II.III Leadership and Organization

Element 23: Principles of Leadership

The exercise of leadership is one of the most important elements of strategy. By setting out a practical framework, leadership can be more thoughtful, can make more impact and can contribute greatly to the success of a chosen strategy.

- Empower the vision and the strategy
- Live the values
- Engage and motivate individuals
- Go beyond the conventional
- Lead from the front
- Lead from the center
- Get the job done

1. Empower the Vision and the Strategy

The process of empowerment of vision in a strategy program is not only about launching the effort. How you treat the process and content during and after the exercise may be even more critical to its success.

A large part of individual commitment to greater collective effort is driven by the single test of whether the path set by the leadership of a business is truly empowered across the entire organization. Not all existing activities will be in line with the new direction. Creating real change consistent with the vision and strategy is essential. One of the most inevitably visible aspects of empowering a new vision lies in articulating priorities and ensuring that they are respected.

While every individual can make a substantial contribution to the successful design and implementation of strategy, each and every individual within an organization is also a possible source of resistance, recalcitrance and inefficiency unless convinced of the direction set by the leadership team.
2. Live the Values (Demonstrate Character Through Action)

In accepting a leadership role there is also a responsibility incumbent upon leaders to live the values promulgated, provide a model for behavior which respects the corporation’s value summary and demonstrate the higher values which provide the foundation and guiding ethical principles of an organization.

Among these ethical values there is none more important than personal integrity. Trust, faith, hope and many other higher aspects of human emotion are tied up in the complex psychological act of accepting leadership from another individual. Of all of the attributes of leadership, trust consistently emerges in research as the most valued by subordinates.

The balance of values desired from leaders reflects the fact that the true essence of leadership is much more about individual behavior and moral value than it is about possessing any particular skill or exhibiting any one personal style.

Personal integrity and mastery of the self are the ultimate sources of power in business and in life itself.

3. Engage and Motivate Individuals (Reach the Heart of Your Organization)

In every organization the vast majority of individuals want to do a good job, learn, grow as they work and contribute to the creation of something special. For many, there is a sense of unfulfilled promise and disengagement in what they do and a missing sense of a higher purpose in what they achieve.

By reaching the hearts as well as the minds and financial interests of your colleagues, by responding to their need to contribute to something greater than their individual selves, you will be able to release new levels of energy for performance and change in any business.

4. Go Beyond the Conventional (Set New Standards of Excellence)

No manager will ever achieve the more ambitious goals of strategy if he or she aspires only to be conventional in approach or average in result. None of the leaders who created great