

## Manager or Leader, Which Are You?

Michael J. Stickler, President

**"At Empowered Performance, our mission is to engage and empower the minds and spirits of all of our clients and to transform that intellectual capital into a sustainable force they can use to dominate their competitors".**

**-Mike Stickler**

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Earlier this year I visited several manufacturing plants of a major corporation. It was a unique opportunity because a few years earlier I led the top management of these plants through an Enterprise Excellence Education program.

Surprisingly, the enthusiasm evident during my initial visit was sorely lacking. There were virtually no changes in the operating structure of the plants and the business and production process and products had not improved. These top managers had remained in the "maintenance mode." They were not leading the improvement effort; they were only managing the status quo. Somewhere along the road to Enterprise Excellence they had lost the primary driving force necessary for success, "Leadership."

Effective management must have a leadership mentality. By embracing the vision of Enterprise Excellence for the firm, a leadership goes on to develop a thorough, demonstrable knowledge of the Enterprise Excellence process, and a fundamental understanding of the tools it uses for identifying and resolving problems. Leadership means you "walk your talk" daily; you communicate with actions as well as words what you mean by Enterprise Excellence. It means you know the right questions and aren't afraid of the answers. It means you recognize the efforts of all involved. And it means you accept-yes embrace-the process of change in your company's culture, environment, beliefs and daily behaviors.

### Acquiring the Leadership Mind-Set

The leadership mentality begins with the realization that change is essential for improvement. For this to happen, you must be inspirationally dissatisfied with the status quo. This is usually preceded by an honest appraisal of the facts-both about your company and its competition-that clearly shows that improved performance and reduced waste will increase sales, profits, market share, and add value.

Next, the leaders must make and fulfill a commitment to become educated, as a team, in Enterprise Excellence. This instruction will show them the roles and responsibilities they must master to manage the process of continuous process improvement. For this process to succeed, all must share this leadership understanding.

Most importantly, the leaders must be able to accept facts and be eager to acquire new ways of thinking. They must understand that the daily behaviors are based on beliefs that were established in the past environment. They must have the confidence to make the decisions and to take the actions required to achieve Enterprise Excellence.

### The Next Steps

As management education progresses, the chief executive and a specially appointed Enterprise Excellence steering committee must develop a vision of Enterprise Excellence for the organization.

Sharing this vision with all employees will help to mobilize the organization. It will give purpose and direction to the Enterprise Excellence effort.

Next, management must identify and measure the true cost of poor performance in the business systems. All processes and practices involving everything from receipt of raw materials to the shipping of finished goods must be examined, using VSM. This thorough analysis will reveal, the waste, non-value adding activities as well as the value adding in the business system.

In addition, a competitive analysis, as well as a benchmarking of the firm against excellent companies who are not competitors, will provide valuable data to further focus the effort. Most importantly, an accurate measure of your customers' perception of your performance must be made. Ask them: "How are we doing?" and "How can we do it better?" The results will lead to the identification of specific missions and objectives to further guide the process.

### Creating the Environment

At this stage, management must begin to demonstrate its commitment to fulfilling the vision of Enterprise Excellence. It begins by challenging all of the past practices, policies, procedures and methodologies, recognizing that the future is not an extension of the past.

The improvements leading to Enterprise Excellence, begin when managers start to think and act in a process-oriented manner. They must start to ACT differently, to think differently. If they don't, they will revert to the old way of running the business. This is what happened to the managers mentioned at the beginning of this article. They were in "maintenance mode" and were not working to improve the system.

Reinforcing this change in thinking should be new ways to measure performance. The emphasis must be on measuring improvements to the process, not results. For example: measuring cycle time reductions versus inventory turns or measuring the number of new supplier partnerships versus the reduction in the number of vendors.



## Manager or Leader, Which Are You? (continued)

One aspect of the Enterprise Excellence process that cannot be overlooked, is the importance of the people involved. Their contributions need to be carefully evaluated and appreciated. An emphasis should be placed on solving cross-functional problems, team building efforts and team recognition, not on solo fire-fighting and functional excellence.

