The “TO” Window and Me: Confessions of a (sometimes) Restorative Leader

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Why this workshop?

- Theory meeting practice.
- Reality and Research
- A bit o’ learning with a bit o’ fun
A Quick Review

“The fundamental premise of restorative practices is that people are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes when those in authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them.”

His Lordship, Ted Wachtel
Social Discipline Window - review

Adapted by Paul McCold and Ted Wachtel from Daniel Glaser
Fair Process - review

“Individuals are most likely to trust and cooperate freely with systems – whether they themselves win or lose by those systems – when fair process is observed.

(Kim and Mauborgne, 1997)

- Engagement
  - Involving in decisions that affect them.

- Explanation
  - Explaining the reasoning behind a decision.

- Expectation clarity
  - Ensuring everyone understands the decision and what is expected of them.
Engagement
means involving individuals in the strategic decisions that affect them by asking for their input and allowing them to refute the merits of one another's ideas and assumptions. Engagement communicates management's respect for individuals and their ideas. Encouraging refutation sharpens everyone's thinking and builds better collective wisdom. Engagement results in better strategic decisions by management and greater commitment from all involved to execute those decisions.

Explanation
means that everyone involved and affected should understand why final strategic decisions are made as they are. An explanation of the thinking that underlies decisions makes people confident that managers have considered their opinions and have made decisions impartially in the overall interests of the company. An explanation allows employees to trust managers' intentions even if their own ideas have been rejected. It also serves as a powerful feedback loop that enhances learning.

Expectation clarity
requires that after a strategy is set, managers state clearly the new rules of the game. Although the expectations may be demanding, employees should know up front what standards they will be judged by and the penalties for failure. When people clearly understand what is expected of them, political jockeying and favoritism are minimized, and people can focus on executing the strategy rapidly.
Restorative Leadership

The Goals is THIS: Not THIS:
My Journey

- School in Crisis
  - Staff cuts, pay cuts, stipend cuts, class sizes,
  - Leadership change
  - Given the helm on the last day of school

- Direct application of Restorative Practices
  - Open door policy; meetings with special interest groups
  - Admin Team operating on a consensus model – expanded team
  - Honest, transparent discussion on ALL matters
    - Budget, pay scales, stipends
  - Assembling round tables to address particular issues
  - Result..
What are the benefits of WITH Leadership?
Benefits of Real “WITH” Leadership – Research
Gary Yukl, Leadership in Organizations, 2013

- Higher Decision Quality
- Decision Acceptance
- Satisfaction with Process
- Development of Participant Skills
- With other Players:
  - Subordinates,
    - Quality; acceptance; development of decision making skills; team building
  - Peers,
    - Quality, cooperation
  - Superiors,
    - Expertise of boss; “check-in” on boss’s perspective; Don’t go overboard
  - Outsiders
    - Understanding of clients, suppliers, etc.
    - Learn about their needs, strengthen networks, solve mutual problems.
More Effective WITH Leadership

- Encourage expression of concerns
  - Try to deal with them
- Describe proposals as tentative
- Record ideas and suggestions from others
  - Build on them
  - Be tactful in expressing concerns on them
- Listen to others w/o defensiveness
- Appreciate input
On a day-by-day basis, what is the number one thing a leader does?
Decisions, Decisions

- Most all of LEADERSHIP comes down to decisions.

- IDENTIFY the DECISION:
  - I decide
  - I decide with your input
  - We decide
  - You decide with my input
  - You decide

- Examples
Why do YOU go back to (or stay in) the TO window?

Or…why do OTHERS do it…?
Why we stay in the TO window- research
Gary Yukl, Leadership in Organizations, 2013

- Our need for power
- Insecurity
- Need for achievement
- Difficulty in forming relationships
- Lack of expertise in subordinates
- Attitude of subordinate
- Distrust of subordinate
- Laxness

Ben Cohen – Ben and Jerry’s – “It’s not natural to ask questions of employees when I know the answer, listen patiently when they say something that isn’t right or ask them for ideas when I am eager to express my own.” (NOTE: He does believe in participative leadership!)
Ways to improve your WITH – and overcome the urge to go back to TO

Delegate:
- Tasks a subordinate can do better
- Urgent but not high priority tasks
- Work relevant to sub’s career
- Tasks w/appropriate difficulty – allow for success
- Pleasant AND unpleasant tasks
- Tasks not central to YOUR role

"Never delegate authority; delegate liability."

NO!
When you delegate:

- Be clear
- Give authority and limits
- Establish reporting protocol
- Be sure delegation has been accepted
- Inform others
- Monitor appropriately
- Get necessary info to subordinate
- Provide support
- Mistakes = learning
Quick Summary

- Benefits of Restorative Leadership – WITH – are supported by research in the field of Leadership.
- Restorative Leadership DOES NOT mean everything is decided by committee.
- “Appearance” of engagement IS NOT engagement!
- Agreeing on who makes the decision should not be overlooked!
- Delegation helps develop subordinates AND helps you overcome your personal obstacles to WITH.
Questions, concerns, comments, issues or other?

Or: Oh, look at the time!
Parting Shots

- PowerPoint will be posted
- Contact me:
  - tfertal@lchsyes.org
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  - LinkedIn – Tom Fertal
  - O – 717-509-0315

- Keep at it…
- Remember…
Being restorative is a PROCESS, not a DESTINATION…

“One does not simply become a Restorative Leader overnight… it takes a great deal of practice…”
How Restorative Practices Made Me a High School Principal

BY THOMAS WITZEL

Ten years ago, I was principal of Lancaster Catholic High School in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. I was also a student in the Master of Restorative Practice and Education program at the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) Graduate School.

In the summer of 2006, I enrolled in my first restorative practices course at the International Institute for Restorative Practices Graduate School in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. I had just been named vice principal of student affairs at my high school. My major responsibility was student discipline.

As an administrator at a private, faith-based school, I had always been satisfied with the traditional system of detention, suspensions, and "Saturday school" for misbehavior. Although I had long known that we needed an alternative to these traditional methods, but I hadn't really known what that might be.

I had heard the term "restorative justice," but at the time I didn't know much about it. A quick search on the internet led me to the IIRP in Bethlehem, my old hometown, a mere 20 miles from my school.

As the school year began at my high school (and I continued my studies at the IIRP), I began to introduce restorative practices to the faculty. Although I was still in the early stages of my own education in restorative practices, I still at that time was exploring the potential for restorative practices to reduce harm, re-engage and disrupt the cycle of violence and retribution.

It was my plan to continue teaching and training the faculty in restorative practices at my school.

The IIRP offered several courses on restorative practices and I was able to attend the "IIRP in Action" course and "IIRP in Practice" course at the IIRP Graduate School. I was also able to attend the "IIRP in Action" course and "IIRP in Practice" course at the IIRP Graduate School.

I was immediately drawn to the principles of restorative justice and the idea that schools could be places where students were able to learn and grow, not just receive punishment for their mistakes.

I was also impressed by the tools and strategies that were offered in the courses. These included the "IIRP in Action" course and "IIRP in Practice" course at the IIRP Graduate School.

I have been able to incorporate these tools and strategies into my work at my school and I continue to use them in my work as an educational leader in Pennsylvania.

For more information on restorative practices and the IIRP, visit http://www.iirp.org/.

References


Four-Day Summer Institute: Basic Restorative Processes, July 10-13, 2014. For all professionals, with a new option for school administrators that satisfies Pennsylvania Act 45 credits but is relevant to school administrators everywhere. See http://www.iirp.org/events/details.php?eventID=570


Newspaper Article