

LEADERSHIP EBOOK

A collection of articles on Culture, Listening,
Conflict Management, Motivation,
Engagement and more.



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HOW TO USE THIS EBOOK

The articles address the problems facing leaders and teams. All of them leave you with questions to personally answer or discuss with your team.

Recommended Uses

- Select an article that addresses issues your team is facing and distribute it at your next meeting using the questions to spur conversation.
- Consider your personal growth and select an article to help you develop as a leader.
- Distribute the ebook to your team and have them select an article to discuss.
- Encourage one of your team members to read an article about a skill or approach you want them to develop. Have them share their thoughts with you one on one.

A Listening Quote

"When our communication results in each of us feeling heard, understood, and valued, relationships and trust deepen."



IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING TO BECOME A BETTER LEADER

True communication occurs when we listen to one another. When our communication results in each of us feeling heard, understood, and valued, relationships and trust deepen. I believe listening is a gift because when I do it well, people genuinely remark, "I really appreciate you listening."

Are you a good listener, even a great listener?

Think about the times when you listen best. What's the setting, who is involved and what's the topic? Take a moment and reflect specifically on what you do to ensure you're listening deeply?

Now think of times when you struggle? What gets in your way... what emotions or thoughts do you experience... would I see anything in your behavior that suggests you're not listening?

I'm not a gambler but I'll make this bet... there are times when you do well and others when you struggle.

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IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING TO BECOME A BETTER LEADER

If you've taken a moment to reflect, then I've helped you raise your awareness and develop insight about your listening. I encourage you to write down what you've identified and commit to taking action to limit the thoughts, behaviors, and emotions that get in your way and embody those that promote and result in understanding.

Here's a couple of ideas that have helped me improve my listening.

- I check my emotional operating system because I know that I listen best when I operate with empathy and curiosity.
- I work to eliminate distractions and try to get eye to eye.
- I allow people time to finish their thoughts which means allowing for silence.
- I express value in what they've shared and then ask questions. This can sound like "tell me more" or asking nuanced questions in context with what they've said.

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IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING TO BECOME A BETTER LEADER

- I work to hear “their truth” and use self-talk to stay engaged especially when hearing a truth different from my own.
- I want to fully understand before responding which sometimes means simply expressing appreciation to them for what they’ve shared.

To become a better leader and manager, work to become a great listener. Listening requires energy, awareness, patience, and practice. If you focus on developing this aspect of your communication, I guarantee you and everyone you interact with will benefit.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What situations create a struggle for you to listen well?
- What steps can you take to become a great listener?
- Why is it important to you to develop your listening skills?

A Culture Quote

"By watching, listening and experiencing your organization as an observer, you can detect signs of an attractive culture or one that causes employees to flee."



HOW YOUR CULTURE IMPACTS ENGAGEMENT

Much is written about the impact of culture on employee engagement and organizational growth. Having been inside hundreds of organizations, I've seen both eye-popping and subtle representations of culture.

If you're tuned in, I believe you can quickly get a feel for your culture. By watching, listening and experiencing your organization as an observer, you can detect signs of an attractive culture or one that causes employees to flee.

Walk around your office, look in on meetings, visit the break room and observe whether you see people smiling having **Fun** or **Frowning**. Are you always a serious bunch or is there some laughter and levity?

Consider your growth strategy and fiscal health. Do your employees have confidence in the organization's direction and financial performance? Are you on solid **Footing** or are you **Fiscally Floundering**?

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HOW YOUR CULTURE IMPACTS ENGAGEMENT

When conversations occur about problems facing your organization, do you hear **Fixed** or **Forward** thinking? Are employees trapped in belief systems that inhibit accountability or do the conversations represent a growth mindset?

Is your culture **Fearless** or **Fearful**? Do your employees have the autonomy to act or must they ask for permission? Do people speak up in meetings, offer new ideas, and respectfully challenge one another?

Do managers fail to provide **Feedback** or is it delivered at the right **Frequency**? And does it focus on **Failure** or is it **Fruitful** to an employee's development?

What is the culture more comfortable with - **Formulas** or **Freehand**? Would I see employees doing what it takes to wow your customers or simply hear them recite policy?

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HOW YOUR CULTURE IMPACTS ENGAGEMENT

How much gossip, loose lips and lying occurs in your organization. Does your culture accept **Falsehoods** or encourage **Fidelity**? Who gets attention and promotions?

