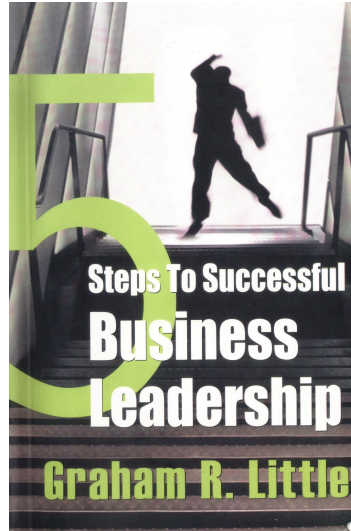


5 Steps to Successful Business Leadership



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■ The Big Idea

"5 Steps to Successful Business Leadership" is an important management guide which explores the principles and practice of leadership in business. It provides readers with five creative and groundbreaking tools which, if used properly, can help them to succeed at the task of managing a team.

Areas covered include:

- How to set the standards
- How to motivate the management team
- Establishing and achieving targets
- Coaching skills
- Monitoring performance
- Creating the environment for success
- Thinking outside the square

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■ Why You Need This Book

Written in direct, down-to-earth language, this book proffers five steps which can help readers succeed at the challenging task of being a manager.

■ STEP 1: Gain agreement that people want to be successful in their jobs

A common issue is the line where management influences stop and personal influence starts. It is what is called the *key ethic of leadership* and can be stated as follows:

All individuals have the right to select the thoughts they hold in mind and the thoughts influencing action.

Let's take a simple A, B, C view of the causes of human behavior:

Attitude leads to **B**ehavior that leads to **C**onsequences.

Now let's expand this simple explanation as follows:

Attitude (Management can make no demands)	A person is responsible for his or her own thoughts and no other person is able to tell another how he or she should think.
Behaviour (Management can demand)	What we think expresses itself in behaviour. Within the model of management, behaviour at work is expected to reflect the goals. It follows that a business can expect and require people to act a certain way at work:
Consequences (Management can demand)	Behaviour has consequences and at work, the business has the right to require consequences that serve its needs.

The following notes are a summary of the application of this system to business:

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Do not train to change attitude. Training is the act of improving the performance of the actions and tasks to achieve the goals. It can and must be a focused activity with clear payback, and if there is no clear payback, then the training expense must be questioned. Attitudes can and should arise in training, but only good attitudes can help the employee focus behavior and enhance his or her performance at work.

Business has no right counseling employees. A person's head is his castle. People will have life difficulties, such as divorce. But the business has no place involving itself these situations. It can only offer the employee the chance to file a leave, or offer advice on whom to approach for counseling advice.

Surveying attitudes is a waste of time and money. There are two good reasons for this. First, any effective manager can walk into a work place and have a very good idea in a few minutes of the attitudes of the employees there. Second, even if he or she finds these out, nothing can be done directly to change these existing attitudes.

So how can a management team tackle issues of attitude? The best and most effective thing management can do to build the best possible attitudes within the business is to focus on management's proper job – of course, "to manage" – to do it very, very well and then ask everyone to come along for the ride, grow with the challenge and enjoy the success.

■ STEP 2: Define success in terms of the numbers the team must achieve

For a management team accountable for profit and loss, coordination of effort is effectively achieved by the profit profile. Each team member is responsible for some number on the profile and for some project whereby that number will be improved this year and next year. This defines success for the team, and momentum and commitment to being successful in this team and this job. The result of these clear and focused efforts is to arrive at a strong 'team spirit'.

SUMMARY OF TEAM WORK

1. ***Coordination.*** Making very clear what the team as a whole must achieve. All team members are expected to cooperate in such a way that the total level of operating profit is always enhanced.
2. ***Ethics.*** This is the responsibility of all team members, but a crucial focus of the team leader. It is not necessary that the team members actually like one other, but everyone must afford his or her fellow team members professional respect, ensuring that no personal biases undermine any aspect of team performance.

