



Project Summary

A Theory and Use for Leaders

A Seminar for New Engineering Managers

Background

Several Design Engineers were promoted into managerial roles. These managers were highly skilled in their specialty. Now they were being asked to perform in a role where they had not previously been trained. Leading people presented new challenges. Requiring new references for making decisions.

Some of the new managers were having difficulties transitioning out of a technical leader role to a leader of people. As former Engineers, the managers appreciated having a theory to base their actions.

The second level manager wanted to provide these new managers with a foundation of leadership concepts and principles to help them become better managers. Something he wished he had been given when he was starting out as an Engineering Manager.

Actions Taken

Created and delivered several four-hour training modules in the theory and practice of management. Content that provided hope and covered new responsibilities of management in the future global economy. Exposing the original thinking and leadership philosophy that spawned many of modern improvement programs:

The Heaviest Losses from Corporate Governance. Lack of knowledge in organizations about:

- Psychology of people
- How to interpret and understand data
- How to work as a system
- How to create a learning organization

A different view of an organization and its relationships:

- Within the organization
- Between the organization and the rest of the world

Simulation of Traditionally Managed Organization and Discussion of Better Practices. Some faulty practices:

- Quotas, Signs and Exhortations
- Pay For Performance (merit pay system, bonuses, ranking and rating, MBO)
- Fear
- Lack of Pride of Workmanship
- Dependency on Inspection





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Mismanagement of People Leads to Unethical and Ineffective Behavior

- Competition between individuals & departments
- Reward for best individual performance
- Pressure to make numbers
- Buying on Price Alone
- Multiple Suppliers

Failure to View the Organization as One system; Failure to Create Consistent Strategy, Policies, and Procedures

- Interaction of system components
- Sub-optimization of Corporate Strategy and Policies, contrary to aim
- Focusing on increasing your share, not increasing the whole
- Destruction of a system

Faulty Decisions Based on Misinterpretation of Figures, and How to Use Performance, Production, and Service Measurements Appropriately

And much more!

Results

At the conclusion of the modules, the second level manager used this common foundation of knowledge to coach and mentor his direct reports more effectively.

Feedback from the group praised the different view of the role of managers from what they had been exposed to in the past. Comments included their personal revelations about ideas that first appears to be contrary to 'common knowledge', then makes sense when integrated into a larger picture.

Lessons

- The importance of using examples
- Bringing an intact management team to a common understanding
- Having a central theme to tie different elements together
- Overcoming the disruption of variable delivery schedule to continuity



Dave Nave
& Associates