

Organizational Strategy

Exercise

Leaders are involved in the creation and execution of organizational strategy. One of the biggest roadblocks to execution is communication issues with managers and staff. In this exercise, let's take a look at LeaderFear, and see how it impacts communication of organizational strategy and plans.

Description

The concept of LeaderFear is defined and explored in this activity. LeaderFear can be defined as the fear that leaders intentionally or unintentionally create as a means to reach organizational and personal goals. The activity describes the pitfalls of LeaderFear and why it is not an effective long-term management philosophy.

1. Explain that LeaderFear can be defined as the fear that leaders intentionally or unintentionally create as a means to reach organizational and personal goals.
2. Distribute a copy of the handout to each participant.
3. Briefly review the major points of the handout:

The unfortunate fact is that LeaderFear can get the job done. Although it can be effective, fear is not an efficient motivator, at least not in the long run. Fear gets people's attention and causes a definite reaction. Fear may get people to act, but eliminating or reducing this fear factor will actually improve performance in the long run.

Leaders may have legitimate reasons, on occasion, to become angry. They may need to take aggressive and stern actions at times that are appropriate for the situation. When done responsibly and rationally, these actions are accepted and even respected by the people in the organization.

However, when a leader is known for constantly losing his or her temper without justification, a problem definitely exists. A hostile work environment is created.

4. Distribute the handout to each participant and ask each one to complete the questionnaire.
5. Being sensitive to the fact that there might be information shared in this handout, ask for volunteers to discuss the questions.
6. Instead of specifics, ask participants in general how they feel about the effects LeaderFear can have on an organization and its consequences.

Debrief

Ask participants if they think LeaderFear can be reduced in an organization and what are the potential benefits of reducing this fear factor.

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Group Exercise for Leaders

1. How great a factor do you believe fear plays in the culture of your organization and why do you believe this to be true?
2. What are some examples of this fear dictating important decisions in your organization?
3. How differently do you think these decisions would have been if this fear factor had not been present?
4. How could fear be reduced in your organization?
5. Do you believe that you lead based on fear? Why or why not?
6. How do you think those you lead feel about how much fear you create for them concerning their jobs and careers?