

Make It Stick

*Activity Pack*

The 10 Dimensions of Effective Leadership

 **Helping lessons learned through training become part of *how we work*.**

**To the Learner Leader…**

This suite of activities has been designed to reinforce the key learning from the **10 Dimensions of Effective Leadership** course. They have been designed to be led by team leaders or designated trainers and do not require training experience, though for best results we recommend that whoever is leading the activities understands the principles of adult learning and has some experience in leading learning activities.

The suite of activities will provide you with up to six months of learning reinforcement. We recommend that an activity is run each month following the 10 Dimensions of Effective Leadership course.

Each activity will take 10-15 minutes to run depending on the size of the group.

When running each activity:

* Ask the group to reflect back on the original course they attended:
  + What takeaways did they have?
  + What have they tried to implement?
  + When revisiting some of these activities for a second time, ask them what additional ideas or thoughts they have in applying the concepts and tools in the activities to their job.

There is one activity to a page. Each activity has a brief introduction followed by instructions for the learner leader.

We suggest the following to optimise your learning experience:

* Have the group meet away from their normal workspace
* Make sure mobile devices are switched off so that everyone fully engages
* Make the environment ‘safe’ and encourage everyone to contribute
* Run these activities with everyone standing – try running them outdoors in the fresh air
* Have other team members take the lead and run an activity – this will build confidence and leadership skills
* Don’t be afraid to improvise – the learning needs to be about you and your group so make it meaningful
* When debriefing an activity, get the group to reflect on what the activity means for them and what they will do differently or continue to do that underscores the learning points from the activity

**Activities in this pack**

1. Intensity – setting clear expectations
2. Assertiveness
3. Risk tolerance – the courage to act
4. Adaptability – learning agility
5. Decision making – leading a team to a decision
6. Self-protection – employee engagement

**Activity 1: Intensity - Setting clear expectations**

**Introduction**

The culture of any workplace is formed through the attitudes and behaviours that persist and are acknowledged. A workplace with strong expectations about behaviour will have a strong culture. For it to have a good or healthy culture, the right behaviours need to be promoted and reinforced. Even though it is incumbent upon all employees regardless of their position to demonstrate expected behaviours, it is usually (though not always) leaders who in particular need to model desired behaviours and address shortcomings.

**Instructions**

As a group, discuss what expectations are being set by the manager in each of the following scenarios. The workplace values for this organisation are: integrity, respect, accountability, simplicity and safety.

**Scenario 1** – An employee has alerted the manager to the fact that some staff are not smoking in the designated smoking areas and this is distressing some staff. The manager says she will look into the matter. Two weeks later the employee raises the same issue, to which the manager says she is waiting on advice from her boss. Two weeks later the issue remains unresolved and the employee does not raise the matter again.

**Scenario 2** – A manager is having their lunch in the lunch room. On a near table, two employees are making lewd comments about a fellow employee. This is not the first time the manager has heard such remarks. The manager finishes his lunch and leaves.

**Scenario 3** – An employee queries a safety inspection with her manager that was done earlier, saying that it appears to be a tick and flick exercise and she is concerned about the risks of not doing it properly. Her manager says not to worry as the safety inspection is carried out each week and there is a never an issue.

**Scenario 4** – An employee is about to finish work for the day when a member of another team asks her where the inventory report is. The inventory report is a day late and the other team needs it as part of its procurement process. The employee approaches her manager who says not to worry as the report often gets to the other team a day late and it doesn’t make any difference to them.

**Debrief**

* Why are leaders sometimes reluctant to set behavioural expectations?
* What is the message to employees if expectations and standards are not set?
* What do leaders need to keep in mind when setting behavioural expectations?
  + Consistency – this goes to your integrity as a leader
  + Immediacy – do not let things slide
  + Focus on the behaviour and not the person
  + Repetition of the message expected behaviours
  + Rewarding and recognising the right behaviour

**Activity 2: Assertiveness**

**Introduction**

The Leading Dimension of Assertiveness describes how you assert your viewpoint. Some people tend to be very quick to assert their opinions and may aspire to lead others. Others tend to be more reserved and defer opportunities to offer their opinion. Most of us seem to dislike public speaking but will assert ourselves when needed.

