Effective Engineering Leadership

9th Annual Smead Symposium
Great Leaders Turn the Spotlight on Others
Reaching Your Leadership Potential

**Key Experiences**
- Technology Development
- New Business Capture
- Full Program Life Cycle
- Multiple Geographic Locations
- Corporate Special Assignment
- Cost & Schedule Accountability
- Mediation & Negotiation

**Leadership Competencies**
- Communications
- Inclusiveness
- Employee Engagement
- Building Effective Teams
- Internal Relationships
- External Relationships
- Develop Organizational Talent
- Value Creation

**Personal Characteristics**
- Professional Reputation
- Hardware Engineering
- Software Engineering
- Systems Engineering
- Finance & Planning
- Contract Negotiation
- Subcontract Management
- Authenticity & Integrity
- Confidence & Decisiveness
- Humility & Restraint
- Creativity & Innovation
- Vision & Thought Leadership
- Ability to Handle Pressure
- Community Service

**Domain Knowledge**
Building a High Performance Team

**Group**
- May not share a common goal
- Specific roles and duties are not assigned to individuals
- Members are independent
- Members may not know each other

**Team**
- Share a common cause or goal
- Specific tasks are assigned to each individual
- Members are interdependent
- Members are aware of each other’s weaknesses

**Teamwork Happens by Design**
Building an Effective Team

- Common Commitment and Purpose
- Common Performance Goals

- Form your team with appropriate and diverse mix of styles, perspectives and experience
- Establish a common set of objectives and a shared mindset
- Identify clear goals, what is the purpose of the team?
- Bigger is usually not better
- A little structure goes a long way
- Focus on We before Me
- Higher performing teams communicate with maximum impact
- Keep virtual members connected
- Manage tension by building trust ahead of need, when trust is eroded
  – candid conversation is the antidote
- Develop team operating principles

- Complementary Skills
- Mutual Accountability
Domain of Trust

- Not something you do, something you earn through your behaviors, principles, character, and relationships
- Both a character and competence issue
  -- Open, honest, do you have the skills and abilities to deliver on your commitments
- Listen with your head and heart
- Be accessible
- Persistent and consistent behaviors
- Find common ground
- Words matter, be clear
- Trust is reciprocal, trust your team
- Be vigilant in protecting the interests of those who are not present
- Create a safety zone for sensitive and ethical conversations
What Are
Team Operating Principles?
Team Operating Principles

• Team Operating Principles document how a team behaves

• The principles represent the way the team wants the organization to see us both from leaders above us and the people we manage

• Does this mean we cannot disagree? debate?

• Much better to talk about and document these before we need them

• Reviewed yearly or when a significant change in organization occurs

• New team member, new team

• A way to build trust early in a new team
Examples of Team Operating Principles

1. We will always consider “We” before “Me” in all decisions that affect our team
2. We will operate a half step up, taking on delegated responsibilities with a can-do attitude and support other team members in their delegated roles
3. We will respect each others viewpoints, communicate directly and timely with each other
4. We will provide timely feedback to each other and encourage collaboration and cooperation
5. We will resolve our differences within the team before involving others
6. We all are accountable for the team’s performance
7. We ask challenging questions because we need to understand each other’s priorities and portray each other in the best possible light
8. We don’t assume that something is meant in a negative way – we check our assumptions
Leadership Scenario #1 – Team Operating Principles

You are the leader of a 12 person team that is developing a new higher specific impulse electric propulsion thruster. Your team is completely internally funded with no Customer deliverables. Over the past two years you have made great progress and are generating lots of attention.

Your team developed and follow these team operating principles

- We are open and honest with one another.
- We treat each other with dignity and respect.
- We listen to and respect each other’s ideas and opinions.
- We hold confidences.
- We honor our commitments.
- We support and invest in each other’s development.
- We routinely critique our processes.
- We have fun.

Your team’s success resulted in the Air Force awarding you a sole source production contract to build, test and fly one of your prototype electric propulsion thrusters. The roles and responsibilities of the team are changing. You now have 16 people on the team, a Customer and are responsible for delivering flight hardware in 18 months.

What operating principles would you modify, add or replace to ensure your team continues its excellent performance?
What Do You Think When You Hear “Hold People Accountable”?
What Is Personal Accountability?

Being willing to answer for the outcomes resulting from your *choices, behaviors, and actions*

When you’re personally accountable, you *take ownership of situations* that you’re involved in. You see them through, and you take responsibility for what happens – good or bad.