What happens when people make mistakes. Are they **Flogged** or **Forgiven**? Do conversations seek to understand what occurred from which everyone can learn or do they result in fault finding and indictment?

Have relationships developed where people feel mutual respect, acceptance and belonging or does the culture promote unhealthy competition? Do coworkers and departments see one another as **Friend** or **Foe**?

Here's a final few 'F's" that also stand out.

Do people celebrate and support one another at work? Is there **Food** to be shared and are there events and gatherings that include **Family**? And consider the physical environment too. Do the **Furniture** and **Fixtures** promote pride or embarrassment about the workspace?

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Lastly, do your employees have the **Freedom** to express their **Feelings** about their culture, leaders and teammates? How much conversation is filtered versus authentic?

My encouragement is to pay close attention and work to develop a culture that helps drive employee engagement.

Questions to Consider

- What in this article describes your present culture that drives engagement?
- What in this article describes your present culture that inhibits engagement?
- What in this article describes what you want to see more of in your culture?

A Engagement Quote

"When people are asked about career experiences where they were fully engaged... there was a high level of trust."



WHAT CREATES AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE?

Gigs of data exist from decades of surveys on employee satisfaction. This is a well-researched topic with work done by many reputable firms like Hewitt, Deloitte, Kenexa, AON, Gallup and Towers Perrin. Some of the best research I've come across is from Leigh Branham in his book RE-ENGAGE who cites 6 universal engagement drivers.

- Caring, competent, and engaging senior leaders
- Effective managers who keep employees aligned and engaged
- Effective teamwork at all levels
- Job enrichment and professional growth
- Valuing employee contributions
- Concern for employee well being

Today, more than ever before, I see trust as a key issue impacting engagement. You can be on a great team, serving great clients, being paid well...

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... and receiving recognition. Yet if you see people or leaders behaving without integrity and getting away with it, trust erodes and disengagement sets in.

When people are asked about career experiences where they were fully engaged, I often hear there was a high level of trust. When trust is high, work gets done faster, fewer emails are sent to clarify positions, and there are fewer meetings after the meeting. When I look at the research and talk with business leaders, a key distinction that creates an engaged workforce is trust in senior leadership.

QUESTION TO CONSIDER

- In which of the engagement drivers does your organization excel?
- Which of the engagement drivers must your organization focus on improving?
- What is the current level of trust in your organization's leadership?

A Wisdom Quote

"Before you turn to the outside to find answers, consider the wisdom you have accumulated."



WHERE DO YOU TURN FOR WISDOM?

When faced with important decisions or difficult problems, where do you turn? Many people turn to family members, close friends, a spiritual advisor or trusted colleague. An old Hindu legend describes a time when all people had the wisdom of the gods. But they abused their privilege and Brahma, the chief god, decided to take it away from them and hide it in a place where it could never be found. Not knowing where that would be, he held a council of the gods to help him decide.

One god suggested, bury deep in the earth. Brahma replied, No, people will dig down and find it. Another god said, Then let's put it in the deepest ocean. Brahma shook his head and said, no, people will learn to dive to the ocean's depths and find it there someday.

A third god asked, Why don't we hide it on the highest mountain or the farthest corner of the earth? Brahma answered, No, people will eventually climb the highest mountain, scale every peak and search every hidden cave.

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WHERE DO YOU TURN FOR WISDOM?

The gods were exasperated and threw up their arms. There is no place. They will find it anywhere we put it. Brahma was quiet for a time. He thought long and deep. Finally, he looked at the council and said, here's what we shall do. We will hide their wisdom in a place people will never look - deep inside themselves.

Next time, before you turn to the outside to find answers, consider the wisdom you have accumulated and turn in - look deep inside yourself.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What type of decisions do you face where you must trust yourself?
- How can you learn to trust your judgment?
- What are situations in your life where you trusted yourself and won?

A Feedback Quote

"Let your words and behaviors demonstrate that you appreciate the importance and significance of the feedback you're receiving."



9 STEPS TO TAKE TOUGH FEEDBACK

The degree to which people are open to accepting feedback often correlates to their willingness to excel. If they're satisfied with the status quo or unwilling to change, feedback won't have much impact on their performance. For those committed to getting better every day, feedback is necessary, though sometimes tough to take.

Here are 9 steps on how to take tough feedback.

1. Take A Breath - Deep breaths provide a calming effect.

2. Take Notes - This allows you to maintain composure, accurately reflect what you heard and provides a resource should follow-up communication prove worthwhile.

