



Lead, Develop, Care: Shaping a Different Kind of Leader

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Lead, Develop, Care gives a leadership framework that clarifies your roles as a leader and gives helpful tools for each role. It differs from most leadership books by going beyond simply giving you leadership principles and practices and rather gives you a leadership model. An illustration of this is that “leadership principles and practices are like jigsaw pieces—helpful and needed if we know when and where to apply them effectively. But a leadership model does something more. It’s like the box top, providing the “big picture” or overarching goal and vision for which the leader is striving.”

Without a model, we don’t know how or when to apply different leadership principles. We don’t have a way to prioritize. We are just randomly trying leadership puzzle pieces hoping it fits the situation. A leadership model helps us answer the question: “What should I do today?”

In addition to giving a clear leadership model, Lead, Develop, Care is also packed with resources to guide you along the way.

“This model provides a framework for leadership and doesn’t ask you to discard everything else you’ve learned about leading.” Everything fits under these three responsibilities.

3 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Lead: “Intentionally influencing and enabling people to accomplish a given task. Leading is people-centered while not discounting the need for results.”

Develop: “Intentionally strengthening your people’s capacity to grow and contribute.”

Care: “Intentionally watching over and responding to the needs and well-being of your people. While Develop is the most neglected area of leadership today, Care is the area that people who are led feel leaders most neglect. Caring for those we lead does not have a one-size-fits-all approach or method because people are all different.”



OPERATIONAL ASPECTS FOR THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

LEAD

Set Direction: “Steering a team toward a particular goal or target—is essential or else a leader will just end up managing everyone’s busyness. Setting direction means not only having a target but a clear plan to achieve it.”

Alignment: “Alignment is about bringing together. It does not necessarily mean everyone will agree with every decision, but that all views are heard and considered. As a leader, your challenge is to align the thinking, actions, resources, and people on your team. A big part of alignment is ensuring that your people are busy with the right activities at the right time and in the right way.”

Motivate: This “is perhaps the one to which leaders pay the least attention. Leaders are in a unique position to motivate people, and motivation can be one of their most important contributions.” Think about what motivates and demotivates you. Evaluate how compelling your vision is. “How can you “tie your people’s story to a larger story”?”

Manage: “Leadership and management are often seen as rivals; leaders tend to look with disdain at the “bean counters” while managers roll their eyes at the latest “vision from on high.” Instead, it’s best to see these areas as complementary, necessary collaborators. Some leaders tend to set direction, then “delegate and abdicate.” A leader has the responsibility to be present and oversee adjustments in course needed along the way (e.g., when unexpected circumstances arise). You need to manage the present and steward the future; the latter entails planning, organizing, guiding, and assessing.”

DEVELOP

Teach: “Teaching people involves challenging their paradigms—the frameworks by which they see life. Leaders are both learners themselves in addition to teachers. This process of learning is lifelong and shared between leaders and those they lead. All leaders have a responsibility to share new information (teach) those they lead; neglecting this role leads to stagnation and diminished contributions among their people.”

Model: “Modeling is a two-part responsibility: “you watch me” and “I watch you.” Four mistakes explain deficiencies in modeling among leaders today: we equate information assimilation with training; we substitute reports for presence; we substitute virtual presence for actual presence; and we don’t expend the resources needed to make modeling possible. Leaders are their own best tools for developing others; practical steps toward modeling include leaving your office (without doing so, it’s hard to achieve the two-way modeling approach), and taking someone along with you when you do.”

Coach: “Coaching is all about improvement, and everyone (no matter how good they are in a certain area) can stand to improve. There are two main approaches to coaching: directive (the coach sets the agenda, coaching toward the model) and nondirective (the coached sets the agenda, being coached within the model).”

CARE

Know: “To care well for those you lead, start with getting to know them; this shows you value them, not just for what they do but for who they are.”

Connect: “Without personal connection, employees are more likely to leave your firm, or others are likely to feel put off by your leadership. Connecting is not about agreeing with someone but about understanding and recognizing how another person thinks and feels. In addition to your understanding, giving your time, presence, attention, questions, and enablement will grow your connection with others. Emotional intelligence (EQ) helps you connect with others through a greater awareness of yourself and others, as well as understanding of how to act on that awareness.”

Provide: “Caring involves providing others with what they need in order to succeed in what they’ve been asked to do, or in what they need to grow as a person. Provision may be tangible or intangible. We may provide what people think they need (welcomed provisions), and we may also provide what they don’t think they need (unwelcomed provisions); both can lead to growth and success. It’s important not to assume that you know exactly what people need in order to succeed.”

Protect: “Leaders protect those they lead in order to prevent unnecessary harm from befalling them; it is not hand-holding or coddling but a “clearing of the obstacles” in a waterway. Protection isn’t a sign of weakness of those under a leader; rather, it signals the unique position a leader is in, as a result of his or her authority and/or special access to resources and knowledge. Leaders have a responsibility to protect their people from three main threats: themselves, certain failure, and others.”