

The International communicator

communicating with competence

Autumn 2006

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

N Vision learning solutions are radical solutions, solutions that go to the root (p. 3).

Be radical. Set clear goals that touch the hearts of the people working with you, goals that are uplifting and help employees find purpose in their work (s. right). Create an intimate workplace in which your employees experience creative profit, emotional profit and social profit (p. 2). Empower your employees and they will respond (p. 2). Have an eye for the cultural influences in your organization. If someone does not behave as you would expect them to, it might just be that the culture they come from has a different set of values than yours (p. 3). Listen to your client (p. 4) and hear what they are dissatisfied with. Dissatisfaction is a sign of a need that you can fulfill.

Revolutionize your business. N Vision Learning Solutions. We listen and learn with you.

Joe Butler, Editor

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Leadership

Clear and Elevating Goals: The Team Engine

"It is not enough to do your best. You must know what to do, and then do your best."—Edward Deming

In the Summer 2006 issue of The International Communicator we looked at anchoring vision and mission in an organization. The next directional tool we would like to examine is the clear and elevating goal.

Underneath a race car's aerodynamic and sleek body there's a powerful engine. Vision and mission point to the checkered flag at the end of an imaginary race. A clear and elevating goal is the engine that drives an organization or team forward to fulfil its vision and mission.

"A clear and elevating goal is the engine that drives an organization or team forward to fulfil its vision and mission."

For N Vision, clear goals are stated in such a way that every single member of the organization understands them. People in the organization have robustly debated the goals. They make intellectual sense from a business perspective. You can state without a doubt by when a goal should be achieved and how you will mea-

sure its achievement. These are the elements often contained in a "S.M.A.R.T" goal (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based).

"'Elevating' means the goal speaks to our heart."

Yet these elements alone are not enough. "Elevating" means the goal speaks to our heart. It encourages us to rise above average performance and strive for excellence. Because we identify with the goal emotionally, we go the extra mile to achieve it. To return to our racing car metaphor, the emotion we experience when we talk about the goal is like a turbocharger: When it kicks in, there is a boost of power driving us forward.

A clear and elevating goal will engage the hearts and minds of people and help them reach the performance they previously thought impossible.

Michael Couch

The Bottom Line

Leaders Learning for Profit®

"There is more to the word profit than meets the eye."

As a leader, the ultimate goal of achieving profit rests with you. You are rewarded and penalized to the degree to which you achieve or don't achieve business profit.

"Truly exceptional leaders are those who connect human energy and personal growth to create business results."

"Profit princes" who achieve high profits through cost-cutting and a control and command leadership style grab newspaper headlines. These "profit princes" soon fade from the front page when it turns out that they cannot achieve sustainable performance or business profits by these measures alone.

Truly exceptional leaders are those who connect human energy and personal growth to create business results. A closer look at the origin of the word profit reveals the meaning "to grow, to advance, to progress." In the business world this means both personal growth (learning) as well as business growth. Leaders who learn to encourage and support learning in

their organizations reap the rewards of these profits long before they end up on the balance sheet.

In *Small Giants, Companies that Choose to Be Great Instead of Big*, (Portfolio [publishers], January 2006, ISBN: 1591840937), Bo Burlingham describes the type of profit (growth) that contributes to becoming a "Small Giant": Leaders must learn to create an intimate workplace in which employees experience creative profit, emotional profit and social profit. Together these lead to sustainable business profit.

While a recent survey (CEO Challenge 2004, Barrington & Silvert) determined that talent development and employee involvement are primary concerns among CEOs, very few CEOs are able to maximize the link between people profit (growth and development) and exceptional business profit.

If you're a leader who isn't satisfied with your business profit, perhaps it's time that you look at how your people are truly profiting in your organization. And that's the bottom line.

Dan Norenberg

Numbers

7 a.m. – 9 a.m. is the most effective thinking time for 60% of businesspeople.

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. is the least effective time.

—from NFI Research, survey

Leadership

Making the Matrix Really Work

The coaching mindset is the matrix leader's key to empowerment.

A variety of different structures have been designed to deliver more competitive performance. One of these, the matrix (see *The International Communicator*, Summer 2006), has in many instances not delivered the hoped-for levels of energy, creativity and speed of execution.