3. Take Accountability - Listen for and acknowledge what you can own and share the actions you can take to address the issue.

4. Take A Picture - See everyone and everything that is involved including who is providing the feedback, the origins of their feedback, and the intent of their feedback.

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9 STEPS TO TAKE TOUGH FEEDBACK

5. Take Time – Consider asking for time to reflect on the feedback so that you respond thoughtfully and with grace.

6. Take It Seriously – Let your words and behaviors demonstrate that you appreciate the importance and significance of the feedback you're receiving. Thank the person for the feedback they're offering.

7. Take Responsibility – Speak up on your behalf and respectfully address factual or perceptual inaccuracies.

8. Take Care – Be diligent not to attack the sender or take people down by how you respond.

9. Take The High Road – It's easier to think about what you wanted to say than take back what you said.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Have you ever received tough feedback, the kind that's hard to hear?
- How do you prepare for a meeting or conversation where you may be receiving tough feedback?
- What feedback have you received that's been most impactful to your development?

A Motivation Quote

"Great leaders value people and know how to connect with them. They are authentic and trustworthy and believe the more they give, the more their people will give back."



IS IT REALLY A MANAGER'S JOB TO MOTIVATE THEIR TEAM?

There are two schools of thought. One says it's not the managers job to motivate and engage their team, it's up to the employee. The other recognizes that most employees disengage and leave organizations because of their relationship with their manager.

Managers who engage and motivate their teams to excel in four areas.

- They clearly define goals and expectations.
- They make resources available.
- They recognize performance.
- They genuinely connect with and care about each team member.

Imagine a project or team where goals and expectations are clear. People know their roles, they take initiative, they ask great questions, they offer timely insight and come together to get work done.

Now imagine an engaged, motivated team operating without necessary resources and forced to make do.

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IS IT REALLY A MANAGER'S JOB TO MOTIVATE THEIR TEAM?

Great managers fight for and make resources available and people appreciate that - a lot!

Employees also appreciate being recognized for doing a great job. Yet, recognizing performance is not only about what people do well. Engaged employees value a leader who encourages accountability and can address when performance doesn't meet expectations.

And finally, great leaders value people and know how to connect with them. They are authentic and trustworthy and believe the more they give, the more their people will give back.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How do you express appreciation and recognition?
- When have you resisted communicating about unmet expectations?
- How do you know your team understands and is clear on goals?

A Conflict Quote

"Make the conscious decision to express yourself in a constructive manner, thinking through the outcome you expect from your expression before you share it."



4 ESSENTIAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Managing conflict of any kind can be a frustrating task for most of us. For leaders, resolving some sort of conflict is usually the norm rather than the exception. From competing resources and deadlines to new project teams, mergers, and managing through organizational change, leaders are continually required to flex their interpersonal conflict management skills.

In addition, more and more of the work we do today involves multiple teams to reach organizational goals. The increased need for clear communication and role clarity between teams will help to ease potential conflict, and if navigated well, can provide team members with the opportunity to be innovative, take risks, and increase productivity.

As a leader, you may find the strategies below can help you to leverage your emotional intelligence skills in times of conflict.

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4 ESSENTIAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Manage Yourself First

1. Listen to yourself with purpose. Use **Emotional Self-Awareness** skills to recognize your reactions, thoughts, and feelings regarding the conflict at hand. What are your thoughts about the conflict; the way it has been handled thus far and what can be done to get through it? What frustrates you about it? What is good about it? Remember, even though it may feel personal at times, the conflict is often not about you. Pay attention to how you feel and bring the focus back to the issue.

2. Timely expressions of yourself. As a leader, your emotional expressions are always in the limelight, and while some situations call for instantly expressing yourself, most require a more deliberate and controlled expression. Your genuine expression and authenticity will be appreciated by others especially when it is timely and constructive. Make the conscious decision to express yourself in a constructive manner, thinking through the outcome you expect from your expression before you share it.

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4 ESSENTIAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

Manage Others Second

3. **Empathy in conflict management.** Without empathy, the conflict would bring nothing but harm to your team and your effectiveness. Use your **Empathy** skills as a tool to bring down the temperature of the situation. Listen to the other side attentively and genuinely.

Even if you disagree completely, find ways to express your genuine understanding (e.g., how frustrating the situation must be for them; the amount of effort being dedicated; how much is at stake for them). Validation in this way can be the single most powerful tool to get others to pull back their defenses.

