

---

## A Leadership Skills: Influencing People

Creating high performance culture at workplace requires a unique approach. Culture comprises how people work together, their attitude, behaviour and belief of getting things done. Since culture and teams are collection of individuals, an important part of process is that each person needs to make right choices that sometimes require shift in thinking. In any organisation, high performance culture begins from their leadership. Senior leaders have to cast right shadow irrespective of the situation and think about what can be done to help them and their teams to be 'at their best' against busy, challenging times.

I have been fortunate enough to come across some of the brightest yet very humble minds, be it my immediate reporting line or a co-worker, which have taught me work and life effectiveness skills through their actions. This made me aware of my own strengths and challenges. I have always been open-minded to suggestions and learn how to be at best at the higher state of mood elevator. These of course have helped me getting along with individuals more easily and get more results in less time with less stress. Some of these leadership skills that I believe motivated me to have rationale thinking and high performing working culture have tried to capture neutrally in the following essay.

Mr. A has a tendency to make me accountable for each task I have performed under his supervision and made me ask one question to myself "What more I can do to get results in spite of obstacles and barriers?" By letting me believe accountable for my own actions and freedom of me taking ownership of the task have achieved better results in the long run. Being accountable gives us more control over our lives, helps us learn from our own mistakes and prevents us from getting stuck in the past. I have achieved better results at work and at home whenever I've adopted a more accountable mind-set. There are prices and payoffs for being more accountable. Therefore, Mr. A for me, is my Accountability Manager.

I had always received many nods of appreciation from Mr. B, even for the petty tasks I performed, which gave me sense of recognition. This made me wonder, even small gesture could motivate individual to reach greatness. An environment where people are recognised for the things they do well leads to an atmosphere of respect and dignity. This gives them foundation for putting forward their best effort. Appreciative feedback raises people's spirit, shows respect. Appreciation is the glue that holds relationships and teams together. Therefore, Mr. B became my Appreciation Leader who taught me giving someone appreciative feedback is easy, quick, powerful and uplifting.

In my role as a Lead Cabin Crew, several times I could remember myself to be presumptive of situation. However, later in time when ideas or opinions are presented to me, I always thought of my inclinations, am I more positive or negative about the motive of others? Am I curious or judgmental? I have learnt through my own experience that when we don't know why people behave the way they do, we tend to make up the reasons and we make assumptions about the person's motive – and our assumptions aren't always right. Assuming the

best in others doesn't mean believing that everyone does the right thing all the time. It is a belief that everyone is doing the best they can, given their current level of thinking. When I was

---

at my best, I tend to give others the benefit of doubt and approached them with curiosity, rather than judgement – which usually gave better results. In any organisation, assuming positive intentions whilst cohabiting work environment is the key to promote healthy workspace.

Another aspect of managing people well that I've learnt from Mr. C whilst working for Britonia Textiles is to help adjust the way I behaved in certain situation and tackle things in life both at work and at home, to feel more fulfilled and happy. Being at my best is the feeling of being on top of everything. This can be anything from accomplishment of a particularly challenging task/project or an activity/moment that I was really enjoying and felt great about it. But this state of mind doesn't come without truly being in the moment, without any distractions. Looking at Mr. C who chose himself to be fully, mentally present and focused as well as physically in place for most of the time. We tend to get more results and fulfilment in life when we can learn to live in the moment; with each thing we are doing at that moment both at work and at home. It provides us with greatest opportunities for maximising effectiveness and life fulfilment. This life lesson of 'being at your best' comes from Mr. C, which became my 'be here now' advocate.

Throughout my professional career, I have always valued the importance of on- going exchange of coaching and feedback. This is one of the most important vehicles for reinforcing the desired behaviours and shaping a high performance culture. On another aspect, I always thought about how my actions influence others, the shadow I'm casting on the people around me, at work and at home. When we are present ('be here now') and listening, we will find notice messages through gestures, facial expressions, postures, voice tones, underlying emotions and with right energy. Consequently, when we feel heard, we will feel important and appreciated; we feel better about ourselves. And with a greater sense of self- esteem, we produce our best efforts.

The key message to remember is it takes more to be a great leader than just being technically adept, who is competence or have effective decision making skills. It is moreover, having awareness of individual strengths and challenges in work culture and implications for the business results. The great leader is who he influences his people by casting right shadow and lead by his own example. He clearly understands and manages the dynamic of the team. The leader who understands the different behavioural styles of each team member and understands how those styles can work together better by motivating them to get best out of it. The one who understands the collective style of the team and importance of openness, trust and collaboration of a team.