In some instances, dramatic changes in the structure and organization of the firm may be necessary to speed the movement towards Enterprise Excellence.

### Moving Ahead

Keeping the process of Enterprise Excellence improvement on track and moving ahead requires a considerable management effort.

These 12 key guidelines were developed by my friend Ed Turcotte. They can help you acquire and keep a leadership mentality. You should use them to direct your quest for Enterprise Excellence.

1. Ensure that your people have time to work on the improvement process.
2. Establish new policies, procedures, and standards promoting business excellence rather than functional excellence.
3. Eliminate corporate and functional barriers to improvement.
4. Flatten the structure of the organization.
5. Set cross-functional goals.
6. Demand the best possible education and training for all employees.
7. Make human resources a strategic priority.
8. Run the business using a formal system.
9. Demand linear performance.
10. Get to know your employees, customers and suppliers.
11. Review business performance with the management team.
12. Be highly visible in your leadership of Enterprise Excellence.

Only managers who are leaders and who embody the leadership mentality can make Enterprise Excellence happen. Which are you, manager or manager-leader? There is a difference!

## Lead, Follow, or Get The He.., Out of The Way!

I had the opportunity the other day to sit through a senior level management workshop on LEADERSHIP sponsored by Dr. Michael Hammer of "Re-engineering the Corporation" fame!

Admittedly, my experience has been that there is nothing more important than leadership, from the front not the top! Leadership has been known to even help narrow the talent gap!

The list of leadership "must do's", that was developed by the people that attended the workshop included:

- Articulate the vision and strategy every chance that you get, every hour, every day, every week, Always!
- Communicate and motivate! ALWAYS!
- Passion!!! ALWAYS!
- Flush the losers, NOW!
- Remove the barriers, NOW!
- Allocate the resources, if it's worth doing make the investment. NOW!
- Energy!!! LOTS and LOTS!
- Appoint Process Owners, give them the authority, resources, get out of the way, and hold them responsible for the results! NOW!
- Invest your personal time, this gives everyone else permission! NOW!

- Institutionalize the improvements; they must become the "WAY" we do things! NOW!
- Metrics must be process oriented, not results oriented! ALWAYS!
- Learn to only ask process-oriented questions! NOW!
- Change the organization structure, NOW! You are organized to support the way that you do business today, if you are going to do business differently your organization structure must change!
- Must change the way people think! That only happens through education and training...ALWAYS!
- Educate, educate, educate, train, train, and train some more, you can never do too much of either...NOW & ALWAYS!
- Set very aggressive, outrageous goals...no company that we have encountered has ever exceeded its goals. Raise the bar every hour, every day, every week, every month, every quarter...ALWAYS!

Most importantly do it NOW!!!

Now that's a list of "To Do's". How many are you doing every day?

The "To Do's" are nice...but they must be grounded in three ways: Facts, Emotions, and Symbols!

## Food For Thought - The 300 Spartans

I saw this movie many years ago...when I was digging through the discount bin at Sam's the other day I found a copy of this 1962 movie on DVD for \$5.95. What a treasure!

The movie tells the story of the battle of Thermopylae that took place during the Greek-Persian war in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

Because of its defensible terrain, the mountain pass of Thermopylae, the "Hot Gates," was chosen by the Greeks as the site for the battle. At the time it consisted of a pass so narrow two chariots could barely move abreast—one side stood the sheer side of the mountain, while the other was a cliff drop into the sea. Along the path was a series of three "gates," and at the center gate a short wall was hastily erected by the Greek army to aid in their defense. It was here in the August of 480 BC that an army of some 7000 Greeks, led by 300 Spartans, stood to receive the full force of the Persian army, numbering perhaps some forty times (280,000) its size. Some estimates of the Persian army go as high as between 1.5 and 2 million.

This is not a story of immediate success, the Greeks that did not retreat (the 300 Spartans) were killed by the overwhelming force of the Persians. The Persians were later defeated at the battle of Plataea.

