

Creating the Leadership Advantage

Warren Buffett said, *“The quality of leadership, more than an other single factor, determines the success or failure of an organization”.*

Research has proven time and again that superior leaders create more satisfied customers, hold on to key people better, and generate higher income for their organizations.

Leadership development is taken very seriously at our best American organizations. It is understood that regardless of natural talent in leadership, it is the ongoing training, cultivation of relationships, and experiences that nurture that talent to excellence.

It is also the degree of a leader’s of strengths and weaknesses of individuals on the leadership team that makes all the difference. The leader who is able to identify and align the leadership competencies of the team to best achieve the Vision and Mission of the organization has created the Leadership Advantage.

- When was the last time that you made a strategic effort to evaluate and improve the leadership skills of your team?
- Is it possible that the Vision of your organization is no longer appropriate for these times and requires a creative update?
- Are you accepting less in terms of performance from some of your people than you know they are capable of?
- Is it time to have a plan for each individual on your leadership team to improve leadership skills, collaboration and performance?

Below you will find five essential strategies to leverage one unique assessment and “Create the Leadership Advantage” in your organization:

1. Discover and leverage your strengths.

“The essence of leadership comes not from having pre-defined characteristics. Rather, it comes from knowing yourself – your strengths and weaknesses.”

Bill George,
Former Chairman and CEO of Medtronic

While Bill George is absolutely correct, many leaders struggle to find the best way to identify their strengths and weaknesses. We use a well-validated assessment to measure leadership competencies and traits. This assessment is so comprehensive and accurate that leaders discover blind spots within the 24 personality characteristics and 12 leadership competencies even when they have taken personality assessments in the past. They are then able to use that understanding of themselves to take a giant step toward creating a leadership advantage in how they think, approach work, and relate to others.

2. Select wisely to build an unstoppable team.

Using the leadership assessment, you can hire for those leadership competencies and personality characteristics that your team needs to execute the strategic plan and realize the Vision. While an interview is a critical part of the hiring process, this assessment gives you insight into candidates that you can't get from an interview. Use the interview questions provided to help you sort out potential concerns so you can make informed decisions. This objective information combined with a great interview provides a significant advantage when finding the best people for your team.

3. Uncover your team's potential

Using this same leadership assessment during a team retreat, you will raise the bar for both individual and team performance. A team report uncovers the strengths and weaknesses of your entire leadership team allowing you to leverage strengths and fill in gaps for more efficient execution of the strategic plan. The goal is to align personal characteristics with leadership competencies in a collaborative environment. The smart leader knows what is innate and what is learned and builds a plan to take advantage of learning opportunities to increase personal and team productivity.

4. Align strengths with Vision.

The expressed intent of a leadership team relative to their organization is their stated Vision. This Vision must be regularly updated to be certain that external circumstances aren't changing at a faster pace than the Vision. Technology is changing, business expectations are changing, talent requirements are changing and competition is changing. Is Vision ahead of these rapid changes or behind? Are we sure? History is sadly full of examples of businesses that did not stay ahead of the change curve through creative Vision updates. Think Kodak, Barnes and Noble, Nokia, and Blockbuster. As your Vision changes, it is important to align the strengths of the leadership team with that Vision to optimize the effectiveness of that team.

5. Sustain developmental progress.

Use the varied developmental recommendations and action plan included with your report to build new personal competencies individually and as a team. Combine the suggested books, seminars, behavioral suggestions, and online learning to create the right plan for you and your team. Then use the 360 version of the assessment to measure progress at predetermined intervals. This adds a level of accountability and leads to greater and more sustainable change individually and as a team.

Creating the Leadership Advantage begins with a self-aware leader who can leverage his or her strengths and compensate for his or her weaknesses. From there, it is a combination of hiring the right people, providing the training to maximize their potential, and ongoing measurement of results.

We provide both the best assessments and results-focused training to help you create the leadership advantage.

If you would like our help in getting started on creating a leadership advantage, please contact Dr. Heather Johnson at heather@klassenperformancegroup.com or Don Klassen at dklassen@skypoint.com

Please also visit our web site at www.klassenperformancegroup.com