



Q&A

CORPORATE COACH ACADEMY

By Dr Michael Heah



CEO/Adjunct Professor/Certified Master Coach

LEADING IN NON-COMMERCIAL ENTITIES

Q I am now the chairman of a religious organisation in a fairly large community. I took up the post primarily because I wanted to give back to the community after "taking from it" all these years in my corporate life. The other reason is that I want to use my wealth of experience to benefit others. Unfortunately, I am a misfit here because I have absolutely no autonomy and authority to manage this place. What is worse is the politics and backstabbing. I am totally disgusted and seriously thinking of quitting unless something good happens fast. Can you help?

A The hard reality is that managing a commercial organisation is very different from managing a non-commercial one like the one you are leading now. In such an organisation, you do not

LEADERSHIP WITHOUT AUTHORITY

manage from the top, but from the "middle" with an executive committee above you and the community below you. You are indeed more of an enabler than a leader. You need a major shift in your mindset on the leadership role you now play if you want to carry on.

You will need lots of patience, tolerance, humility, and compassion. Only through consistent actions driven by these attributes can you get far. Forget about the clout and authority you had before. Learn to manage your colleagues successfully through persuasion, influence, and empathetic communication to get their buy-in. This is certainly not the place for power plays. It is more about earning trust and credibility before you get their respect and trust for you to influence them.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What challenges are you facing with your people?
- What are your old leadership ways that cannot fit in here?
- What do you want to say to yourself?
- What actions will support this new way of thinking?

MANAGING CHANGE

SUCCESSFULLY

Q I took over a manufacturing plant at a time when it was fraught with many problems: production levels and business was poor, people's morale was low with high staff turnover, and a team of poorly trained leaders. I then introduced reforms on all fronts aimed at rejuvenating the entire organisation so that it could reap a reasonable return on investment as soon as possible. I initiated the reform process by first setting a new vision, then charting a new business direction, and, after that, introducing a set of work standards to fit into the entire scheme. I had numerous dialogue sessions to communicate what was required from the people. Unfortunately, the outcomes are not at all good. Somehow, I feel there is a wall of resistance. It appears like they prefer the status quo and want to be in their comfort zone. What do I do now?

A If you stop blaming others, you will see what needs to be done at your end. Stop trying to bulldoze your way through and work on yourself instead. You need to acknowledge that solely relying on authority alone will not make people change

the way you want them to. For better results, something better than authority has to be deployed.

Finding ways to earn their trust is perhaps more powerful. Treat your people with greater importance and rope some of them into the decision-making team for them to feel they are part of the goings-on instead of being treated as passive spectators. You can also give them more space to have a say on how things can be improved instead of you single-handedly deciding on everything. The key is to make them your partners in this journey towards reform.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What changes do you want to see in your organisation?
- How effective are you in doing it?
- What are the roadblocks?
- How can they be removed?

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