

Servant Leadership Focus is a monthly newsletter to promote and stimulate servant leadership ideas and tools into the Viox culture.



TRANSFORMATIONAL STORIES GROWTH MINDSET AND VIRTUAL MEETINGS

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS:

❖ **High Impact Virtual Meetings**
by Michael J. Stabile

❖ **Death By Meeting**
by Patrick Lencioni

❖ **Topic:**
**GROWTH MINDSET
AND MEETINGS**

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Go to Mike's' recommended leadership reading through his personal link to Amazon
<http://www.futurenowed.com/resources/recommendedBooks.aspx>

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Catalytic and enduring servant leadership focuses on the **human factor** because that's whom we always are interacting with. We need humans to get things done and to engage in rich relationships. There's no getting away from this fact. So servant leaders have a **growth mindset that looks to adapt and adopt methods of communication and interaction** that will “**best**” stimulate a *culture of growth, creativity, innovation, and empowerment of others*.

As facilitators and meeting managers we have a lot to pay attention to from the planning and design of a meeting, to who should attend and how to manage the group dynamics. **Everything that we already know about good facilitation applies to virtual meetings and using web-meeting tools.** In addition to the normal meeting planning activities there are some particular issues that we need to

pay attention to as facilitators of virtual meetings.

Trust and a comfortable level of social or personal interaction are enormously important for effective virtual meetings. We lose some of our influence as facilitators in managing the room with our own physical presence and personality and need to find new ways to engage with participants and create an appropriate and effective dynamic within the group. We need new ways to **establish our role and the trust of participants in us as the meeting facilitator.** We need to be aware of the interactions and reactions within the group without the usual visual cues and clues.

Thus the focus of this month's newsletter is on **cultivating a growth mindset and unleashing dynamic virtual meetings.**

The Mindset that Increases Creativity & Productivity Are Leaders Born or Made?

In 2001 came the announcement that shocked the corporate world. Enron – the corporate poster child, the company of the future—had gone belly up. What happened? How did such spectacular promise turn into such a spectacular disaster? Was it incompetence? Was it corruption?

It was mindset. According to Malcolm Gladwell, writing in the New Yorker, **American corporations had become obsessed with talent.** Indeed, the gurus at McKinsey & Company, the premier management consulting firm in the country, were insisting that corporate success today requires the “*talent mind-set.*” Just as there are naturals in sports, they maintained, there are naturals in business. Just as sports teams write huge checks to sign outsized talent, so too should corporations spare no expense in recruiting talent, for this is the secret weapon, the key to beating the competition.

As Gladwell writes “*This ‘talent mind-set’ is the new orthodoxy of American management.*” It created the blueprint for the Enron culture and it sowed the seeds of its demise... But by putting their complete faith in talent, Enron did a fatal thing. By creating a culture that worshipped talent, they forced their employees to look and act extraordinarily talented. Basically, it forced them into the fixed mindset. And we know a lot about that. We know from our studies that people with the fixed mindset do not admit and correct their deficiencies. And a company that cannot self-correct cannot survive.

Brutal Bosses: When bosses become controlling and abusive, they put everyone into a fixed mindset. This means that instead of learning, growing, and moving the company forward, everyone starts worrying about being judged. It starts with the bosses' worrying about being judged, but it winds up being everybody's fear about being judged. It's hard for courage and innovation to survive a company-wide fixed mindset.

Are Leaders Born or Made?

When Warren Bennis interviewed great leaders, “*they all agreed leaders are made, not born, and made more by themselves than by any external means.*” Bennis concurs: “*I believe that everyone, of whatever age and circumstance, is capable of self-transformation.*” Not that everyone will become a leader. Sadly, most managers and even CEOs become bosses, not leaders. They wield power instead of transforming themselves, their workers, and their organization.

Why is this? John Zenger and Joseph Folkman point out that most people when they first become managers enter a period of great learning. They get lots of training and coaching, they are open to ideas, and they think long and hard about how to do their jobs. They are looking to develop. But once they've learned the basics, they stop trying to improve. It may seem like too much trouble or they may not see where improvement will take them. They are content to do their jobs rather than making themselves into leaders.

Or, as Morgan McCall argues, **many organizations believe in natural talent and don't look for people with the potential to develop.** Not only are these organizations missing out on a big pool of possible leaders, **but also their belief in natural talent might actually squash the very people they think are the naturals.**

New Research on Mindset and Leadership

Researchers Laura Kray and Michael Haselhuhn have shown that **people in a growth mindset make better negotiators.** They also found that when business school students were taught a growth mindset they learned more skills and got better grades in their negotiation course. Negotiators with a growth mindset were much more able to push past obstacles and reach an agreement that benefited both sides.

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THE MINDSETS...

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Peter Heslin and Gary Latham found that *managers with a growth mindset notice improvement in their employees, whereas those with a fixed mindset do not* (because they are stuck in their initial impression). When people are taught a growth mindset, they start to be sensitive to improvement.

