



The Conscious Leader

GILBURG LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

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How Do I “Develop” a Troubled Team?

Barb was concerned with the state of her team. They were a broad mix of players, from brand new to the organization to folks who had served for 20 years or more. Administrative, program and support staff worked alongside one another to accomplish the unit objectives in an increasingly adverse and challenging environment. Tensions were high, communication problems were escalating, and she was starting to feel like her unit was a rudderless ship at sea amid the changing directives and priorities handed down from top executives.

She also sensed there was some animosity and distrust towards her as well. Barb was not sure she had effectively communicated some of

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the larger organizational issues to her people. Her intention had been to insulate her folks from what she perceived to be dysfunction at the higher levels, however her team complained that they lacked important information—if they even spoke to her. Meetings felt forced and unproductive if they happened at all, and the magnitude and tenor of gossip circulating around the office position, and the desire by some to leave the team, deeply concerned her.

On top of everything, people’s initiatives and fewer resources. Folks weren’t taking real vacations and the strain showed. They were producing an incredible amount, but Barb wondered if it was sustainable. Mistakes were becoming more common, and she wondered how long she could maintain her own energy and optimism. Ironically, Barb was eligible to retire any time she chose... this very thought entered her consciousness more frequently than ever before.

Familiar Story?

If this scenario sounds familiar, it is because it is a sample of many clients we have worked with over the last several years: people working hard to accomplish tasks in increasingly challenging times with fewer resources and more responsibility, or who are part of teams that have become frayed while trying to maintain an overwhelming workload under a heavy weight of mistrust and systemic frustration. The leaders we encounter feel this dynamic acutely, and despite their own well-intentioned efforts to curb this tide, frequently feel disempowered and ineffective. Many sense the solution lies in pulling their people together and striving for greater collegiality, increased collaboration, and more focus on common purpose. And, yet, how can this be done given the presence of many of the circumstances described above?

A well-run team development retreat can be a highly effective way to mend a frayed team or strengthen and re-focus a high functioning team, thereby increasing overall leadership effectiveness. Given the do-more-with-less mandate facing so many organizations, the days of a leader single-handedly solving problems are long over (if they ever really existed at all). The systemic and cultural challenges impacting organizations

Events

Pegasus Conference: November 17-19 in Boston, MA; for more information visit: <http://www.pegasus.com> Pegasus promotes “Systems Thinking” as expounded by author Peter Senge. We believe this perspective is critical for organizational health and well being, and have found these conferences stimulating and inspiring for private and public sector leaders alike.

This year, Alan will be presenting an elder workshop, while Deb, Amy and Jon facilitate open forum discussions.

