up meetings were held with a much broader array of leaders. It became clear from the interaction that even among the leadership, there was a sense that there was an unevenness or arbitrariness in decision making, and tellingly, that this was okay. Renewal was needed. As Lynn knew, it had already begun.

In the course of the discussion, it was agreed that a key objective over the next six months was to

greatly clarify the decision-making authorities and resource flows across the organization. Each group agreed to work within their teams to clarify and document their value creation strategies and the decision making process at all levels of their organization. Monthly town meetings were planned with the sole focus on how the firm did business, what drove success and how each person's work fit into the process. In parallel, the compensation programs of the firm were reviewed and communication plans developed to further everyone's understanding of how resources were used and distributed in the organization. The process cascaded into the organization until a consistent and clear picture of the business began to emerge across the organization. The quarterly cultural survey in use was modified to include targeted questions to provide on-going feedback.

After six months, the results of this initiative were documented in a new section of on the firm's employee website. As appropriate, aspects were also integrated into the organizations planning process thus providing much greater clarity and visibility to into the process. All managers were asked to communicate the process with their teams and provide feedback. After several months, the changes to the process dwindled to a manageable level, and enthusiasm was up. Excitement was evident and morale was improving.

To close out the cycle of leadership, Lynn asked his teams to propose ways to be proactive, with continuous feedback and action. He realized that leadership requires discipline and vigilance and that nothing works forever. At the same time, he didn't want to wait for the same problem to surface again.

Epilogue

On a recent visit to the same sales office he had visited earlier, Lynn shared a ride with a sales manager who was also heading to the airport. He found it was a good opportunity to learn what a junior manager was thinking and how she thought about the organization. "You know", she said a bit timidly, "I'm glad to know you're sharing your ride to the airport. We are pretty close to hitting out stretch objective this quarter and we need to save every dime we can. I'm hoping to have a little extra spending money at Disney World this spring!"

As he pulled his luggage from the trunk with a loud "thump!", Lynn smiled to himself. He was happy to share his car if it helped her have a little more fun with her family. She deserved it.

1Burgelman, R.A. (1991). Intra-organizational ecology of strategy making and organizational adaptation: Theory and field research. *Organization Science*, 2(3), 239-262.

2Dell, Michael with Catherine Fredman. (1999) *Direct from Dell: Strategies that revolutionized an industry*. New York; Harper Business. p.135.

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On St. Valentine's Day, Or Any Romantic Interlude, Woo Your Sweetheart With Chocolates,

Roses ... AND A Leadership Talk

By Brent Filson

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Summary: Leadership authority Brent Filson asserts that wooing one's sweetheart can be done with a special kind of communication methodology which he has been teaching leaders worldwide for 21 years.

On St. Valentine's Day, Or Any Romantic Interlude, Woo Your Sweetheart With Chocolates, Roses ... AND A Leadership Talk
by Brent Filson

On Valentine's Day, or any romantic interlude, lovers should woo their sweethearts with chocolates

and roses — but also a Leadership Talk.

My experience in teaching the Leadership Talk to thousands of leaders worldwide for the past 21 years confirms that the Talk is a boon for leaders of all ranks and functions in their jobs and careers.

But I've also learned, to my surprise, that many leaders are employing the Leadership Talk effectively outside their jobs in their personal relationships.

Giving Leadership Talks helps leaders get a lot more results in organizations. Leaders see how much more effective as motivational tools Leadership Talks are than speeches and presentations.

Speeches and presentations communicate information. But Leadership Talks have you establish a deep, human, emotional connection with your audience.

That human connection is important in getting great results in your job; but it is also important in getting great results in your personal life — even your love life.

If you want to win or sustain the fondness of a loved one, a Leadership Talk may just make it happen.

Mixing leadership and love may seem like mixing apples and oranges. But great leadership and love share common elements. For one thing, when you are wooing your lover, you may be taking the lead. And for another, using a Leadership Talk, you're fostering a deep, heartfelt relationship — as great leadership often does.

Here are a few pointers on giving a Leadership Talk that you can put into effect this Valentine's Day or any other interlude for love. Before you speak, simply ask three questions: Do you know the needs of your lover? Can you bring deep belief to the relationship? And can you have your lover take action? If you say `no' to any one of those questions, you can't give a Leadership Talk.

The questions apply to lovers as well. To foster a deep, human emotional relationship, you must know what your sweetheart needs, the deep belief you bring to the relationship, and finally, the action you want your sweetheart to take.

However, the questions are not meant to be stumbling blocks to your Leadership Talk but stepping stones. If you answer `no', step back and assess your situation. Think through what you might say so that you can `yes' to each question. Then speak. Give a Leadership Talk. And, by the way, don't forget the chocolates and roses.

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The author of 23 books, Brent Filson's recent books are, **THE LEADERSHIP TALK: THE GREATEST LEADERSHIP TOOL** and **101 WAYS TO GIVE GREAT LEADERSHIP TALKS**. For more than 20 years, he has been helping leaders of top companies worldwide get audacious results. Sign up for his free leadership e-zine and get a free white paper: "49 Ways To Turn Action Into Results," at

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AND A Leadership Talk

Make The Elephant Jump --- Leading With A Kind Heart

Ten Tips on Speaking with Authority and Power

Seeing the Talents of Effective Leaders

Leadership Development For Managers

101 Recipes For The Deep Fryer

Obesity and Weight Loss

Christmas Happy Package

Motivate Your Way To Success

1000 Atkins Diet Recipes



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