

Why is Effective Leadership Important?

True leaders can influence the 'organisational climate', or the culture of an organisation. They promote well-being and engagement in the workplace by creating a positive workplace culture. In doing so they earn the respect of employees who are supported and motivated to provide discretionary effort enhancing their productivity, performance, attendance and outcomes.

Effective leadership has many cost benefits to an organisation including:

- Improved attendance and improved workplace health,
- Reduced turnover and costs in recruitment and training,
- Enhanced engagement, performance and outcomes,
- Positive influences on organisational image and customer service, and
- Being a workplace of choice and attracting the best employees.

So what are the attributes of successful leaders?

✓ **Emotional Intelligence** – involves situational awareness and perceiving, understanding and strategically responding to people, emotions and challenges. Emotional intelligence for leadership consists of five key attributes as follows:

1. **Self-Awareness.** Being an effective leader requires insight into their strengths and weaknesses, understands their own motivations, and have a sense of confidence and willingness to learn. Accurate self-awareness, or insight, allows us to identify and consider the potential influence of our own emotions, values, personality traits, biases and preferences.
2. **Self-Regulation** allows leaders to control their emotions when responding to situations or making decisions. Leadership requires objectivity and fairness. Decisions should not be adversely influenced by negative emotions relating to aspects not relevant to the decision-making process. Leaders will respond to situations strategically rather than react to them. They will allocate the time required to gather relevant information, understand the problem, consult with stakeholders and implement a strategic solution while mitigating risks and foreseeing consequences.
3. **Self-Motivation** is being driven to achieve outcomes and constantly improve performance.
4. **Empathy** is the ability to understand individual team members and factors that motivate and affect them. It is being tuned to their emotions and wellbeing. It involves ability to support, challenge and develop employees to achieve enhanced engagement in work and mutually positive outcomes.
5. **Effective Communication and Relationship Management** relates to effective communication including listening and intentional communication. It is about building positive relationships with, and between, others and having skills to resolve conflict. Effective leaders build networks with others. They encourage, mentor and support colleagues to achieve positive outcomes. They personalise the workplace by taking a genuine interest in people and through those positive relationships promote engagement.

- ✓ **Socialised Power** – Effective leaders use power responsibly. They create vision, consult stakeholders, establish agreed goals and positively support teams to achieve goals. They are aware of their power and use it wisely, rather than engage in a management style that is dominating and controlling. They look for win/wins when negotiating outcomes. Effective leaders understand the nature of reciprocity when making decisions that affect employees. In respecting and supporting employees they know they will generally earn loyalty.
- ✓ **Strategic Intent** - Often organisations promote people because they are technically good at their job or high performers in their area of skill. High performance, however, in a set of tasks does not necessarily translate to natural leadership capability. When adapting to a leadership role, leaders need to shift their focus from the detail of the work to a broader, strategic view. Leaders do not micromanage, they support and inspire employees towards development, growth and achieving greater goals. They promote workplace satisfaction and engagement and know that this translates into better organisational outcomes.

Many organisations also neglect to train, develop and grow leaders. Instead, they are often just left with managers who maintain the status quo, tick the boxes and implement policy. Managers are uninspiring if they do not possess true leadership qualities.

How can I optimise my leadership skills and capability?

Taking courses in leadership is a great start to building your knowledge and skills. Implementing your learnings, however, can be challenging as leaders have to face so many complex challenges. The complexity of leadership is highlighted when you consider all the above variables.

It is helpful to obtain independent, confidential coaching to reflect on challenges in a private space with a professional with both leadership training and experience who understands workplace psychology.



What are the benefits of coaching?

We assist clients:

- ✓ Develop emotional intelligence through self-reflection, exploration and problem solving,
- ✓ Learning to manage stress and enhance emotional regulation,
- ✓ Optimise psychological health, motivation, work performance and life balance,
- ✓ Enhance understanding of individual employees and workplace dynamics, and
- ✓ Improve skills in communication and relationship management.

iflow psychology can assist. Just call **0431 564 257** or book an appointment online at www.iflowpsychology.com.au

INVEST. LEAD. SUCCEED.