

How Leadership Influences Organizational Effectiveness

Leadership is definitely not a 'one-size-fits-all' sort of word. It is one of those words that is ceaselessly debated and typically elicits a spectrum of individual opinions, from describing personality attributes, 'position' characteristics, or even behaviors. Whatever the arena – sports, politics, religion, business – a leader impacts and influences organizational effectiveness.

The million-dollar question, then, is how does leadership impact organizational effectiveness?

James G. Bohn, Ph. D., attempts to answer that question through research described in his paper entitled, *The Relationship of Perceived Leadership Behaviors to Organization Efficacy*, recently published in **The Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies** (2002, Vol. 9, No. 1).

Through the use of surveys, interviews and empirical research, Bohn's results conclusively indicate that leadership, or how leaders behave, has a direct relationship to overall perceptions of organizational effectiveness, or how organizations will perform.

According to Bohn, "This is significant for leaders to understand, since they may be unaware of how their behaviors impact their employees."

Employees place their faith and trust in their leader's capabilities, expecting the leader to provide:

- A compelling vision of where the organization is going.
- Consistency in pursuing and achieving goals.
- Clear, concise communication, whether in general or in conveying their ideas and organizational direction.
- Team building and orchestration.
- Credible proof – a solid track record – of performance accomplishments.

Bohn concludes, "The capabilities of someone (a leader) who is competent, with a strong personal sense of efficacy, with the ability to "stay the course," who has "been there; done that" in the midst of a group of people has considerable effects on the confidence of others. That confidence can be reflected in an overall sense that an organization will endure and prosper."

"Leaders have the capability to show vision, organize teams, stay the course, and ultimately help the whole organization win. The reverse is also true."

This last statement has broad implications for leadership development, succession planning, and executive coaching and mentoring support opportunities within organizations.

"For organizations to survive and prosper, effective leaders must be in place and their capabilities evident to employees," says Dr. Jonathan Dehlinger, VRH. "Fortunately, leadership behaviors and skills can be developed."

VRH offers customized and comprehensive assistance with personalized, individual assessments, identifying talent and planning for the future, instilling self-confidence through executive coaching, and providing leadership development insights that stimulates personal and organizational growth. Visit www.vrhconsulting.com or contact Dr. Dehlinger directly for more information.

[For a complete copy of Dr. James G. Bohn's paper entitled, *The Relationship of Perceived Leadership Behaviors to Organization Efficacy*, contact VRH – 414-259-9722, 800-259-1091, or email jon@vrhconsulting.com.]

About Dr. James G. Bohn

Dr. Bohn has extensive experience with organizational development in an industrial environment, specializing in maximizing employee performance while increasing employee satisfaction, energizing an organization through powerful teamwork approaches, and improving overall business profitability. He is an adept problem-solver and project manager as well as educator.

Dr. Bohn was educated at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee. He has spent over thirty years in various managerial positions including sales, professional development, customer support services and human resources.

He is one of the independent practitioners who will be lending his expertise and talents to VRH's virtual staff in 2003 (*refer to the Virtual Staff article on back page*).

An 'Out of the Box' Approach to Coaching

It is referred to as remote coaching, and is one of the individual leadership development services offered by VRH.

You did indeed read it correctly – remote coaching.

VRH's Dr. Jonathan Dehlinger describes remote coaching in a bit more detail in a recent interview.

What is remote coaching?

"As VRH practices it, it is taking advantage of available technology to work with busy executives, managers or leaders to help them explore their talents and abilities in the best way for their situation."

Who would use remote coaching and why?

"Typically, men or women in middle through executive management or any individual in a key leadership position, whether younger or more seasoned."

"This process is ideal for these individuals because their time is both tight and precious. They typically don't have the luxury of participating in a traditional face-to-face coaching process. Remote coaching gives them the ability to address specific situations that arise in real-time when they need an objective, professional outside opinion. It capitalizes on the efficient use of available technology – email or telephone – to address specific concerns. For example, remote coaching offered the perfect solution to an evolving situation for an executive traveling extensively in South East Asia. As you can see, distance is not an obstacle."

"Remote coaching is a short-term, focused approach to helping an executive with understanding and determining appropriate actions when addressing a specific issue."

What other sorts of experiences have you had with remote coaching?

"We have worked with a senior executive from an out-of-state, start-up manufacturing company who was referred by the CEO. The CEO was concerned about him 'rolling over people to the detriment of the organization.' This very accomplished executive needed assistance with interpersonal relations, anger management and stress management. So we had one, half-day, face-to-face meeting at a mid-point geographic location where initial data was gathered and an individual assessment was conducted. All subsequent interactions were via telephone or email. These sessions focused on specific aspects of behavior change – to assist this individual with understanding and dealing more effectively with the leadership elements of job stress, communication, time management, priority setting and delegation. Naturally we had more frequent interaction at the beginning, and it tapered off at the end. We worked together about 9 months, and we will continue to follow-up on a quarterly basis for a short time."

"The CEO, the executive and the executive's subordinates were all pleased with the subsequent behavior changes."

"We have also done career counseling with a Midwesterner

who relocated to one of the coasts. This individual needed assistance resolving mid-career adult issues. We had one initial face-to-face meeting to define objectives and to get an understanding of values and expectations. The remainder of the coaching process was handled through short telephone conversations and email exchanges."

What do you see as the major benefits of remote coaching?

"Increased convenience, decreased travel time and associated expenses, and having access to objective, professional resources who can help you think through your options and suggest alternative approaches."

Are there any drawbacks?

"Of course you lose your visual cues with no eye-to-eye contact, but both of us are forced to listen more closely for voice inflection nuances on the telephone and to be more conscientious about word choices using email (or the phone for that matter)."

