

Zapp or Sapp – Role Model Leadership

MANAGERS

“Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing” Albert Schweitzer

Do your team respect you as a leader? How do they make their decision? Chances are they won't take out the latest management book on 'What makes a Great Leader' and tick off the recommended qualities or attributes that they see in you. They will simply observe what you **do** on a daily basis and from this they form an opinion about who you **are**. They will then use this observation to decide if you are a trusted leader or someone with their own agenda, someone who's either out to impress to get promoted, or simply out to avoid too much hard work and effort themselves. Leaders who are in it for themselves are not as effective because their teams only obey them with little real commitment. Sadly they succeed in some organisations because they present a good image to their seniors at the expense of their workers. In other situations they get by because no one pulls them up for poor performance - their teams are blamed for not doing an effective job.

So, what do you do every day that sends a clear and strong message to your team about who you are? Because this is the signal, they will pick up loudly and clearly, about who you want them to be? Yes, you can deliver inspiring speeches about your vision; you can provide them with the skills to do a good job. But unless you behave every day as you want them to behave they simply won't believe the dream and won't use their skills to the very best of their ability.

If you want to inspire a change of behaviour in your team members and build momentum for progress then you need to lead by example and demonstrate the leadership qualities that will encourage them to act.

Sometimes in the 'busyness' of our day to day jobs we simply forget the little things that send signals to our team. So why not

stop now and take ten minutes to think about the impact you are having on your team and what this might mean for their commitment and motivation.

Action

You can do this activity on your own or with a group of your peers.

1. Take a piece of paper and draw a line down the middle. On one side write Zapp and the other Sapp
2. Cut out the cards over the page then read them one by one. Decide in each case if the action is likely to Zapp (supercharge) or Sapp (deflate), the energy, enthusiasm and motivation of a member of your team.
3. Now it's time for honesty. Draw a horizontal line across the paper. Above the line on the Zapp side place all the things that you **always** do. Place below the line the things that you do sometimes, rarely or never. On the Sapp side above the line place the things that hand on heart you can say you have **never** intentionally done. Place below the things you have done sometimes occasionally or rarely
4. What do the results tell you about your role model ability or your consistency as a management team?
5. Spend some time over the next few days being really aware of your behaviour with your team (after completing the activity you'll find it hard not to!). This is the first step to change. The second step is consciously making a real effort to set the example you want. This will put you well on the way to this becoming a habit.

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” John Quincy Adams

Prioritising coaching above everything other than genuine emergencies	Leaving your troubles at home so you can focus on your team	Clearly communicating business, team and individual priorities	Stopping what you are doing when a team member ask to talk so you can pay full attention
Forgetting to pass on a message and denying you have received it in the first place	Always giving an honest answer	Buying a box of chocolates as a thank you at the end of a hard day	Recognising individual achievement rather than taking credit for it yourself
Cancelling a 1-1	Promoting the successes of the team around the business	Shopping online while at work or checking personal messages and emails on your mobile	Belittling/ moaning someone in public and thinking its funny
Having up beat and inspiring buzz sessions regularly with your team	Moaning about how busy you are	Saying good morning to everyone and asking how they are - with genuine interest	Avoiding someone who wants to speak to you or telling someone to say you aren't there to take a call when you are
Only focussing on the stats rather than the effort your team have made	Treating all team members fairly	Not explaining the overall business objectives and how everyone contributes to them	Having an excuse not to attend team socials
Being too busy to help most of the time	Offering to get teas and coffees for the team	Saying I'm listening, while reading your emails	Offering on the spot praise or coaching after over hearing a great or not so great call
Having favourites in the team	Smiling a lot	Having arguments or disagreements with a team member or another colleague in ear shot of everyone	Arriving late while being strict on punctuality for everyone else

Tips to help you Zapp

1. Positive Intention

We're assuming that you do genuinely want to make a difference to your team...and that this isn't about you looking good! That simply won't work and what you do will seem like a hollow gesture. Actions you take to demonstrate to your team that you care about them need to come from the heart and have a positive intention.

2. Clear direction

Give people a clear steer on where the team and the business is heading. Provide people with a framework within which they can act. Then give them the freedom to follow their own route in their own way. How much freedom depends on them – their experience, confidence, and willingness to accept a challenge.

3. Ooze enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is infectious! If you can't get excited about the work you and your team do, they certainly won't! And also find a way to get excited about the talents of the individuals in your team. Everyone has their own strengths and it can be disheartening if your manager just doesn't seem to appreciate what you do

4. Notice and Act

This is a really old one, but so true. 'Spot people doing something right'. Unless you are out and about amongst your team you just won't be able to do this. And when you do spot it then do something - tell them why it was so great and thank them so they will want to do more and better in the future.

5. No strings attached

Rewards given spontaneously for a job well done are often as effective as incentives that people work towards. But if you start attaching conditions to these or use them as leverage to get more done the next day then they become counter-productive.

The 'I bought you chocolates yesterday, so buck up and get on with it' approach will soon wear thin. But, given as a random act of kindness, the memory of those chocolates will be treasured for a long time.

6. Saying Sorry

It really doesn't have to be the hardest word! If you made a mistake that has had an impact on an individual or the team as a whole then say sorry! No ifs, no buts!

7. Pride in your People

If your team or individuals are doing a great job then don't take the credit for it. Tell **your** manager what they have achieved or the progress they have made and encourage them to comment on it too. And spread the word around the business by putting them up for the awards that your company offers for great performance.

8. Thank you!

Two simple words that can never be said too much! It's the thank you at the end of a job that's often missing. You receive the work by email and that's it. Well get up off your chair once in a while and thank them in person!

9. Surprise, surprise!

There are so many ways to show you care so ring the changes. Why not leave a note on someone's desk or send a card explaining what a positive impact something they've done has had on you. It can be as simple as making the tea if you don't usually do it. Make sure you get it right for each individual. A show of praise in front of the team will make one person beam with pride and another cringe with embarrassment so think about what would really mean something to each individual.

....make their day today
...and tomorrow ...and the day
after that.....!!!