Accountability is something you choose to exhibit. You can be given responsibility, but you have **to take** accountability.
Building Personal Accountability

Be Clear About What You Are Responsible For
Ask for clarification of your tasks, your role versus other team members’ roles

Be Honest With Yourself
Ask for help if struggling
Admit mistakes
Apologize when wrong
Don’t blame others
Don’t make excuses

Do What You Say You are Going To Do
Personal integrity

Use Time Wisely
Procrastination is a way to avoid or shed responsibility
Practice good time management
Make time for what is important

Continuous Learning
Mistakes offer teachable moments
Learn from your missteps
Above and Below the Line Thinking

A clear line separates accountable and non-accountable behaviors and thinking

Do It
Solve It
Own It
See It

I am part of the solution, focus on what can be done and get creative to deal with obstacles

Wait and See
Cover Your Tail
Finger Pointing
Ignore or Deny
It’s Not My Job
Confusion, Tell Me What to do

Victims

Victimized by circumstances out of their control, blaming others, focused on what cannot be done, frustrated and paralyzed

"The Oz Principle: Getting Results Through Individual And Organizational Accountability" authors Roger Connors and Tom Smith
What Is Team Accountability?
Building Team Accountability

**Common Purpose** - common goals and objectives, agreed to team operating principles to guide behaviors

**Clear Expectations** - discuss and document expectations of who’s doing what and when, detailed understanding of plan, roles and individual results

**Trust** - team success over personal success, all operating with best intentions, ask for help

**Conflict** - productive, professional constructive conflict, issues are quickly brought up so solutions can be found

**Peer Accountability** - step up and help

**Consequences & Rewards** - make rewards and consequences visible. Discuss and learn from poor results. When things go well, Celebrate!
Leadership Scenario #2 – Accountability

As the leader of a large portfolio of programs, you have the responsibility to manage the ever changing need for talented people. You just lost a large contract and now have to reduce headcount by 10%. You write a memo to your top leadership, defining the problem and asking for their suggestions for reductions, you are looking for a fair, balanced and expeditious approach that can be communicated to all employees. You give the memo to your administrative assistant to send to your top leadership. Your assistant mistakenly sends the memo to a much larger group of leaders. You are now getting large amounts of negative feedback from this group of leaders, they feel blindsided by this turn of events.

What do you do next?
Establishing Enduring Relationships

- Leaders need to be able to establish and maintain strong, enduring and effective relationships with their customers, employees, teammates and community in order to accomplish the objectives of the organization.

This is an attribute that is visible and should be measured.
Beyond Customer Satisfaction to Customer Partnership

• There’s no such thing as over-communicating

• Be a useful resource

• Be honest at all times

• Always meet your deadlines

• Eliminate surprises

• Think of Customers as more than just “customers”

• Customer partnership is a living demonstration of an attitude, a committed connection
According to Chip Bell, “Customers as Partners Building Relationships That Last” there are 6 elements to building a partnership:

**Abundance, Trust, Dreams, Truth, Balance, Grace**

**Abundance** – think generosity, partners don’t keep score, noncompetitive, there is value in synergy and working together, focus on relationship value not on transaction costs, making an effort to provide value based solely on the commitment to the relationship, a “giver” perspective

Example – when visiting (or calling) customers, make sure you start by bringing something they value, information, status, good news…..before you start the business conversation, show you respect their time and attention

**Trust** – feeling of confidence, reliability, assurance, faith and fidelity, promises kept, expectations met, visions coming true, surrender need for reciprocity, healthy candor, welcomed feedback without defensiveness, listen to seek to understand, leap of faith

Example – develop a communication pact, I’ll over-communicate if you don’t overreact, good or bad news communicated within 24 hours regardless of lack of details
Customers as Partners

**Dreams** — joint purpose, shared and collaborative vision, mutuality, starts broadly and works down to details

Example – Do you really know what your customer’s vision and purpose is? Don’t assume it is similar to yours. Your vision may be to deliver the best technology on time and on budget, your customer’s vision may be to be the best manager of an industry partner to get the value the military needs.

**Truth** — straight talk laced with compassion and care, candor and openness are valued, authenticity, interpersonal risk taking, courage to ask for feedback, compassion to give feedback, checking ego at the door

Example – to manage team health, getting and giving feedback on team member behaviors so that open communication and collaboration can continue.
Customers as Partners

Balance — pursuit of equality, stability over time, equity, fairness, fair outcomes, joint dealings are balanced, demonstrations of respect, equality requires participation, there will always be rises and falls of power as participates try and equalize the relationship, equality requires respect, equality has nothing to do with rules, it is elastic.

Example — partnerships are nurtured through resilience more than endurance, resilience is being able to rebound from setbacks and adversity and grow from hardship and negative experiences.

Grace — sense of familiarity and ease, norm of calm and composure, partners are not ruled by policies, easy access in the broadest manner, how you act in times of trouble.

Example — your reactions when confronting and communicating difficult situations and events, can you both speak calmly about a very difficult situation with the goal being a plan of attack.
Aerospace Needs the Next Generation of Leaders

• To be the catalyst to transform ideas into results
• To be accountable
• To build effective teams and develop others
• To have self awareness, humility and empathy
• To build enduring relationships
• To communicate effectively
• To display high integrity and honesty
• To inspire and motivate others

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

John Quincy Adams
Thank You!
### Presentation Flow – 11:15 to 12:30

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>Welcome &amp; Reaching Your Potential – 5 Mins (1-3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building an Effective Team – 10 Mins (4-6)</td>
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<td>Team Operating Principles: – 10 Mins (7-9)</td>
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<td>Operating Principles Leadership Scenario - 10 Min – (10)</td>
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<td>Personal &amp; Team Accountability – 10 Mins (11-16)</td>
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<td>Customers as Partners – 15 Mins (18-22)</td>
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<td>Summary &amp; Thank You - 5 Mins (23-24)</td>
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