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PEARLS OF WISDOM – CORL Corral

Auteure: Muriel Shewchuk, infirmière autorisée, baccalauréat en sciences infirmières, CPN(C), est consultante en soins périopératoires. Elle vient juste de prendre pris sa retraite après 42 ans dans les domaines de formation et d'administration périopératoires. Muriel est la cofondatrice ainsi que la coprésidente actuelle du Canadian Operating Room Leaders Network (CORL), organisme ayant récemment devenu groupe affilié de l'AIISOC. Muriel sera la représentante du CORL au sein du conseil administratif de l'AIISOC.

LEADERNOMIE

L'équilibre en leadership – s'adapter selon les circonstances

Vous avez raison, vous ne trouverez pas le mot «leadernomie» dans votre dictionnaire. Cependant, je réclame une certaine liberté poétique pour créer ce mot et pour l'utiliser dans cet article. Dans votre rôle de leader, vous devez choisir parmi plusieurs différentes voies, chacune représentant un style différent – laquelle choisir? Pouvez-vous en choisir plus qu'une? Que vous soyez le leader d'une salle d'opération pendant une seule journée ou que vous soyez le directeur à long terme d'un grand service, ou quoi que ce soit entre les deux, vous aurez, afin d'être efficace et connaître le succès, à choisir parmi plusieurs styles de leadership au cours d'une semaine ou même d'une journée. La définition de «leadernomie» serait alors le mélange de styles de leadership en vue de produire les résultats les mieux adaptés aux circonstances et aux personnes concernées.

Author: Muriel Shewchuk RN, B.Sc.N, CPN(C) is a Perioperative Nurse Consultant. She has recently retired following over 42 years of Perioperative Education and Administration. Muriel is a co-founder, and currently co-chair, of the Canadian Operating Room Leaders Network (CORL) which has recently been granted Affiliate status with ORNAC. Muriel will represent CORL on the ORNAC Board.

LEADERNOMICS

Situational Balance – One Size Does NOT Fit All!

You are right – “Leadernomics” is not a word that is in your dictionary. I have taken editorial license and created the word for use in this article. As you walk down the road of leadership styles, you will have several paths to choose from – which will you take? Can you choose more than one? Whether you are the leader of an operating room theatre for only one day or the long-term director of a large department – or anything in between – you may, in order to be effective and successful, need to choose several different leadership paths over the course of a day or a week. “Leadernomics” would be defined as the blending of leadership styles in order to produce the results best suited to the circumstances and the people involved.

Leadership Styles

The purists view of leadership styles are generally recognized as laissez-faire, democratic, autocratic, and dictatorial. Leaders are often labeled as one type of leader by their colleagues and staff. The label is generally the result of a specific encounter or a belief that is held about the leader – it may or may not be fair and may or may not be recognized by the leader. Whether or not it is fair, most employees and colleagues will have an opinion about their leaders. This label is hard to change. To do so, a leader must recognize how he/she has been labeled and make a concerted attempt to develop a new image – ideally one that is situational and appropriate to a range of scenarios. Effective leadernomics blends the various styles of leadership in to one that allows a leader to respond effectively to every situation. When used effectively, it allows everyone involved in a situation to achieve a positive result and to, as needed, “save face”. Leadernomics used effectively help a leader achieve the label “The Leader Everyone Wants”!

Selecting and utilizing the most effective leadership style can be not unlike the challenges of dealing with children. A two year old can go from being loving and sweet to laying on the floor in a fit of tantrums. A volatile, emotional, challenging teenager can test your every strength. In the

workplace, senior professionals, with great responsibility and complex roles, can suddenly shift to nonsensical, out of control, behaviour that requires the appropriate leadernomics to effectively manage the situation. "One size leadership" will NOT fit all of the possible, and interesting, situations.

