

SEVEN CULTURE SHAPING TIPS FOR LEADERS



You do not change a culture; you 'shape' them. Anything worth achieving takes time, effort, leadership commitment and above all persistence. To effect lasting positive change in any team, many subtle and overt leadership techniques and methodologies are required.

What follows are 7 Leadership Traits that will help shape lasting change and produce outcomes.

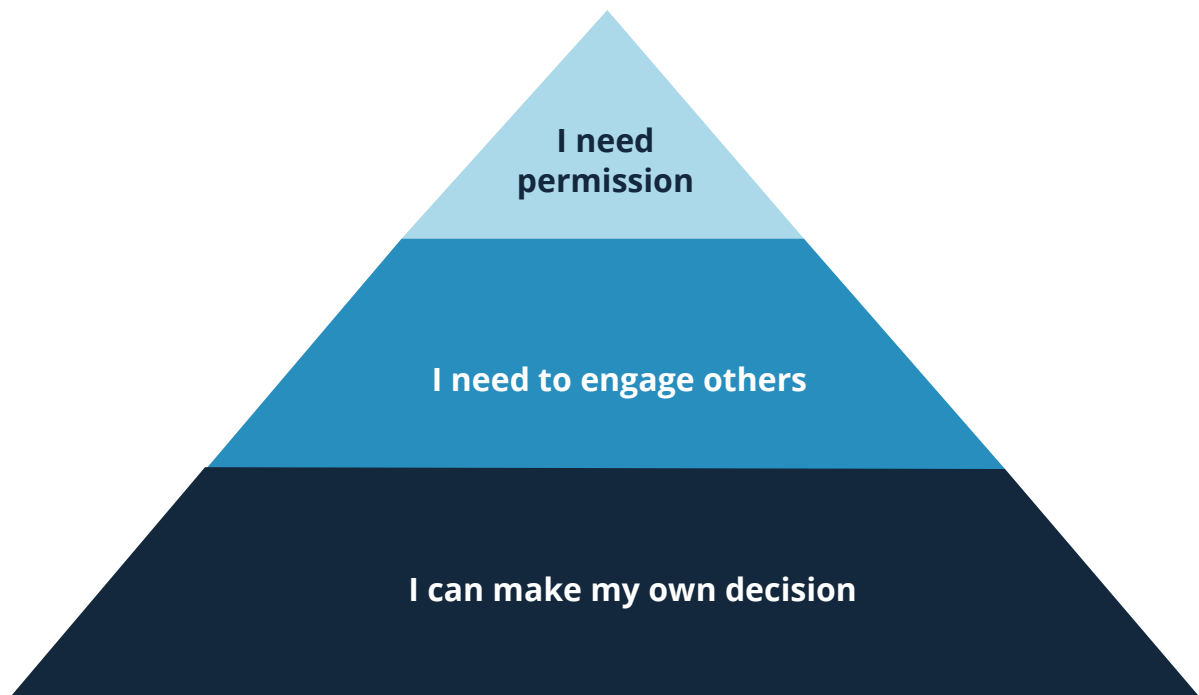
TIP 1: CAPTURING THE HEARTS AND MINDS IS KEY.

Values guide performance, strategies drive performance. In order for people to sign on and commit to a common vision, purpose or performance outcome, it requires them to connect with – resonate to – and personify the desired way of doing things. **Engaging hearts and minds requires two key requirements:**

<p style="text-align: center;">One: Believe in the common aim and vision for the future</p> <p>Team members must believe in what they are pursuing otherwise the characteristics of enthusiasm, resilience, persistence and volunteerism will be lacking. There must be an obvious, personal and compelling benefit to them, or the team, this will symbolise a connection to what is being espoused by the leadership team</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Two: Catch staff doing things right.</p> <p>This is the best piece of role modelling advice to any Leader. Rather than a kick butts and take names approach, people are far more motivated by meaningful and timely pats on the back for demonstrating good practice. This increases the propensity for the rest of the staff and colleagues to also assume similar practices. Osmosis works!</p>
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TIP 2: YOU SHAPE A CULTURE RATHER THAN CHANGE IT

Like raising and educating children there is a constant leadership requirement to reward, recognise, teach, discipline and facilitate the right behaviours, attitudes, actions and approaches, this is the same for individuals and teams. This coaching dynamic requires many formal and informal interactions to work effectively. The 'loose-tight model' (pictured below) is just one framework that helps individuals to navigate their own empowerment agendas.



THERE ARE THREE C'S IN ANY INDIVIDUAL COACHING DYNAMIC

- Confidence
- Competence
- Context

If an individual is confident, and feel they have the competence and understand the context for decision-making, then their actions and behaviours will evolve and develop, ultimately raising their ability to perform.

