
Sailing through Stormy Waters: The Communicator as Crisis Manager

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Leadership Motivation & Energy

Could your negative thoughts be hindering your company's success?

Channeling Leadership Motivation and Energy

In these times of fast-moving change and troubled economies, company executives are increasingly challenged to find new and effective ways of energising and engaging their employees to ensure collaboration across regions and divisions, and achieve sustainable business success. Whether or not they succeed depends ultimately on good leadership.

Trust and integrity are more important now than they have ever been, which demands a new leadership style – or way of being. It is a way of leading that demands the involvement of all affected stakeholders and an acknowledgement of their needs; a way of leading and being that gives voice to what is within people and accepts emotion as a legitimate part of the corporate culture.

We either Grow or Die

Darwin's concept "survival of the fittest" not only applies to transmutation of species, but also to organizations adapting to evolving customer needs and market circumstances. Organizations most responsive to change will survive. The faster the world moves, the faster we need to change. To thrive in the current dynamic economic, political, and social climate, organizations must be able to adapt fast.

What is emerging as the most significant reason for transformation project failure is a lack of adequate attention to the people-related aspects of organizational change. Effective transformation and crisis management involves much more than the mere application of processes, tools, and techniques.

Part of an organisation's success is based on how well their leaders lead, and also how well their followers follow. The relationship between leader and follower is truly symbiotic – you can't have one without the other. Followers have a responsibility to speak up. And the organisation has an equal obligation to create the environment for them to safely do so.

No matter how much partnership and empowerment there is, the CEO has ultimate authority and responsibility. The most capable team members fail when they gripe about their leader but do not say or do anything to help him or her improve or get back on track.

Personal change is at the root of change within an organisation. Each individual contributes to the overall success of the change effort. As a leader, you are a role model setting

the example for how an entire group of people should act. You delegate duties to your followers. One key characteristic of leaders is that they set high standards of accountability for themselves and for their behaviours. They assume that others are watching them and setting their own standards according to what they see. Releasing the incredible reservoir of potential is the opportunity and task of the leader – to find a way to tap into that motivation and energy, direct it and multiply it throughout the organization.

Understanding the Interplay of Thought, Emotion and Action

Emotions are psychological, behavioural, and physiological episodes experienced toward an object, person, or event that create a state of readiness. Most emotions occur without our awareness. We typically pay attention to our emotions while thinking through what we like or dislike. Cognitive and emotional processes don't always agree with each other, which might cause some dissonance and feeling of discomfort. Emotions also directly affect behavior.

We are not victims to emotional cues and triggers. We can use reason to evaluate our emotions, interpret them, and even reassess our initial reaction to them. We can soften their impact or shift their meaning. In other words, we can control our own emotions as well as the effect that other people's emotions have on us. The ability to detect, assess, and control one's emotions is one of the predictors of success in relating to others. So, somewhat paradoxically, connecting with others depends on developing a deep understanding of ourselves — what triggers our strongest emotions, and how the emotions we show impact others.

Emotions Motivate Actions

Successful companies actively create more positive than negative emotional episodes. The emotions-attitudes-behaviour model illustrates that attitudes are shaped by ongoing emotional experiences.

