

Volume 4

What I am hearing

I heard a similar comment or question from several leaders recently. Do any of these statements sound familiar?

- When I am gone, they just don't show the ability to make decisions I expect from leaders.
- I told them exactly what I expect – why don't they get it?
- What I would like to see out of the managers in this organization in 2010 is more accountability.

Three different leaders. Three different organizations. Three different industries. Are any of these statements fresh in your mind?

What it means

There is one common theme to the companies I mention above – scarcity of time/resources caused by growth or cutbacks because of the economy. As a leader, you have spent a lot of time in the last 24 months making some tough decisions. As a coach, when I hear one of the above statements, my first response is “What is your part in this situation?”

Two things that are almost a constant in any organization I have consulted or worked:

- In normal times we tend to think everyone around us thinks, works, and is motivated like us. Under stress, it gets worse.
- We are great at communication.

In a recent study by Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer published in *Harvard Business Review* they asked leaders and workers questions to understand the number one motivator of workers. The leaders said the number one answer would be **recognition for good work** (either public or private). When asked the same questions, workers had a different answer, **making progress**. People want to get things done, and completing work motivates them. More often than not, we do not understand what our people need. The first question we need to ask ourselves as leaders is, “What role am I playing in assisting or impeding their progress?”

What you should do

In his book *Death by Meeting*, Patrick Lencioni talks about how learning needs to be part of every executive team meeting. At your next leadership team meeting, take a copy of the article (“What Really Motivates Workers,” by Amabile & Kramer), have everyone read it and ask the following questions:

- What habits do we have as leaders to make sure that people know what is important and are getting the support and resources to complete them?
- What do you need to complete in the next two weeks? What can I do to help?

(write answers on paper/whiteboard to review at next meeting)

Uncertain with how to have this conversation or how to make some of these habits part of your culture? Contact me. scott@thetrugroup.com



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