One of the key reasons for this, in N Vision's experience, is that leadership is still operating from a mindset of command & control (C & C). For example, we observe global functions expecting regional operations to make the matrix work while they themselves work with the previous hierarchical mindset of C & C. But C & C leadership will never deliver flexibility and creative responsiveness. *Empowerment* is the essential ingredient of leadership for matrix effectiveness.

The Leadership Coaching Mindset (LCM) is the leader's key to empowerment and is characterized by:

- Clear goals & priorities
- Valuing personal accountability
- The drive to achieve results with others
- Listening for meaning & understanding
- Knowing when to be directive & non-directive
- A passion for development in self & others
- A respectful exchange of performance feedback

We encourage and coach leaders to apply the LCM as a pragmatic tool for making their matrix organizations work better, thereby "raising the bar" of flexibility, responsiveness and faster execution.

Ed Norman

The Learning Corner

Word Watch

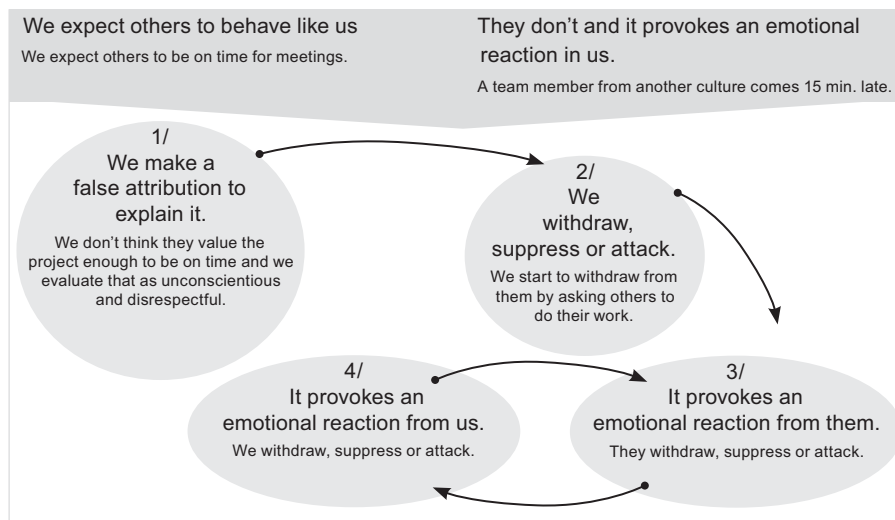
What You Get is Not Always What You See

The D.I.E. Model: Describe, Interpret, Evaluate

When an international partner surprises us with behavior that doesn't match our expectations, we immediately want to *interpret* and *evaluate* the situation. This is based on our subconscious cultural values of which we are most often not aware. Our reaction is a judgment

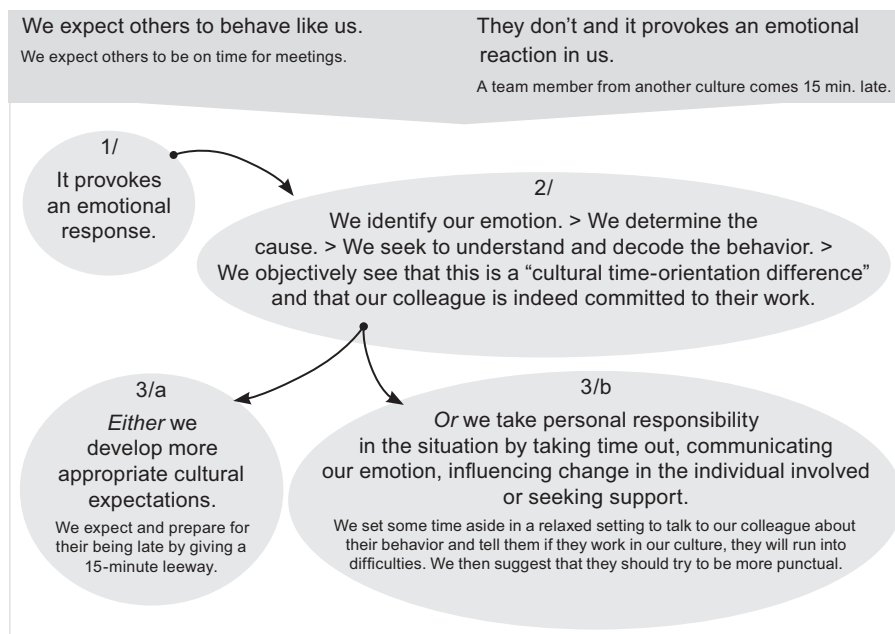
rather than an objective *description* of the situation and very often our *interpretation* is in fact wrong. This is referred to as an "attribution error."