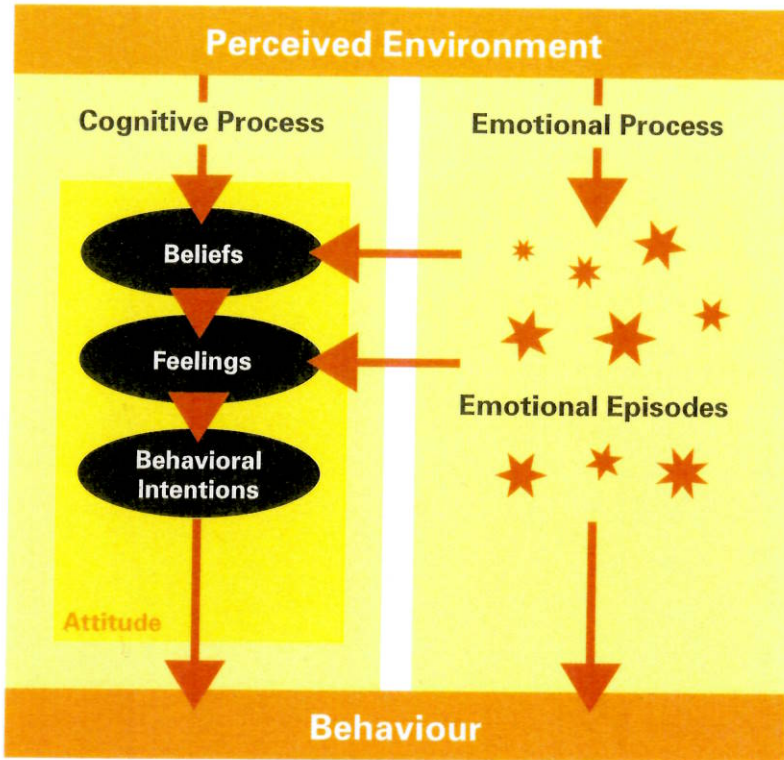
Positive Emotions for Optimal Organisational Functioning

Our thoughts, emotions and actions are the keys to understanding ourselves; they have a dedicated motivational

energy. Attitude is formed by a thought meeting a feeling, or vice versa. There are two pathways by which thought and emotion typically meet: 1 – The mind thinks a thought. And that thought produces an emotion. 2 - The body produces an emotion. And the mind thinks a thought about that emo-

ent strategy fosters innovation and creates a sustainable platform for growth.

Leaders and managers who demonstrate genuine leadership motivation and energy exhibit the following key traits. Here's what you can learn from them:



- **They provide a vision for the future** and share the passion they feel. As ambassadors for their cause, they give staff a vision of the big picture and where the company is headed. In doing this, they help employees to connect the dots and see how their everyday tasks contribute to the long-term perspective.

- **They communicate, communicate, communicate.** Good leaders involve their teams in formulating action plans, pieces of the strategy or the overall vision so that there is immediate support and buy-in from the start. They actively listen like a coach to what people want and need, observe interactions, provide feedback and reinforce collaborative behaviour.

- **They are facilitators who strengthen connectedness** within their teams and across the organisation. They allow transparency around the actions and processes that lead to results and decisions and address critical issues immediately; involving the right people to solve them.

- **They listen, listen, listen** to the ideas and concerns followers share with them. It enables them to connect and get engaged.

- **They establish an environment of continuous improvement and open dialogue** by providing opportunities for people to grow, both personally and professionally. They are caring and compassionate.

- **They act with integrity.** As Oscar Wilde put it, "Be yourself, everyone else is taken". Successful managers make a conscious choice to lead and be the person others choose to follow, and are rewarded with trust and authenticity. They are prepared to show courage, stamina, resilience and perseverance along the way.

tion. Action or decision takes place in the intersection where thought meets feeling, or feeling meets thought.

Understanding the interactions of these thoughts, feelings and actions, i.e. enhancing our self-awareness, leads us to discover our own wealth of resources and power and to help others unleash their potential. By being aware of the consequences of our actions, behaviours and thoughts, we can reduce unnecessary drama in our lives, actively manage energy levels and consciously engage others to work together toward a joint cause.

A Winning Attitude: Key Skills for Leadership Motivation and Energy

In today's business climate, in which uncertainty is the new certainty, leadership motivation and energy is one of the few variables that can still be controlled in the drive for revenue and profits. Leaders who are conscious of their motivation and energy stimulate connectedness and endorse collaborative behaviors, which in turn attract the best people. Once this is achieved on an ongoing basis, a perpetual machine is put in motion that forms the foundation of a collective corporate culture. Reinforcement of positive cultural behaviours is one of the most effective yet underestimated and under-utilized levers executives have to help them deliver on the company's strategic objectives. The combination of a healthy company culture and a consist-

In a nutshell: If you regularly reflect on your own thoughts, emotions and behaviours and how their interaction influences team performance and organisational culture, you will often find the answers you seek. The more positive leadership attitude you demonstrate, the more successful your business will be and the smoother your own professional and personal career advancement.



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