Sorry, I did not mean to turn this into a history lesson. I wanted to really talk about the leader of the Spartans, King Leonidas. He fought and died with his men; he was in the thick of the battle, he lead from the front not from the top. He demonstrated his leadership, not by what he said but by what he did.

On a side note, a famous quote has been attributed to King Leonidas, when told that the arrows from the Persians would blot out the sun, he said "Then we will fight in the dark".

Finally allow me to quote King Leonidas' own words in response to the Persian's king offer to make him King of All Greece: *"If you understood what was honorable in life, you would avoid lusting after what belongs to others. For me, it is better to die for Greece than to be monarch of the people of my race."* When the Persian King Xerxes demanded he give up his arms, he said simply: *"Come and take them."* Xerxes did, but to Leonidas – not the victor - went the laurels of the hero. Even in defeat, Leonidas became a symbol of the defense of Democracy against tyranny and a reminder of the need for sacrifice in order to win that victory.

Now that's leadership!!!



## The Effective Leader

I recently had a discussion with a number of executives about their leadership effectiveness; following are the key points from that conversation.

...I think that most of us will agree...Leadership Effectiveness is closely linked to leadership ability, but I also think that there is more to it than that.

Many of us would be quick to point out that an effective leader requires many attributes to be truly effective – integrity, intelligence, conceptual thinking ability, good communication skills and so on...however I think that there are four attributes that stand out as critical:

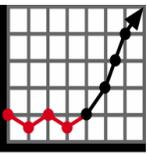
1. A sense of purpose or mission – This is the result of being able to define something beyond oneself that is worthy of one's best effort, as well as having something within you that compels you to apply your energy and creativity towards achieving it. This is what Dr. Maslow called "self-actualization." There also seems to be a passionate, single-minded, consistent, focus on the mission.

2. A sense of authority – The people who possess this attribute seem as though they were meant to be in charge. They neither doubt or question that leadership was destined to be their role in life. They accept the mantle of leadership without a trace of arrogance, regarding it as less than a divine right or responsibility. These people allow for and encourage input from a wide variety of sources. They are able to embrace and accept criticism and even failure without feeling diminished by it. They leave no doubt as to who is in charge and no need to say much about it.

3. A calm intensity – A calm intensity is the ability to move relentlessly ahead toward a goal without giving into stress or causing undue stress in others. It is the ability to stimulate, motivate, and energize a person or an organization to function at peak potential – without driving people or causing them to feel pressure or blame, guilt, or fear. This person, helps people to set stretch objectives and provides the support they need to reach them. He or she remains calm under pressure, while exuding competence, confidence and a can do attitude.

4. Finally an effective leader really, above all CARES – about us, about what we are doing, and how things ultimately turn out.

How well do you measure up as an effective leader?



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Empowerment Quarterly  
Designed and Edited by:  
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## Recommended Readings

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Leading the Revolution  
By: Gary Hamel

Jack Welch and The 4E's of Leadership  
By: Jeffery A. Krames

Patton on Leadership  
By: Alan Axerod



## Quotes for the Quarter

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"Leadership is all about people. It is not about organizations. It is not about plans. It is not about strategies. It is all about people--motivating people to get the job done. You have to be people-centered."

*-Colin Powell*

"Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results."

*-George S. Patton*

"The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it."

*-Theodore Roosevelt*

"Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." *-Peter F. Drucker*

## Cigar of the Quarter

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### Rocky Patel Olde World Reserve Maduro Torpedo

This dark, attractive mini torpedo is a woody smoke, with touches of earth and leather flavors. The finish carries a coffee note. Excellent with a double espresso!

Made By: El Paraiso Cigar Factory  
Distributed By: Rocky Patel Premium Cigars  
Country: Honduras  
Filler: Nicaragua  
Binder: Nicaragua  
Wrapper: Honduras  
Score: 95  
Size: Figurado  
Ring Gauge: 54  
Length: 5"