This leads to a spiral of misunderstandings and escalation as seen in the example below:



By suspending our interpretation and evaluation and by simply describing the experience, we can stop the spi-

ral of misunderstandings and inevitable escalations. The same scenario could look like this:



Ieva Gaidulis

Steven Hunt

Radical

Visit N Vision's website and one of the first things you'll see is our Statement of Purpose and in it, in the first sentence, the word "radical":

"Our heartfelt purpose is to design and deliver radical learning solutions."

We don't mean rebellious or reckless. But radical is exactly what we mean. The origin of "radical" lies in Latin *radix*, "root." If you are radical, you go to the root, and touch and act upon what is essential and fundamental.

Radical means looking at the root of each personal and business issue and its solution in its individual context. Take two distinct leadership examples that demand a "radical" vision:

- A new senior executive may want help to clarify their vision and mission and engage the key players in the organization.
- A first-time leader may be struggling to motivate their international team, some of whom they rarely meet face-to-face.

The same solution does not work for both leaders because each situation has its own roots. "Different strokes for different folks" as the saying goes.

In short, being radical is all about designing and delivering solutions that fundamentally challenge our participants to think about their feelings, emotions and behaviors and to act in their own individual situation.

Radical thinking leads to breakthrough ideas and new plans. Radical action leads to new products, new services and new market opportunities. And ultimately that is a huge benefit for everyone.



Developing Customer Needs

All sales are based on developing customer needs.

Are you so tuned in to the pulse of friends and family that they share their successes and failures as well as their needs, wants and dreams with you?

“In business, needs are any statements or questions made by a customer expressing wants or concerns that can be satisfied by the seller.”

In family circles and overlapping circles of friends, certain types of people are often sought out for their advice on some specific need and are consistently able to exercise influence – in spite of dealing with many different types of communication and thinking patterns. These “Wise Ones” have a large and flexible range of influence strategies that make this possible. Being keenly aware of not only the needs, but also the desires behind these needs

is another key factor in exercising influence. Many types of desire drive these needs: The desire for love, for family togetherness, for security, the desire to be remembered.

Fruitful business relationships are strikingly similar in this way. Here the desires behind the needs may be based on a desire for more money, a desire to save money, or a desire for increased security or convenience.

“Effectively developing customer needs is at the heart of outstanding sales results.”

In business, needs are any statements or questions made by a customer expressing wants or concerns that can be satisfied by the seller. Of course, trust and rapport must first be established between the seller and the customer. Only then can the seller carry out investigations, identify dissatisfactions and bring needs to the surface. Needs are often born as small statements of dissatisfaction.

Effectively developing customer needs involves nurturing and transforming these dissatisfactions and implied needs into specific problems as defined and expressed by the customer. Increasing the number of these needs increases successful outcomes dramatically.

Demonstration of capability to meet these needs should only be shown when the customer is most recep-

“Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe”

—*Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), US President*

“The ability to learn is a defining characteristic of being human; the ability to continue learning is an essential skill of leadership.”

—*Warren Bennis born 1925, Professor of Business Administration, University of Southern California*

“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere”

—*Albert Einstein (1879-1955), physicist*

At this point the focus on any particular benefits should be centered and prioritized on the ones that specifically show how a product or service meets explicit customer needs that have already been expressed. Packaging this message of capability in the most appropriate influence strategy, tailored to that individual buyer, reinforces images of projected positive outcome and sets the stage for obtaining commitment.

Effectively developing customer needs throughout the entire sales process – from preliminaries and identification, to obtaining commitment and satisfaction – is at the heart of outstanding sales results. In sales, long-term customer satisfaction leads to referrals and repeat business. When this happens, relationships grow and become deeper and richer.

Kieran McVey

Challenging Situations?

What challenging situation would you like us to deal with in a future issue of the

International Communicator?

Get our perspective.

Send us an email at:

communicator@nvision-learning.com.

We will of course ensure that your challenging situation remains anonymous.