**Instructions**

This activity explores the positive and negative aspects of assertiveness and why the best approach is to always act assertively when you need to. Firstly make the point that assertiveness is about exercising your rights as an individual and not allowing others to violate them.

**Part A – Individual**

Each person to write down five occasions in or outside of the workplace when they assert themselves, followed by five occasions when they are reluctant to assert themselves.

**Part B – Small Group**

Now spilt the group into smaller groups of 3-4 people. Ask each group to come up with four words to describe the positive benefits of being assertive and four words that have negative connotations for being assertive. Each group must agree on the four words in each category they put forward.

**Part C – Whole Group**

Now bring the group together as one. Combine the words from each group into the positive and negative piles.

For each word in the negative pile, ask why it is negative and if it is affecting the rights of those being assertive or of others around them.

Now have each person take out their five occasions when they were reluctant to be assertive. If they choose not to be assertive, are they respecting their rights or respecting/disrespecting the rights of others?

**Debrief**

What is the role that leaders play in protecting the rights of others and in empowering others to act assertively?

Why can it be difficult to act assertively with others in authority or in more powerful positions? What is the cost of acting or not acting assertively in such circumstances?

Would a team expect their leader to act assertively? Why?

**Activity 3: Risk tolerance – the courage to act**

**Introduction**

The Leading Dimension of Risk tolerance is a measure of a leader to respond with boldness in times of uncertainty or stress. Acting boldly means having the courage to act. As a leader you need to instil the notion and skills of courage in your team. There are three aspects of courage that you can develop in others (Treasurer B, 2019):

* Try courage – is the courage of action and initiative. It is encouraging people out of their comfort zone. It requires overcoming inertia caused by the risk of failure.
* Trust courage – is the courage to let go and allow your team to do more. It is relinquishing control and believing in the positive ability of your team to pull through. It requires overcoming the risk that other people’s action may fail or harm you or others
* Tell courage – is the courage to speak up, to be truthful to yourself and others. It includes providing difficult feedback to your team and others. It requires overcoming the risk that others may reject you or your beliefs

**Instructions**

Break into three smaller groups. Give each group one of the three aspects of courage to apply to the following scenario:

Your organisation has recently been exposed for a range of fraudulent dealings and faces the threat of multi-million dollar fines. Your organisation has been asked to testify at a government backed national enquiry looking at the culture and practices within your organisation. You and your team work in compliance. The enquiry Commissioner has selected you and two of your team members at random to testify before the enquiry. Senior management of your organisation including your manager are worried and anxious about what you and your team will say and what reputational damage might ensue. They have held crisis meetings with the organisation’s legal team, you and your team, aimed at schooling you in what you should and shouldn’t say and what questions you might expect from the Commissioner.

Each group is to ponder the following questions as they relate to their aspect of courage and to report back their thoughts to the larger group:

* What are the key personal risks faced?
* What are the key risks to the organisation?
* What are the main obstacles faced by the team members in being courageous?
* What can you as the leader do and say to build up the courage of your team?

**Debrief**

The courage explored in the scenario focuses on personal values and ethics. How can courage and risk tolerance manifest in other aspects of work such as:

* Sales?
* Strategic goals?
* Supplier relationships?
* Performance ?

(Ref: https://www.leadershipnow.com/leadingblog/2019/05/the\_three\_types\_of\_workplace\_c.html)

**Activity 4: Adaptability – learning agility**

**Introduction**

Being adaptable in a VUCA world means harnessing learning agility:

1. Flexibility – Willingness to try new things;
2. Speed – Rapidly grasping new ideas;
3. Experimenting – Testing out new ideas;
4. Performance Risk Taking – Taking on challenges;
5. Interpersonal Risk Taking – Asking others for help;
6. Collaborating – Leveraging the skills of others;
7. Information Gathering – Increasing your knowledge;
8. Feedback Seeking – Asking for feedback; and
9. Reflecting – Taking time to reflect on your effectiveness.

**Instructions**

Break the group into pairs or threes and give each group one of the learning agility factors above. Ask the pair/triad to reflect on what they would do as a leader to develop this learning agility factor with their team in the following scenario:

Your organisation is implementing a new customer service delivery system which will streamline and integrate customer, billing and product data. It will mean staff learning a new system, and new processes and terminology when using the system. It will also mean changing the way that people work – doing away with some processes and amending others, and a change in roles.

