

Leadership, Productivity and Turnover... oh my!



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Solutions for Leadership & Organizational Excellence

By Peter Van Schaack

What are some key indicators that your organization needs leadership development?

In order to answer that question, we should first define leadership. According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, the definition of Leadership is: Function: *noun* **1:** the office or position of a leader **2:** capacity to lead.

I however, would suggest that leadership is a verb, and is in fact: the act of creating or facilitating change. The quality of that change, and how easily or how difficultly it occurs, is a function of leadership quality. Whether it is improving process, implementing new technology, creating new products, or improving service to customers, change requires effective leadership to achieve it. And, it is in fact leadership that will get you there, not management.

A fact that I learned long ago is that the quality of an organization's performance cannot exceed the quality of its leadership. This, points to the fact that leadership is the foundation of an organization's success. Further, it is leadership's responsibility to inspire, create vision and to develop a framework that promotes efficiency through clear communication. As illustrated below, when these needs are not met, lost productivity and even more costly symptoms of poor leadership appear at an alarming rate.

You have two extra days a week – use them

I am not referring to Saturday and Sunday, but rather to a survey that Microsoft conducted in March of 2005. In the survey of 38,000 people, Microsoft discovered that full time workers consider about 17 hours per week to be unproductive – two full days. What's more, the most common productivity pitfalls sited, included: unclear objectives, lack of team communication and ineffective meetings. While Microsoft has tried to turn this into a problem that can be solved through better scheduling and planning software, it seems clear that

the root cause is leadership.

If you think the problem stops at just the lost productivity you would be mistaken. It also hits turnover at an alarming rate. People want to feel fulfilled in their work, they like to be challenged and see the rewards of achieving goals. When direction is not clear and goals are slow to be realized, it is hard to keep people feeling engaged and valued. And, when this sentiment is not felt by just one or two people but by an entire organization, then you have a culture that is clearly underperforming.

To take this situation to the next conclusion, not only will an organization like this have a hard time retaining good people, but they will also have a difficult time hiring quality executives that have the savvy to identifying good corporate cultures and are particular about the leadership that they work for.

Fortunately, leadership acumen is learnable. Farr provides several options for developing leadership skills at any level. Whether you are an Emerging Leader, Experienced Executive, or Senior Executive, Farr provides solutions to help turn organizations around and create bottom line driven results. From improving overall performance and recovering those two lost days a week, to reducing turn over and becoming a desirable company that attracts top level executives. There are very real and financially tangible results to be gained through proper leadership development. Farr has been a trusted leader, in helping companies improve their bottom line results for over 50 years. We would welcome the opportunity to speak with you about solutions that may fit your organizations leadership needs.