Peter Heslin, Don Vandewalle, and Gary Latham showed that *employees evaluated their growth-mindset managers as providing better coaching for employee development.*

When managers were taught a growth mindset, they were more willing to coach employees and the quality of their developmental coaching became higher. Also, managers with a growth mindset actually sought more negative feedback from their subordinates. *They wanted to learn how to improve their management techniques and were not threatened by the idea of hearing some negative things about themselves.*

TIPS FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

MELAINE ROBSON & CHRISTINE KESTEL

SIX FACTORS FOR VIRTUAL MEETINGS

1. Planning a viable agenda or series of agendas
2. Effective use of technology
3. Preparing participants and pre-work
4. Keeping participants focused and engaged during a virtual meeting
5. Building trust and social capital
6. Maintaining momentum between meetings



TIP #1: PREPARATIONS

Think about the **method of communication**: *should it be a conference call? a videoconference? a meeting in a virtual meeting room?... Or is an in-person meeting necessary?* Different purposes may need different types of meetings. Decide on participants. *Usually, a maximum of 12 people is appropriate for virtual meetings.* Set a clear time frame for the meeting and remember to account for different time zones. If you are booking time in a room or a web space, include some additional time at the end for leeway. *Send out the agenda or needed documents to all participants at least 2 days before the meeting.* Organize the technical setting if you are the leader. If you are attending the meeting, make sure that the needed software works on your computer.

TIP #2: ROLES, RULES AND MANNERS

Virtual meetings lack the visual clues of face-to-face meetings. **They require more concentration when listening, more care when speaking, and more rules to structure them.** Define in advance the roles for all participants: who is responsible for technical questions, note taking, facilitating, etc. and define why they are attending. Set up rules and follow them! Who talks when? How do you show if you agree or disagree without speaking (tools)? Are there limited speaking times? And so on... Mind your manners! To make a virtual meeting successful, good manners are critical.

Avoid multitasking. First, it's impolite, and second it's unproductive (tasks will take you longer in fact!). Take turns. The microphone function usually takes only one voice at a time – if you talk over each other, parts of the conversation will be lost.

As a general rule, behave the same way as in an in-person meeting where everyone can see each other. Smile, sit straight, and listen carefully. Others will feel it/ recognize it from the way you are talking. It will make a difference to the quality of the conversation and to the results! Body

language may not be seen but your attitude can be heard.

Make your point clearly but politely. There is a tendency in virtual communication to be too frank because you don't see the other's reaction.

Limit lengthy 2-person discussions in the meeting. Schedule those for later and stick to the agenda.

Use pauses. They give the others a chance to understand you better (they are missing the visual clues!) Talk at a pleasant volume, not too loudly or too softly.

Watch your speed – speak at a good pace. Speak with a clear voice. - Limit background noise (music, colleagues talking, phone ringing, traffic sounds)

TIP #3: KEEP THE HUMAN TOUCH

Even when the meeting is virtual, try to create a feeling of meeting in the same room with people. This approach improves the discussion and the decision-making. Help people feel connected – make introductions. Make sure everyone knows why everyone else is attending the meeting. Arrive in the meeting space a few minutes earlier to do some small talk.

TIP #4: STRUCTURE THE MEETING

Follow the agenda and the time line. Everyone should stick to her/ his role. Make sure that everyone is on the same page: not everyone may have read the documents or the agenda. Summarize them if necessary. Ensure that the purpose of the meeting is clear to everyone.

Think of breaks. A virtual meeting needs more concentration because everyone has to follow without visual clues. No virtual meeting should be longer than 90 minutes. If you need more time, make a break! Mail the whiteboard notes and the minutes to everyone.

A High Performance Meeting plan requires people, process and technology be considered before, during and after the meeting. Here are some guiding questions.

	BEFORE MEETING	DURING MEETING	AFTER MEETING
PEOPLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who are the right people to attend? What are the roles and responsibilities of the meeting sponsor? What are the roles and responsibilities of the participants? What do we need to consider about boundaries (cultural, time, distance)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we build trust and social capital amongst the participants? How do we establish group norms of behavior? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does the group stay connected? How do we encourage continued collaboration, building on the results of the meeting and laying the groundwork for the next meeting?
PROCESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the meeting objectives and outcomes? What is NOT a part of this meeting? Do stakeholder issues need to be surfaced to inform the agenda? What pre-work activities are required for participants to be well-prepared and productive during the meeting? What is our communication strategy? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What activities support the problem solving or decision making process? What type of interaction is best for each activity (eg: verbal discussion, online brainstorming, anonymous or not)? How do we keep participants focused and engaged, especially in a virtual setting? How do we anticipate landmines and plan for them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What venues can we create for the group to continue to collaborate (such as asynchronous) How do we keep track of deliverables and monitor progress? What communication channels should we use and how frequently should we communicate?
TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What technology will support pre-meeting activities (eg: web surveys, asynchronous brainstorming, wikis, blogs, social media, email) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What technology best supports this meeting process, for eg: online brainstorming and prioritizing tools, voting software, idea mapping). For virtual meetings, is a teleconference, video conference or web conference appropriate? What is the technology support plan for the meeting? Do we have a contingency plan? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What technology supports the on-going participation of the group (online meeting software, shared document archives, team portals, social media)

Coaching reminders:

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