What have your clients shared with you about their remote coaching experience?

"Clients have been satisfied with the outcomes, the overall experience, and very appreciative of the 'time well spent.'"

In what situations would you recommend remote coaching?

- "A number of situations come to mind:
- Helping a newly hired executive acclimate to their company, group, or staff.
 - Initial or ongoing professional development support for a new hire to help ensure they get off on the right foot in their new role.
 - Curricular and non-curricular career counseling for college students.
 - Assisting an internally promoted professional to orient to their new role."

"Whether the coaching is for leadership in a business context or career guidance, their issues can be addressed – not any less personally – remotely. We simply use technology to increase convenience and eliminate travel, time, and distance obstacles."

What does it cost for remote coaching?

"VRH offers several investment value options for remote coaching – 1) through a structured retainer agreement; 2) using our Focused Feedback® for Professional Growth approach (for more information, please go to www.vrhconsulting.com, click on Publications, click on Spring 2002); or 3) a customized hourly fee arrangement."

Think out-of-the-box! Make a solid investment in yourself or someone in your organization by contacting VRH for more information.

Leadership Development as a Strategic Initiative*

**Not simply classroom instruction*

“How are the world’s most successful organizations developing their leaders?”

A 1998 study of 350 corporations found that nearly all respondents recognized the need to develop stronger leaders, but less than 44% had a formal process for developing high-potential leaders. However, those corporations that were successful in producing high-potential leaders utilized structured leadership-development systems.

“What are the best practices in leadership development today?”

Fifteen of the most successful corporate leadership-development programs include these essential components:

- 360-degree feedback
- action learning
- exposure to senior executives
- coaching and mentoring programs

The leadership competencies that most impacted the design of these leadership-development systems were:

- strengthening team building
- business understanding
- conceptual thinking

The three critical factors that impacted the success of these leadership-development systems most were:

- the support and involvement of senior executives
- continuous evaluation
- linking leadership development with the corporation’s strategic plan

Successful leadership development requires learning experiences that are strategically focused and utilize executive-development strategies, such as executive profiling, executive policy development and executive coaching or mentoring.

Need assistance with developing and executing effective leadership development strategies? Vernon Roche Hodgson professional staff have a wealth of knowledge and experience with developing and retaining leadership talent, coaching, mentoring, succession planning and development tools, such as 360-degree feedback. Contact VRH at 414-259-9722, 1-800-259-1091 or via email jon@vrhconsulting.com.

Reference Giber, Carter & Goldsmith, 2000. From Linkage, Inc., Best Practices in Leadership Development Handbook. San Francisco: Josey-Bass/Pfieffer.

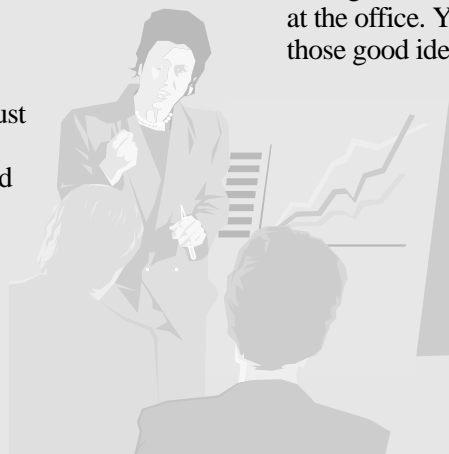
Get More Value From Your Next Seminar

With the typical business seminar costing between \$300 to \$1000, you will want to be sure that you – and your employees – leverage comparable value back into your organization. Here are some tips that may enhance your next seminar experience:

1. Don’t be sensitive. You are there to learn; overlook the occasional flaws in presentation styles.
2. Always ask yourself how you can improve on something you are hearing. Refrain from “tuning out” just because you “already know that.”
3. Seek those 3-to-4 ideas – nuggets and gems – you can put to use on the job immediately.
4. Adapt what you learn to your world. Find ways to make good ideas work in your business environment.

5. Don’t be afraid to ask those “stupid” questions. The only stupid question is the one that is not asked.
6. Avoid critiquing the presenter. This may be hard, but maintain your focus on the message, not the messenger.
7. Mingle with people you don’t know. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet people and make new business contacts.
8. Take good notes and review them once you are back at the office. You will be more likely to implement those good ideas.
9. Share what you learned with others via staff meetings or other informal presentations.

It simply bears repeating – leverage your experience by teaching others within your organization, group or department what you learned at the seminar.



Newsline is Going Completely Electronic...

At VRH, we continually strive to make it easier for you to do business with us. One of the ways we hope to accomplish this is to make it easier for you to obtain and share the information offered in VRH's Newsline newsletter.

This Spring '03 issue of Newsline will be the last one published in both a paper and an electronic format.

Future Newsline issues will be emailed to you directly in an electronic '.pdf' file format. Of course, all Newsline newsletters are archived at www.vrhconsulting.com, click on Publications.

To ensure that you continue receiving your Newsline, please send your email address to deb@vrhconsulting.com today!



Virtual Staff to Benefit VRH Clients

Over the years, we have developed relationships and confidence in a network of professional colleagues whose values, ethics and integrity are consistent with the high level of service offered at VRH. We are beginning the process of formalizing these relationships into a *virtual staffing* concept.

This virtual staff concept offers VRH – and its clients – an expanded staff without the expanded expense. Our clients will be able to access a wider array of expertise and enjoy a broader range of VRH caliber services without the burden of additional fees or expenses.

VRH is developing relationships with several remote independent professionals who will effectively provide local representation in a wider geographic area, including the Fox Valley, Madison and Chicago.

More information about virtual staffing with VRH will be forthcoming over the course of 2003.

**If you would like to receive this newsletter via email contact deb@vrhconsulting.com.
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