



Leadership: What Type Is Needed?

By Bruce Dingman

Filling a leadership position is much more than hiring someone with great experience, good education, or even the right management style and values. How so?

Without question, past performance is the best indicator of future performance—provided it's in a similar situation.

For example, someone who was charged with doing a major turn around at one organization then is hired to bring dynamic leadership to another organization that is healthy, may bring unexpected results. The leader may come across as brash, insensitive, and making decisions before having sufficiently built relationships, gathered sufficient information or developed input. It could be a disaster in the making.

In another situation, an entrepreneurial founder needs someone who can bring a process and systems approach to the company yet not make the company so paperwork oriented or meeting driven that it loses the zeal, creativity and productivity it is known for.

Besides seeking to make sure the right leadership style and experience mesh with the client's need, we also look to see that the following flaws are absent:

- Ego driven (this can take many forms: unapproachable, put people down, insensitivity to others, wants all the credit, out to build an empire, and/or is a poor example)
- Indecisive (insecurity in the form of the fear of making a mistake)
- Cannot admit when one makes a mistake (therefore doesn't learn from them and improve)
- Unorganized (and doesn't find a way to stay organized, i.e., a capable assistant)
- Can't/won't delegate (fearful someone else can't do it well enough)
- Stopped learning (so as the rest of the world keeps improving this person is actually falling behind)
- Politico (favoring personal favoritism over results)
- Frequent job changes (doesn't stay long enough to make a lasting difference)
- Overly creative (brings new ideas to his staff so fast that the staff feels knee-jerked back and forth... and he has no sense of how much change staff can handle at one time)
- Avoids conflict (problems don't get resolved, oftentimes relying on the staff to work it out themselves)
- The "driver" (pushes staff so hard that people feel abused and under valued)
- Hyper focused on work (people do not feel any personal connection, and begin to think, "He doesn't care about me, just what I can do for the company")
- Poor vision caster (there is no contagious enthusiasm for where the organization needs to go)



- Workaholic (has no sense of self-worth except for his work, no balance to his life)
- Temper problems (loses his temper whether due to lack of self-control or for effect)

When an executive is hired without a comprehensive vetting of such areas, an unpleasant surprise often occurs.

May we help you hire the right person the first time?

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