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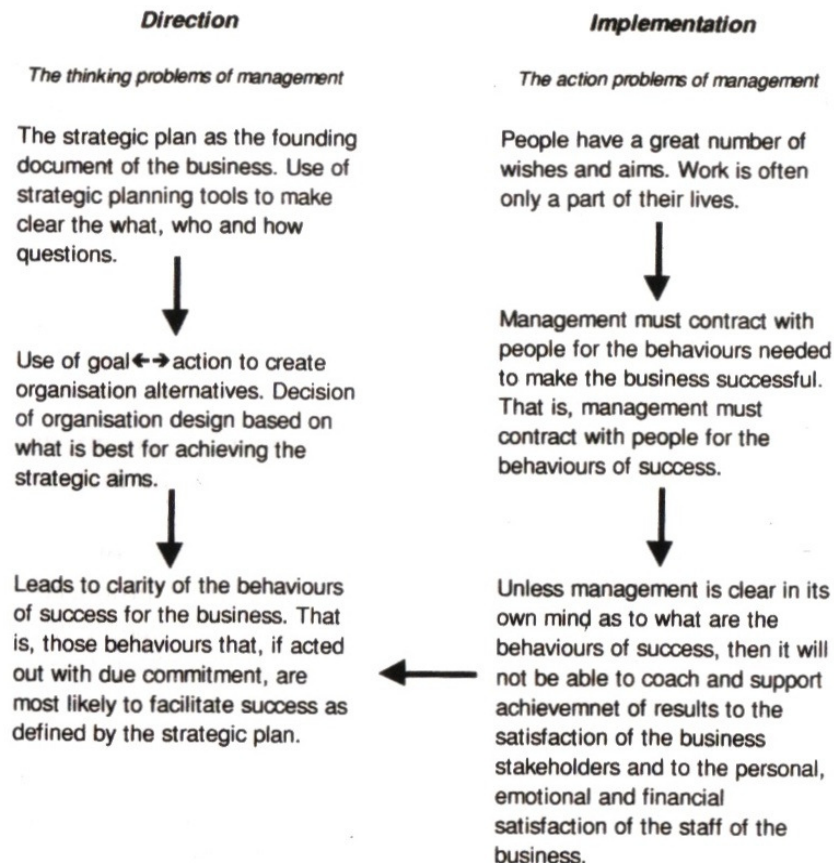
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3. **Personal performance.** Bounded by the preceding points, each team member is expected to be thoroughly focused on his or her own job to the extent that when they say 'such and such will happen', other team members are confident that it will.

■ STEP 3: Identify the actions that, if acted out, will facilitate a satisfactory result

The trick to handling business situations effectively is to apply tools that make sense of them, that clarify and simplify without stripping each situation of its uniqueness, because if that happens, then you are not acting on things as they are today but on things you experienced yesterday.

Management ends up facing two strategic questions: what is it we are going to do? And how will we make it happen? The problems of **direction** and **implementation** give rise to the theory as summarized below:

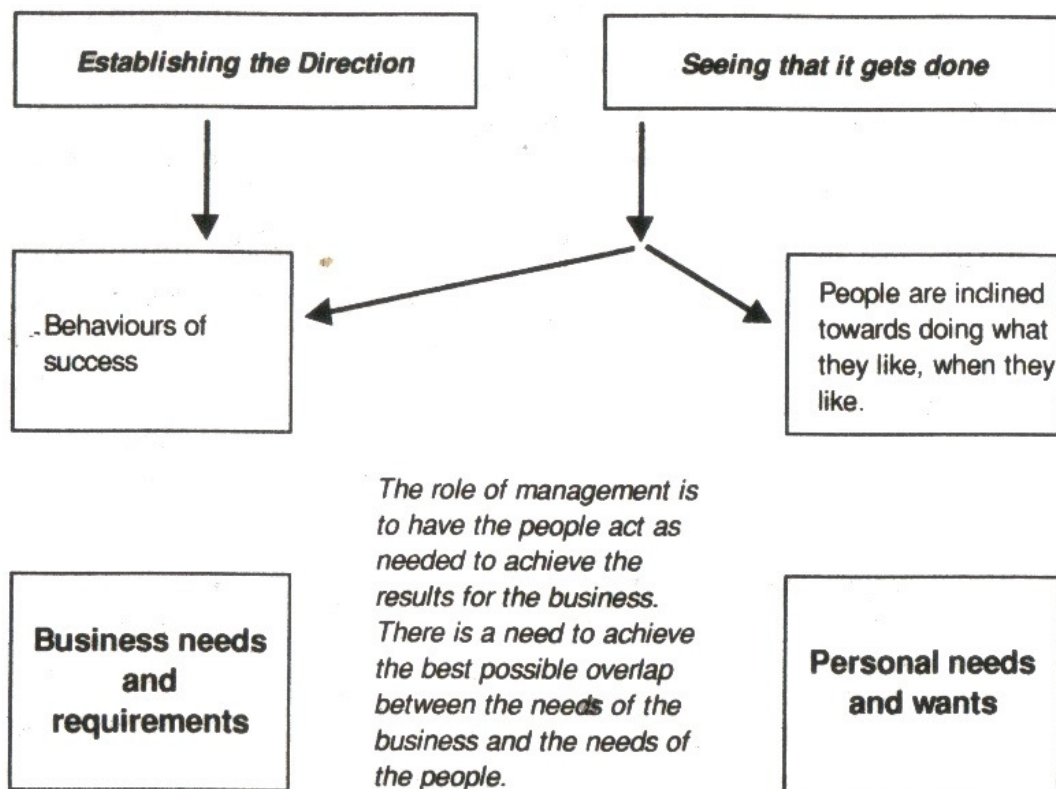


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In what way does training arise within the model? Consider the diagram. The first sequence is called 'the thinking problems of management'. That is getting the direction clear as in the strategic plan for the business, or as in the clearly stated role and purpose of the team so that all team members can see and understand where and how their team contributes to the strategic plan.

