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Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) Curriculum

Leadership - Being a Change Agent

Leadership – Being a Change Agent

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Overview

Change is inevitable, especially in the growing and evolution of leadership skills and behaviors and the organization and people we touch. We specifically enter into a leadership process so that a shared vision and goals to challenge the status quo can lead to change of some non-optimized reality. One brings personal viewpoints and beliefs and mixes abilities and competencies to lead self and others forward.

A four-stage change model is used to clarify the change process. Jaffe and Scott identify 4 stages of transition from 'as it is' to 'as it should be'. They are:

- Denial
- Resistance and Confusion
- Exploration
- Commitment

The 'denial stage' is often a personal one. There is often self-doubt, anxiety, anger, depression, and frustration, focusing on the personal impact of the change. Why are we doing this? What does it mean for me? For my job? What problem are we solving? Is this actually useful? Are we adding value? Will this change behavior? Is there an easier way? What's the opportunity cost? Is it really worth it?

The next stage of Resistance/Confusion may manifest in a lack of production, increased sickness and distrust. Leaders can help by listening to people's concerns and providing updated information.

The usual response during the Exploration/Renewal stage is that energy is released and people focus on the future. There is renewed interest in work; excitement, creativity and focus begin to grow, though there can be some stress from uncertainty and chaos. Leaders can help by providing information to those affected, facilitating informed choices.

At the Commitment stage, people see new possibilities that lead to action. There is better focus on the goal and direction; cooperation flourishes and there is anticipation of the next challenge. Providing an overview or a 'map' of what to expect and information about ways to respond to next steps is often helpful at this stage.

Background work involves doing a situation analysis, checking readiness for change, seeking to understand beliefs of all concerned, planting 'seeds' of ideas, finding a network and partners, being creative and asking questions, and most importantly, analyze how YOU are being a leader of change.

The participants are asked to consider their own MBTI typology and consider how they might augment their own strengths and weaknesses. Who and what complementary typologies can be tapped into to ensure an effective and synthetic process of change?

Objectives

After this presentation, participants will:

1. Describe the stages and behaviors of the '4 Quadrant Change Model'
2. Use self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses in dealing with change (MBTI)
3. Identify the importance of understanding how to accept others' process of moving through change and strategies to assist them
4. Describe steps for being a "Change Agent"

Important Teaching Points

- Change is often threatening and stressful (physical, emotional, psychic)
- Understanding the process of change helps to overcome fear and resistance
- Each person moves through the phases of change at a different rate
- Trust is a key component in leadership
- The equation for Trust = $\frac{\text{knowledge} \times \text{follow-through} \times \text{safety}}{\text{time}}$
- People don't fear change; they fear the unknown, so help them see into the unknown
- Begin with the end in mind
- Leadership is a choice; if you see a problem, lead yourself and others to 'the fix'
- Optimism is infectious. It supports the belief that working with/through others, we can make a difference

Resources / References

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