



Linked 2 Leadership
The Leadership Colaboratory



WISHY-WASHY LEADERSHIP! HOW TO TELL IF YOU'RE TOO INCLUSIVE

☆ · by Carlann Fergusson · in Coaching Corner, Emotionally Intelligent Leadership, Leadership Lessons Learned, Practical Steps to Influence. ·



Today, many leaders are suffering from too inclusive of a leadership style. They look to their team to vote on direction, try to balance everyone's needs, and do their best not to upset anyone.

” This is not leadership!

Wishy-Washy Leadership

This desire to include everyone can translate into a high "affiliation motive." This high need to be liked results in the leader making decisions to appease each person. The result is that no one on the team is happy with the manager.

They see their leader as weak and wishy-washy because they make too many exceptions to accommodate every team member's wish.

” Consistency of direction and purpose erodes.

Effective Leadership

To be effective as a leader you need a two power motives. The first is "**Personalized Power**" and the second is "**Socialized Power**." Personalized power is also referred to as "ego." Although there are many articles telling leaders that ego is something to be avoided this isn't true.

” Leaders need to have a healthy level of ego or desire for personal power to be effective.

It is this ego that makes a leader believe he or she is good enough to rise above the ordinary and to lead a group a people in a direction. That leader has to have enough confidence to believe they have chosen the right direction even though there is no guarantee of success. This takes guts and a willingness to take risks; it takes ego.

” No one wants to follow a leader that doesn't exude confidence.

In a Harvard Business Review article by David C. McClelland and David H. Burnham entitled “[Power is the Great Motivator](#)” the authors shared research showing that:

” ...an important determining factor of high team morale and outcomes was related to a leader’s need for power being higher than their need to be liked.

Getting Things Straight

This is not to say that leaders shouldn’t have some desire to be liked. An absence of this need would create a sociopath and too little in a leader would result in the personal power taking over and the leader becoming the uncaring egotist or abuser.

” The affiliation motive needs to be present but the need for personalized power must be higher.

The authors also found a second power motive that was attributed to the most effective leaders – socialized power. Socialized power is the desire to use your power to do what is best for the organization.

The most effective power profile is highest in socialized power, has a moderate level of personalized power and a lower need to be liked. The research demonstrated that this profile results in the best revenue results, clarity of purpose and direction and teams with high morale and personal responsibility.

Front End Alignment

Here are some tips to get your power profile back in alignment by growing the power pair:

1) Use Consultative Decision Making

Instead of consensus take the team members' opinions and views into consideration and then set a decisive course of action.

2) Question Your Motives

Are you pushing your point of view because you believe it is what is best for the organization, best for your group, best for you or you just want to be right?

3) Demonstrate Consistency

Company policies and guidelines are in place to help you maintain consistency when people ask for special favors. It's okay if the employee doesn't like you for your response. You're their manager, not their friend.

4) Think of the Bigger Picture

Your job as a leader is to keep the business profitable so it can continue to employ the great people who work for you. If you give in to each employee's requests without considering the impact to business you hurt everyone in the long run.

Leaders and companies need to remember there is a critical balance between creating an inclusive workplace and enabling leaders to lead.

What other tips would you offer to keep leaders' power properly balanced?

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Carlann Fergusson is owner at *Propel Forward LLC*

She provides seminars and consulting on Strategic Leadership Challenges

[Email](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Web](#) | Skype: carlann.fergusson