Preparing Yourself for Effective Leadernomics

Many leaders have little understanding of how they are perceived by their employees and peers. It is important to take the time to do a post evaluation of leadership situations in order to determine how the situation could have been handled more effectively and to evaluate how the other participants might be feeling. It is important to look in the mirror, in order to honestly evaluate leadership style, reputation, and the image held by others. A dogged determination to rule and win at all costs, or a fear of the truth, will result in a lack of understanding. Effectiveness will be diminished in a leader who wants to be everyone's friend, to offend no one, and to avoid the tough decisions. Lack of the right education and experience, or the past presence of inadequate role models, mentors, and supervisors can create major leadership issues. Internal and external pressures can increase a leader's difficulties. All these factors combined with personality, leadership style, and personal expectations contribute to each individual's leadernomics.

In order to develop effective leadernomics it is important to have a strong understanding of the mission, goals and objectives, as well as the expected outcomes, ramifications and risks, of each situation. Ask all the "what if's" and be prepared for every possibility! It is important to allow enough TIME to form a clear strategy – this may require moments, a few hours, or days. The application of appropriate leadernomics requires a leader with a high acuity assessment for risk factors to patients, staff, physicians, legal processes, material and financial resources, and the entire medical facility.



Laissez faire Leadership

Allowing everyone to do what they want, when they want, generally has little place, in its true form, in our complex, highly regulated, perioperative environment. A "free for all" with limited accountability to a common goal would raise major concerns. The risks to

everyone concerned, and the negative impact on overall efficiency, will usually preclude the role of purely laissez-faire leaders. If credibility and required production are not managed effectively they may well be compromised.

Democratic Leadership

A true democratic environment would result in everyone having equal access to information and opportunity for decision making through a voting or consensus process. The leader would be expected to fulfill the wishes of the group. A true democracy requires that the staff determine what will occur in most situations. A true democracy requires a great deal of time educating all participants about the situation and its potential ramifications. Many factors – such as the needs of other departments and institutions, administrative and legal requirements, and financial restrictions – will preclude a true democracy. Although staff may want full input, they will also expect that boundaries, borders and limitations are put in place. If they are required to contribute too much input, you may hear "I'm not paid to do your job". Leadership strategies that aim for a full democracy may appear rudderless or leaderless and result in a loss of the leader's credibility.



It is important to establish clearly defined processes that allow staff to have appropriate input through the key experienced personnel. This group will know how to direct the input and facilitate the right procedures. Modified democracy provides the greatest opportunity for teamwork and involvement.

Autocratic Leading to Dictatorial Leadership

We all know a wide range of autocratic decision makers who may, or may not, have the best interests of the staff in mind. Because they can be unapproachable, true autocrats are usually not in possession of all the information needed to lead effectively. The autocratic leader in its worst, and most unaccessible, form would be a dictator. While it is important to be able to make the tough decisions, no leader can afford to be an island, isolated from feedback and from staff input. The impact of the purely autocratic leaders is usually very destructive for the department, the staff and, ultimately, for the leader.

Blended Leadernomics

Utilizing the best leadership competencies and incorporating components from all the various leadership styles in a blended manner will lead to success. Understanding the players and the situation, while allowing for risks and timing, will help a leader choose the right mixture of styles to ensure that that everyone is heard and that all rights, issues, and priorities are recognized. Remember one size does NOT fit all personnel any more than it fits all situations.



Elements of laissez faire can be incorporated in appropriate amounts, with the right group of staff, in to situations where there is limited risk, where considerable time is available, and where staff can be trusted to effectively make decisions. This approach can rule out unnecessary micromanagement. Caution, however, is advised. It is important to draw the necessary boundaries, determine in advance the level and areas of accountability, and to ensure follow through on both the impact and outcome.

The urgency of the situation, the experience of the players, and the individual dynamics and tactics will add challenge to a leader's choices. In crisis situations an autocratic, bordering on dictatorial, approach may be the right tactic in order to reduce the risk to everyone. It is important to encourage dialogue after the situation so that all parties can understand the reason that a particular action was taken. But there will come a point when enough discussion has taken place and decisions just have to be made by those in charge. This may seem autocratic, but it is the role of authority figures to make decisions. It is, however, important that explanation, diplomacy, tact and respect remain part of the process.

Summary

Leadernomics involves effectively blending each of the styles of leadership in a balance that is best suited for each situation, individual, or group. An excellent leader will be able to rapidly analyze the situation and incorporate the strategies that will be most effective. 🌟

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