Quad City Leadership Consulting

Dan Ebener & Kevin James

www.QCLLeadershipConsulting.com

Follow us on Twitter @QCLCinc

Adaptive Decision-Making
Quad City Leadership Consulting

Dan Ebener & Kevin James

www.QCLeadershipConsulting.com

Follow us on Twitter @QCLCinc

Adaptive Decision-Making
What is Leadership? *Activity*
1. Develops strategies for change
2. Involves a voluntary and interactive relationship
3. Strives toward a shared vision or common goal

What is Management? *Position*
1. Structures the order in a workplace
2. Involves an authority relationship between supervisor and direct reports
3. Administers operational tasks
Leadership is...

"A voluntary, interactive process that intends adaptive change."

Dr. Dan Ebener & Dr. Borna Jalšenjak
The Industrial Era

80-90% of people were working in factories

- They needed to be “supervised”
- They were seen as insignificant
- Their opinions were not important
- The boss had all the "answers"

*Leadership was seen as “Good Management”*
The Post-Industrial Era

The World has Changed

- Globalization
- Technology
- Immigration
- Complexity
- Consumerism
- Individualism
- Decline of Family
- Decline of Religion

Pace of change itself has changed!!

It's like whitewater rafting
Adaptive vs. Technical

- Hard to identify
- Solutions require experiments and new discoveries
- Change of organizational culture, attitude, and behavior
- People often resist acknowledging the change

- Easy to identify
- Solutions are clear and can be implemented by authority
- Typically requires changes in only a few areas
- People are generally receptive to the solution
The **problem** is when you try to apply **technical fixes** to **adaptive problems**

**Examples:**
- Back problems
- Wheel alignment issues
- Tardiness in the workplace
New way to lead & make decisions

Organizational challenges have changed

- They are more **adaptive** in nature
- Therefore, we need more “**leading change**” and less “**managing change**”

**Culture of Tell**
(Industrial Era)

**Culture of Ask**
(Post-Industrial Era)

Decision-making is better when it involves your team
What can you do to identify an **Adaptive Challenge**?

- Engage your people
- Listen to your customers
- Review business data & processes
- Develop a strategic plan
- Study your competition
The Decision of Change
What challenges could be coming?

"What are we wasting time on?"

"How will our organization look and operate in 6 months or in 1 year?"

"Who do we rely on for our organization to succeed?"

"Is there a different way we can do business with our customers?"

"What is changing in our industry?"

What challenges do you see?
Uncertainty During an Adaptive Change

**Uncertainty causes YOU to...**
- Be Less Productive

- Make Quick Decisions
- Make No Decisions (paralysis by analysis)

- Emotions Take You on a Ride
  "Emotions can block you from taking in new information."

- Uncertainty causes YOUR people to resist

**Resistance to Change**
- Uncertain about their new role
- Don’t see or understand the benefits
- Don’t feel they have time to implement
- Don’t feel they have a say in the change

"People love improvement, but hate change."

**Actions**
- Acknowledge people's concerns, fears, and loss
- Encourage people to ask questions
- Listen to what they are saying
- Explain the "Why"
- Model the behavior you want to see
Uncertainty causes **YOU** to...

Be **Less** Productive

- Make **Quick** Decisions
- Make **No** Decisions (paralysis by analysis)

- Emotions Take You on a Ride
  
  "Emotions can block you from taking in new information."

- Uncertainty causes **YOUR** people to **resist**
Resistance to Change

Uncertain about their new role

Don't see or understand the benefits

Don't feel they have time to implement

Don't feel they have a say in the change

"People love improvement, but hate change."
**Uncertainty During an Adaptive Change**

**Uncertainty causes YOU to...**

- Be Less Productive
- Make Quick Decisions
- Make No Decisions (paralysis by analysis)

**Emotions Take You on a Ride**

"Emotions can block you from taking in new information."

**Uncertainty causes YOUR people to resist**

**Resistance to Change**

- Uncertain about their new role
- Don't see or understand the benefits
- Don't feel they have time to implement
- Don't feel they have a say in the change

"People love improvement, but hate change."

**Actions to take:**

- Acknowledge people's concerns, fears, and loss
- Encourage people to ask questions
- Listen to what they are saying
- Explain the "Why"
- Model the behavior you want to see
Leadership on the Line
Staying Alive through the Dangers of Leading
Ronald A. Heifetz
Marty Linsky

1. Get on the Balcony
2. Think Politically
3. Orchestrate the Conflict
4. Give the Work Back
5. Hold Steady

Strategies for Leading Change & Making Adaptive Decisions
Get on the Balcony

Take a step back
Remove yourself
Reflect on situations
See the reality

Use your "Emotional Intelligence"
Four Parts of Emotional Intelligence

Self-Awareness
Self-Control
Social Awareness
Social Skills

Awareness
Toward Self
Mindfulness

Action
Toward Others
Empathy
Self-Control
Social Skills
Think Politically
Find Partners
Recognize Your Opponents
Accept Responsibility
Acknowledge the Loss
Orchestrate the Conflict

"Conflict will occur because change involves loss."

Conflict needs to be controlled like a thermostat

Task Conflict versus Relationship Conflict

3. Prepare people to
4. Remind people
Orchestrate the Conflict

"Conflict will occur because change involves loss."

Conflict needs to be controlled like a thermostat

1. Ask yourself "What am I asking people to give up?"

2. Reach out and listen to people with the most to lose.

Task Conflict versus Relationship Conflict

3. Prepare people to experience some loss before they see gains.

4. Remind people of why the change is necessary and what the gains will be.
Give the Work Back

Your job is NOT to do all the work or solve the problem.

Your job is to facilitate a process where your team...

Communicates

Understands the work that needs to be done

Collaborates

Engages in the change activities
Hold Steady

Any adaptive change will have critics

Your Team    Outsiders

Your Boss    Yourself

Leadership is **risky**, so it is natural to have **doubt** and be **uncertain**.

Avoid the temptation to rely only on your **management** authority.

1. **Take the Heat**
2. **Let the Issue Ripen**
3. **Focus Attention on the Issue**
Where do we go from here?

Adaptive challenges will happen

Recognize the adaptive challenge

You can apply technical fixes, but...

Focus on changing attitudes & behaviors
Quad City Leadership Consulting

Dan Ebener & Kevin James

www.QCLeadershipConsulting.com

Follow us on Twitter @QCLCinc

Adaptive Decision-Making