“Coaching is all about performance, but the right team culture will always precede performance”

TIP 3: FEEDBACK AND CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING

Without feedback, no learning can take place; hence feedback loops are at the epicentre of learning and development. Some helpful feedback tips include:

- Coaching feedback must occur at the time it's required, not after the event
- It needs to be specific and tailored to the audience / recipient
- Feedback must be constant and backed up with the appropriate facts, data, and observations
- Apply ways and techniques of reaffirming the same message through as many difference mechanisms and voices as possible
- As a rule, for every 1 negative piece of feedback, provide 5 positive pieces of feedback. **People always perform best when they are confident.**

TIP 4: A SUSTAINED AND SYSTEMATIC APPROACH IS ALWAYS REQUIRED - LEAVE NOTHING TO CHANCE

Just when you get sick of saying it, some people are just starting to get it. The nine touches of feedback require careful leadership thinking, planning and execution. **Some things to note:**

1. **Repetition is an important dynamic** of verbal feedback
2. **Written feedback is concrete** and provides a platform to refer back to
3. **Signage is an important symbolic tool** to help prompt front of mind thinking
4. **Reward and recognition fuels the desired thinking and behaviour**, and acts as a trigger for others to also role model and reinforce the desired approach
5. **Highlight genuine testimonials** – lived experiences of colleagues and customers, to help bring to life the impact of making the right call.
6. **The unwritten team rules are just as important as the written team rules.** The way things are done are all about learnt behaviours, habits and rituals
7. **What is measured is what is done.** It is critical to measure, monitor and highlight what has been done AND how it was achieved
8. **Staff mirror image the behaviours and attitudes of their Leadership Team.** The surest way to kill leadership credibility is to say one thing and act in another way.
9. **Celebrations and Team Rituals** are crucial mechanisms to build a winning mindset and to shape what is important. Without regular celebrations there is no symbolism as to what constitutes success

TIP 5: SYMBOLISM IS THE LINK TO AUTHENTICITY

The standard you walk past is the standard you accept. People are motivated by achievement, and the recognition for achievement. Creating a “Can Do” Team with an empowered, innovative and solution focused mindset does not happen overnight. It requires a carefully planned approach, and starts through the Leaders Symbolism. Important symbolic considerations include:

- What a Leader measures and monitors
- What is included or indeed missing on any meeting agenda
- The attributes considered as necessary for all team members to have which are defined, screened for, enforced and role modelled
- The standards and behaviours a leader ignores or walks past are just as important as what is seen, reported, recognised and acted on
- How a leader acts in a crisis sets the tone and the standards for acceptable behaviour for everyone to follow
- Having some fun and enjoyment are important qualities for teams and leaders to have. If these are absent, a commitment to excellence will surely be lacking.



TIP 6: THE STORY OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCE REVEALS A TEAM'S IDENTITY.

People will always relate to real stories rather than analogies. Thanks to the power of social media and the 24/7 news cycle, we live in a story sharing world. Being able to coach, instruct, debrief and feedback staff performance in a meaningful and transparent manner, allows staff to process the information provided and apply next step thinking. The story of lived experiences should take the form of many mediums including:

- Facts and Data, Dashboards and scorecards
- Observation
- Body language
- Language tone and use
- Stories from customers/clients
- Stories from staff (temperature checks)
- Mystery shops
- Listening Posts (staff, customers, suppliers, industry observers)
- Surveys (qualitative & quantitative)
- 1:1 debriefs or peer reviews
- Social media channels and feedback
- Suggestion and feedback boxes

There are a myriad of story sharing channels, the key is not to just rely on one or a couple of mediums. **Stories provide the platform for any team's point of difference to be seen, experienced, showcased and ultimately believed.**

"You need to own your own story before someone else does."

TIP 7: FOCUS RELENTLESSLY ON THREE BEHAVIOURS / ATTRIBUTES YOU ARE SEEKING TO SHIFT

Any more just becomes alphabet soup! For a quantum shift in both team and individual performance, there needs to be a clearly understood and acknowledged FROM and TO Movement Journey. To avoid white noise syndrome, the focus must be on Middle Managers and Front Line Leaders. Ignore these at your peril, but cultures are shaped from within. Any culture shaping process has to be kick-started by the Leadership Team, but must be consolidated and anchored by the middle management teams and their Front Line Leaders.

Osmosis does work, however Team Leaders must be provided with a process by which to navigate their personification journey to engage their teams in their quest to apply the desired Culture. **Keeping this to three key attributes gives the front line managers half a chance to help shape their teams towards the desired culture.**

FINALLY

Awareness without action is useless. Like learning to drive a car, understanding the road laws is just a ticket to learn to drive. Likewise, it takes thousands of hours to master driving in all conditions. Understanding the context and rationale is always the start, applying and personifying the desired culture is the key.

Remember strategy drives performance, but culture guides performance.



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