The second sequence is called the 'implementation problem of management'. In effect, this sequence begins with people and their wishes and desires. The problem of management is to have the people focus on the actions needed for business team success.



What management must do, therefore, is create the climate to motivate, and provide the understanding and coaching and training in the behaviors of success to build the skills.

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■ STEP 4: Keep the team focused on their level of effectiveness at implementing behaviors of success

At some companies, the "regular" sort of job descriptions are out of date at almost the exact moment they are typed up, and sit in files generally unused and largely ignored.

The principles of job descriptions as we know them seem sound. Yet, there is something missing – a tie-up between the job descriptions and the behaviors of success . Hence a framework has been developed:

Position description for:		
Date:		
Question	Organisation structure	As currently applied to the job
What is the aim of the team in relation to the strategic plan?		
What are the key performance benchmarks?		
What is the aim of this job as part of this team?		
What are the key performance benchmarks?		
What are the main authorities in this job?		
What are the key behaviours of success?		

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The form is kept very simple, with teams and team leaders completing it themselves. This process seeks to encourage regular discussions on 'how we do a particular thing', a.k.a. behaviors of success.

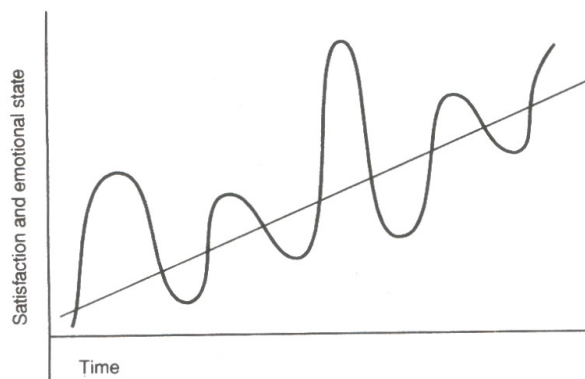
Other advantages of using this form:

1. It must be clearly derived from and related to the strategic business plan and team members can see immediately why they in fact exist as a team.
2. The thrust is team based, and this emphasis on team effort and teamwork, when backed by the simple ethics as outlined in an earlier section, leads to improved team cohesiveness.
3. The system immediately places current performance expectations against business benchmarks, and the business benchmarks are always higher. This has the effect of stressing the striving philosophy taken as one of the underpinnings of the business culture.
4. The system focuses on the key behaviors of success with a strong positive effect on the person concerned. He or she is constantly reminded of the actions needed to attain success.

The system has proven very successful and has become a tool used by many managers to enhance the performance of their teams.

■ STEP 5: Celebrate large and small successes

A relationship can be established between the satisfaction and emotional state of a person's life and the time he spends working. This is shown in the diagram below:



Daily emotional state is graphed as an irregular line, which indicates fluctuations in the level of satisfaction on a daily basis.

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The progressive build-up of life satisfaction is something that should occur despite this daily flux, and ideally should increase over time. It can be seen as being related significantly to a person's goals.

Note that work is only one component of a person's life and, for some people, not even a major component at that. But work has the potential to be a major component based on how important it is in a person's life – which is why it is important for managers to drum up the successes, both large and small, that their staff experience, so that they view work as a larger component of their lives.

Celebrating both small and large successes is a sure-fire way to get staff to realize their significance in the eyes of management and the team itself, itself a stepping-stone towards a realization of the importance of work in their lives. It is after all not only a place where money can be earned, but where we can be satisfied and happy as well.

■ FINAL NOTES

A leader has the ultimate responsibility for the productivity of his team, and some people will actively or passively resist the challenge to improve themselves and will show no energy or interest in doing so. These obstacles must be overcome by the leader if he or she is to bring the team to realize the power and potential of each person in that team.

As already stated, personal growth and an increase in satisfaction through success is only comfortable in retrospect. It will be resisted in advance and resented in reality. It is the leader who guides the people through the emotional obstacles by having a realistic and achievable goal and showing how to get there.

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