

Are you a proactive or reactive leader?

I always remember hearing Margaret Barrett who was the Executive Vice President of Consumer Lending at the Bank of Montreal say that to win the race to the market you either need to be an innovator or a rapid follower.

That has always stuck in my mind because it is so true and both have their own set of pros and cons.

If you are an innovator (company A) you become known for being the "first to the market".

But you will have spent a great deal of capital, wasted time, effort and probably will have made a lot of mistakes along the way.

Instead, the rapid follower (company B) sees what company A is doing and modifies its approach accordingly with a lower cost base.

Company B will not have the kudos of being "the first" but it may have looked at Company A's product and made it better!

Question

Are you a proactive leader?

Do you innovate to stay ahead?

Do you anticipate problems, opportunities and new ways?

Or do you sit back, let things happen and then formulate a plan of attack?

What is the company line on this? Are you company A or company B?

In reality it may be a bit of both, but just take the time out to think about all of the change that has happened in the past and the change planned for the future; are you/have you been innovative or have you been following?

....and have you been successful?

Are you planning for success or for failure?

There are two ways to set goals and to plan.

Firstly you can move towards the things that you want or alternatively you can move away from the things that you do not want.

Sounds simplistic I know but just think about this for a moment. Are you trying to achieve a 20% market share or are you increasing your market share so that your competitors do not get a foothold in your industry even though it may be unprofitable for you to do so!

What plan have you got in place?

No matter whether you are a CEO, MD, Manager, Supervisor or Team Leader you should always have a plan of action of what you want and how you are going to get it.

The most effective managers have:

- A Business Plan
 - Where are we going and why?
- An Operating Plan
 - How we are going to get there?
- A Change Plan
 - How are we going to manage all of the change coming into the business?

Of course there are going to be financial plans etc, but you as a manager should be concerned with these 3 reports no matter what business you are in, what team you are in or department.

You need to know the where, the how and the impact.

Question

So, the question I have to ask is "Do you have a plan?" Is it effective? Do you change it?

Taking Action

A plan is all well and good but are you actually carrying out that plan?

What is your progress?

Indeed, how often do you measure your progress and how do you quantify that measurement if it is an intangible benefit?

The most successful managers take action! AND BIG ACTION AT THAT! They don't mind if the OUTCOME doesn't go their way, they just modify their approach until the outcome DOES go their way.

That's the essence of a great leader - THEY NEVER GIVE IN!

This is a very important trait that I recommend that you foster it! Are you a quitter? Do you fail to follow things through? If you do, notice why?

Could someone else make sure that it is done? Remember, the TOP managers have a winning team around them - they don't have to do everything themselves they just....

HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING GETS DONE!

Question

So what actions are you taking right now to ensure your success and your teams' success?

What did you do last week to ensure this?

What are you planning to do next week to ensure this?

"Vision without action is a daydream, Action without vision is a nightmare" - Japanese Proverb

How to be a pioneer

We've covered a lot in this session and I hope that you have answered the questions as we have gone along?

If not on paper then in your mind at least.

We mentioned earlier about how to be an innovator or rapid follower.

I'd just like to talk about being a pioneer for a moment or two.

Think "pioneer" and you think of Mark Zuckerberg of "FACEBOOK", Bill Gates and "MICROSOFT", Larry Ellison and "ORACLE", Stelios and "EASYJET", John Dyson and "DYSON HOOVERS" or Richard Branson and "VIRGIN".

So if you want to be a pioneer, how do you go about it?

Well, let's put it this way, if we all had a sure fire way of knowing how to be a pioneer we would all be jetting off in our private planes down to our yachts in Monte Carlo!

In my opinion a pioneer has got to get unreasonable with the world and his business.

The pioneer is one who is willing to challenge the traditional way of doing things. You must operate outside the mainstream at times in order to be successful.

George Bernard Shaw had a great perspective on success.

He said "That there are only two kinds of men in the world. There are reasonable men and unreasonable men"

The reasonable man is the man who doesn't ever rock the boat, the guy who doesn't want to cause any trouble and wants no controversy.

But there is the unreasonable man who won't take it, who refuses to quit.

Shaw further believed that all human progress depends on the unreasonable man.

Question

Are you a reasonable manager? or are you an unreasonable manager?

Whichever one you are at the moment, if you want to become a pioneer become UNREASONABLE with all that you do and follow the road that is least travelled.

That is the mark of a TOP MANAGER!

I hope you enjoyed this session?

Next we will be talking about communication skills and why the TOP MANAGERS seem to have the knack of communicating what they want, when they want it and how they want it!

You'll learn their secrets in part 2!

To your success,
Sean McPheat



SEAN MCPHEAT

Managing Director at MTD Training

Tel: 0333 320 2883

Web: www.management-training-development.com

Email: enquiries@management-training-development.com

Founder and MD of international management development firm MTD Training, Sean McPheat is widely regarded as a leading authority on modern day management and leadership.

His passion and expertise lies in his ability to develop and prepare managers for the business challenges that lie ahead of them. Sean is a bestselling author, and has been recognised for his own business building skills through the **British Business Awards** and has been featured in the **Who's Who Of Britain's Business Elite**. He has been a regular judge for the UK's Young Enterprise Programme but was not as horrible as Simon Cowell (well almost!)

Sean has been featured on **CNN International, the BBC, SKY, ITV, The Guardian, Forbes, Arena Magazine, Marketing Weekly, Business Zone, Winning Edge** and radio stations such as BBC WM and LBC (London's Big Conversation).

Sean has over 250 media credits to his name and his weekly email tips go out to over **60,000 people** interested in management and development strategies. Sean is also a much sought after media figure and motivational speaker on all topics related to management, HR, business improvement and entrepreneurialism.

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