**Debrief**

The scenario represents a change project for this organisation. Some people will be a lot more comfortable in navigating the change than others. Some ideas for the leader to explore include:

Flexibility – be flexible in how the system training will take place and in how rapidly staff will grasp the new system

Speed – staff who embrace the change can be super-users, mentors for others

Experimenting – encourage staff to try the system in a ‘safe’ training environment

Performance Risk Taking – challenge staff to problem solve using the new system and to explore the benefits of using it

Interpersonal Risk Taking – set up super users or buddy systems for staff to support each other through the change

Collaborating – peer teaching between staff

Information Gathering – create quick reference guides or user manuals. Set up an FAQ site

Feedback Seeking – give feedback often on progress and be encouraging

Reflecting – create opportunities for staff to see the positives in the gains they have made in moving to the new system

**Activity 5: Decision making – leading a team to a decision**

**Introduction**

The Leading Dimension of Decision-making describes how we learn and process information in making decisions. Some tend to rely on their intuition and experience, while others rely on a more analytical approach. Most of us tend to balance both perceptive and analytical approaches to some degree in making decisions.

**Instructions**

For this activity you will need a thick piece of rope (1-1.5 cm diameter). You need to arrange the rope (as below) out of the view of the group and present it to them on a flat surface. At no time is the group to touch the rope.



1. Present the rope as arranged above to the group and give then 10 seconds to decide whether pulling the two ends of the rope will result in a knot, or not. (first impression)
2. Those who believe it will become a knot stand in one group (Group A). Those that don’t stand in another group (Group B)
3. Then have each member of the smaller group (either A or B) link with someone (1-2 people depending on numbers) from the opposite group. Allow these new couplings two minutes to discuss whether the rope is or is not a knot – they must come to a consensus.
4. Again divide the couplings into two groups – those who believe it will become a knot (Group A) and those who don’t (Group B)
5. Then ask the groups how they felt about the decisions they have come to and why they changed their minds
6. Say to the group, “Anyone can now change sides if they want to.”
7. Say, “I am now going to pull the rope. As I do so you can change sides at any time.”
8. Slowly pull the rope and the rope becomes straight

**Debrief**

* Why did people cling to their beliefs? (pride, not admitting they are wrong)
* Was there a tendency for one group to make fun of the other?
* What are the barriers that a group may face when coming to a decision?
* How does a group find unity when trying to reach a decision?
* What is the role of the leader when making decisions?

(ref: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RC03wAlU76c&feature=youtu.be)

**Activity 6: Self Protection – employee engagement**

**Introduction**

Status Motivation describes how we relate to others as we accomplish goals. Leaders want their teams to be both motivated and engaged. Engagement is a quality where employees look beyond themselves to the greater good of the team and the organisation.

**Instructions**

Listed below are a number of strategies leaders can use to enhance employee engagement. For each one, get the group to think about why the strategy will increase engagement and what practical things a leader can do to put the strategy into practice.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Engagement Strategy** | **Why it will work** | **How to implement it** |
| Keep employees connected to the organisation | It makes employees aware that the work they do impacts more than them and their team. | Provide routine updates on how the organisation is going in achieving its goals. |
| Clearly defined expectations | People more willingly expend effort if they are clear about what their goals are and what is expected of them personally. | Whenever assigning or delegating work, make it clear what is needed, when it is needed and the standard expected. |
| Be transparent about the tasks required | People will respond to honesty from their leaders about the work they are required to do. | Be upfront and transparent about the nature of the work to be done. |
| Be consistent | Consistency builds trust and equates to a feeling of fairness and integrity. | Be consistent in how you treat and reward employees, how you assign tasks and manage performance and follow up on commitments you have given. |
| Model the way | Modelling the behaviour you want to see makes it clear what is expected. | Live the values of the organisation you work for in everything you do and say. |
| Seek feedback | Showing that you value feedback shows that you value what other people think. | Make it easy for people to give you feedback. Acknowledge and thank people for doing so and let people know how you have acted on it. |
| Reward creativity | Employees who are encouraged to share their ideas are more invested in the success of the outcome. | Create opportunities for employees to have input. Showcase and celebrate the ideas that are implemented. |
| Show you care | Employees will respond to managers who genuinely care about them. | Take an interest in people’s lives outside of work. Take an interest in the mental health of employees. |