4. **Conflict resolution management.** Note that the title of this article is conflict management, not conflict resolution. Yes, there will be situations that call for immediate action and you will need to make use of the authority behind the position you hold at your organization.

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4 ESSENTIAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR LEADERS

For others, try simply managing the conflict as opposed to resolving it. Leaders usually have the tendency to jump right into problem-solving mode, especially when problem-solving skills are second-nature, or it seems easier to solve it yourself than allow others to do so.

Make the conscious decision to manage the conflict as a leader and use it as an opportunity to develop your team. Provide them with the latitude to generate solutions and then review the best course of action with them. Remember, conflict can be a good thing! Learn to manage its destructive potential and harness its constructive energy.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- What have you noticed when managing conversations versus trying to quickly resolve conflict?
- When do you avoid conflict?
- Who do you know that manages conflict well?

A Time Management Quote

"As you rise in an organization...that translates into less time spent performing subordinates' tasks and more time spent coaching, giving direction, providing feedback and recognition."



Managers short on time may not be using it wisely. Investing in **"People Time"** vs. **"Task Time"** will produce long term benefits for managers and their teams. Task time is spent doing work whereas people time is spent seeing that work gets done through others. You can't do both without working 80 hours a week.

Non-management jobs tend to be primarily involved in completing tasks. As you rise in an organization, the proportion of people time should rise too. That translates into less time spent performing subordinates' tasks and more time spent coaching, giving direction, providing feedback and recognition.

Here are three mindsets that keep managers stuck in their employee's task time?

"If you want it done right, you've got to do it yourself." What they mean is, when anything goes wrong, as it will, they want to be rescuers. They also may have problems with delegation and trust.

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"I want my subordinates to see I'm willing and able to do whatever I expect them to do." Valid

reasoning? If so, a chicken farmer would have to lay an egg a day to keep his hens' respect.

"I owe it to my subordinates to give them frequent examples of how things look when it's done right."

Let employees excel and own their work, not simply repeat how the manager does it.

Managers have discretion only over a small part of their time. Use it to develop your team, clarify goals, communicate expectations and eliminate roadblocks.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Do you promote the best performers without first developing their management and people skills?
- Who on your team is ready for additional responsibility that delegation can provide?
- What keeps you from spending time coaching, giving direction, providing feedback and recognition?

A Pride Quote

"Consider your employees... you hired them because they are smart, capable professionals and that's what they want to show you."



10 OBSTACLES THAT KILL EMPLOYEE PRIDE

Suppose you were working for a company in a product support or service role interacting with customers on the phone. Which would you rather do?

Choice A: Use your product expertise and unique personality to help your customer solve their problems, concluding the call once the customer's needs are met, and being measured by customer feedback, increased product utilization or revenue plus the feeling that you made a difference.

Choice B: Take calls all day responding with organizationally approved scripts, assigning callers a case number, passing them on to a case manager and being measured by how many calls you took and how quickly you ended the call.

People are born with intrinsic
motivation, self-esteem, dignity,
curiosity to learn, joy in learning.

— W. Edwards Deming —

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10 OBSTACLES THAT KILL EMPLOYEE PRIDE

According to the noted quality consultant Dr. W. Edwards Deming, Choice A sustains intrinsic motivation to do one's best work and boosts morale. At his seminars, Deming asked participants to name specific obstacles that prevent them from experiencing pride in workmanship and company loyalty.

They often come up with:

- Lack of direction, unclear goals and objectives.
- Goals without what's needed to achieve them: time, resources, equipment.
- Arbitrary decisions by the boss.
- No indication that their contribution is valued.
- Insufficient information provided to make decisions on their own.
- Conflicting organizational goals within the company.
- Deadline anxiety.
- Staff not valued by management.
- Hierarchy tries to run technology it doesn't understand.
- Short term objectives conflict with long term.

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10 OBSTACLES THAT KILL EMPLOYEE PRIDE

Consider the roles your employees perform and how their work is measured and valued. You hired them because they are smart, capable professionals and that's what they want to show you. The question is will you let them?

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Which of the listed obstacles do your employees experience most often?
- How can you increase ownership and pride in the work your employees perform?
- What is the cost of not removing the obstacles you've identified?

