The Sales Management Process

Why great managers can make bad leaders

Remember the difference between a boss and a leader;
a boss says "Go!" A leader says "Let's go!" ~E.M. Kelly

Many people use the terms "manager" and "leader" interchangeably, without considering the important differences between the two concepts. Management is the act or art of managing; the conducting or supervision of something. It also means the judicious use of means to accomplish an end.

Leadership, on the other hand is to guide or direct on a course. Leadership is also to direct operations and activity toward a conclusion. It means to have charge of, and go before. (Thanks to Webster's Dictionary for help with the definitions!)

Basically managing is making sure resources are used wisely and that the job gets done. These resources include your budget, equipment, programs, supplies, and such. One of the resources a manager manages is human resources, or employees.

Leaders, on the other hand, enlist the support of others in the accomplishment of a common task, or a set of tasks to achieve a goal. Managers look at the bottom line, leaders look at the horizon.

Good leaders can often be good managers. A good manager can become a good leader by paying attention to the more human side of business.

Becoming a leader:

The differences of being a manager vs. being a leader are subtle. Sometimes it just takes being aware of people. Here are a few people-oriented tasks that can help you be a better leader:

- Purpose: When team members have a high sense of purpose in their jobs and achievements, they are happier and do a better job. A leader can help their team members find their own individual purpose
- Tools & Training: Your team can't do a good job if they don't have the right tools and know how to use these tools. This sometimes requires an investment of money to purchase tools and pay for training. Investing in tools and training shows respect and concern for your team as individuals.
- Timelines: As a manager you have responsibility over timelines. As a leader you have responsibility over how your team is affected by these timelines.
- Individual Fit: Individuals like to feel like they fit into a group and into their job. Having a job that matches their interests and skills is important for every member of your team. The right job gives an individual the opportunity to live up to his potential. It also lets him have pride in a job well done.
- Teambuilding: Combining the strengths of your employees can help you build a successful team. Focusing on each member's strengths, and mitigating their weaknesses, you can get more out of your team. A team of people who can work effectively on their own, as well as together, is a huge asset to you as a leader.

Working ON the business instead of IN it

In the book, *The E-Myth*, Michael Gerber discusses working "on" a business instead of "in" a business as a critical step to helping a business grow beyond a sole proprietor operation. He's talking about focusing on growing a business and making it run in a scalable, franchise-like manner – verses working in the technical details (which is the original reason most small businesses are formed).

Working "on" the business means spending time developing the systems and process for getting the work done in a repeatable, organized and predictable way. If you or some other person are the only people that can do a particular job, that means trouble. You'll spend the rests of your life working "in" your business. But if you can spend time developing the tools, systems and procedures in such a way that anyone with the right skills can do the job, you are on you way to a scalable operation that can produce results with or without you

Caution: Delegation is not Abdication

Delegation frees up your time for other business activities. It helps ensure that you are working "on" your business or department, instead of just "in" your business. Like most things, delegation can be done the S.M.A.R.T. way, or the D.U.MB. way. Here are some tips to ensure you are delegating smartly:

- Specific: Know What to Delegate. There are things that can easily be delegated and others that can not. A good way to see what you can delegate is to look at all the things you do and see which ones can be clearly defined. Delegated tasks should be clearly defined so both people have a full understanding of the scope of the task or project. Another item to consider is confidentiality. There are things you may not want to delegate because of the sensitive information involved.

- Measurable: Track Work and Provide Feedback. You can't just delegate and forget about it. Check in periodically to answer questions, provide feedback, and ensure the work is done correctly. You can be kept in the loop without micromanaging the situation.

- Attainable: Give Clear Instructions and Provide Documentation. Giving all of the necessary information is important in delegation. It's also important to think through various situations and how to handle them. It's a good idea to give the person who is delegated the tasks time to think about what you need him to do. He may come up with questions he didn't think of before and you need to be available to answer these questions.

- Relevant: Choose Who to Delegate to Wisely. This is a difficult step for many managers. It requires a lot of trust to delegate important tasks and projects to team members. Think about your team members. Consider their talents and abilities. Choose a person and take some time to have several thorough discussions about your expectations. Listen carefully to the other person's comments. When choosing a person to delegate to, consider the following:

  o   Trust and loyalty

  o   Necessary skills

o   Adequate availability

o   Work ethic comparable to yours

o   Positive performance history

o   Willingness to admit mistakes and make things right

- Time-based: Keep it Ongoing. Take time on a regular basis to consider what you're delegating and to whom. Also look at upcoming projects to evaluate if they could be delegated. Your responsibilities change, so your delegation needs will also change. By including the possibility of delegation in your regular work evaluation process, you'll become more efficient and better at delegation.

How S.M.A.R.T. goals replace micro-management

If you're only interested in the "numbers," then you are going to have a tough time being a leader. Focusing on your team's strengths and using S.M.A.R.T. goal setting practices, and delegation, will help you become a leader without micro-managing.

Your goals, their goals or both?

People support what they help create. Alignment of goals is critical and can't be top down. Sometimes the best way to lead is to discover where people are going and get in front of them. If possible determine, with your team, no more than three critical goals that need to be done this year. However, upper management might have their own agenda and determine some goals for you. If that's the case, let everyone express their feelings about these goals. No matter how the goals are determined, always let your team choose the path to achieving the goals.