A Power Quote

"Anyone is capable of holding power and influencing others"



LEADERSHIP & POWER ARE NOT SYNONYMOUS

Leadership and power are closely linked but they are not synonymous. People follow powerful leaders. Some are powerful because they can give a bonus or a raise. Others are powerful because they can hire & fire and assign undesirable tasks. Their teams are unlikely to be enthusiastic about their approach to leadership.

Leaders also have power because they're experts in their fields, or because their team members admire them. People with these types of power influence others effectively because of their skills and personal qualities.

The original typology of power was developed by French and Raven (1959) and included the first five forms of power below. Information power was first described by Raven and Kruglanski (1975).

Connection power was described by Hersey and Goldsmith (1980). Moral power was described by Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998).

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8 FORMS OF LEADERSHIP POWER

- Legitimate
- Reward
- Expert
- Referent
- Coercive
- Information
- Connection
- Moral

Anyone is capable of holding power and influencing others: you don't need to have an important job title.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How is the power used effectively in your organization?
- When has power been used ineffectively and what is the cost?
- What type of power do you rely on most to influence others?

A Leadership Development Quote

"They are vigilant about teaching and modeling communication that encourages questions, challenges the status quo and instills commitment and ownership of problem solving and decision making."



CONSIDER YOUR APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A 163-year-old company with 43K employees hired 6K people in 2015. Today, 50% of their workforce possess less than 5 years of experience. That means lots of retirement parties and orientation classes. It also means decades and in some cases, generations of knowledge will soon depart.

Capturing that know-how and archiving the institutional memory is critical. So too is helping new hires embrace a culture with leaders and co-workers more than twice their age. The beauty of this client is their "head above the sand" approach to addressing this reality.

They recognize that it's easy for tenured managers to simply tell folks how work get's done. In fact, they once characterized their culture as one of command and control. You do what's told, ask few if any questions and figure it out yourself. For a time that worked, yet the organization recognized it must change. It's very simple; many leaders are retiring and new generations must be developed. And they didn't just realize this yesterday.

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CONSIDER YOUR APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Their approach for the last 17 years is to develop their people and provide leadership training to ALL levels of the organization. That means Individual Contributors, Front Line Supervisors, Managers, Directors and C-Level Execs participate and learn together. Components of the training include tactile team building activities, peer & 1:1 coaching, Emotional Intelligence & Leadership assessments, 360 feedback, and more.

Being a matrix organization, they are vigilant about teaching and modeling communication that encourages questions, challenges the status quo, and instills commitment and ownership of problem-solving and decision making.

Are they unique in this approach? You bet! But they're not alone in valuing education and training. In June of 2014, Starbucks announced they will pay for eligible Partners (Starbucks, Teavana, La Boulange, Evolution Fresh, and Seattle's Best Coffee employees) to finish a bachelor's degree with full tuition reimbursement for juniors and seniors through a unique collaboration with Arizona State University.

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CONSIDER YOUR APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

"Supporting our partner's ambitions is the very best investment Starbucks can make," said then-President and CEO Howard Schultz. The alliance between Starbucks and ASU was inspired by participation in the Markle Economic Future Initiative, co-chaired by Schultz and Markle President Zo Baird.

The initiative is committed to expanding opportunities that help Americans succeed in the global digital economy and reignite faith that the American Dream is achievable. And guess what, Partners will have no commitment to remain at the company past graduation. In fact, they only need to work 20 hours a week to be eligible.
(<https://asunews.asu.edu/20140615-starbucks-asu-partnership>)

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CONSIDER YOUR APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

So why do firms make a commitment to develop and invest in their employees? Some will say it's the right thing to do, others because it provides a competitive advantage and others because it helps them attract smart people. For clients like my 160-year-old company, they know it statistically impacts key metrics; safety, productivity, customer satisfaction, cost containment, employee commitment and revenue growth.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Is your leadership development investment based on an enduring strategy or a temporary interest?
- How would your employees describe the organization's approach to leadership development?
- How do your development initiatives impact measurable results?

ABOUT TOM SCHREIBER

Tom's career has taken him to every state and halfway around the world designing, selling, and delivering training, coaching, and consulting services. He has held leadership roles in public and private companies and been responsible for:

- Department & Team Leadership
- Talent Selection & Development
- Training Design & Delivery
- Technology Acquisition & Deployment
- Survey Design & Research Analysis
- Vendor Selection & Relationship Management
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Today organizations hire Tom to:

- Coach leaders and teams
- Design & facilitate virtual & in-person workshops
- Provide expertise to grow revenue, engage employees, and retain customers



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