

CROSBY ON

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

by

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Last update: 16.08.2001 13:47

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Number of Credits: 4

Number of words: 7907

ABSTRACT

1 Abstract

This paper is about entrepreneurial leadership and is mainly based on the book 'Running Things: The Art of Making Things Happen' by Philip B. Crosby. It is not a summary of this book, but it shall serve as a document describing what a person must be to make things happen. It combines ideas from the above-mentioned book and my own experience.

This paper will point out that it is not a natural gift to make things happen but more an attitude that can be learnt.

I will not cover all aspects out of the book, but only those topics that are the most important, from my point of view. I am convinced that my selection serves as a good description of points for an effective executive who wants to make things happen.

I will divide my writings into the following main chapters:

- Attitudes of NON-executives.
- Attitudes of executives.
- Running a business.
- Some independent and special topics.

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ABBREVIATIONS

3 Abbreviations

PDA Personal Digital Assistant

I N T R O D U C T I O N

4 Introduction

Before continuing reading: stop a moment and think about the question “What does it mean to make things happen?” For me it means to have an idea and put this idea into practice. Often it also means having to convince people to follow you, to help you or to support you. But how can you do this? How can you make other people follow you? How can you make other people appreciate your idea and convince them to give it their time and support?

Until recently I was convinced that people who have a lot of social and professional contacts have a charismatic attitude. I thought that you were either a born leader or you never had a chance to successfully lead a group of people. But during my working life I experienced that successful people follow a certain pattern. I detected that they used a certain technique, which made them successful in dealing with other people. I agree that some people may use these techniques without consciously learning them and that they are naturally good leaders. However, I think that one can learn these techniques and that one can learn to be a good leader.

Why is it essential to successfully lead a group? Why is it not just enough to do it somehow? Because leaders have to establish the way things are going to go. Sometimes inappropriate procedures become deeply ingrained because no one has taken the initiative.

*“Beginning an executive assignment with an incorrect assumption is a guaranteed system
for failing.”¹*

I learnt that people who feel unsure leading a group don't have to give up. Several techniques and patterns can be learnt that can help anybody lead a group or put something into practice. If you learn certain things or if you are aware of certain facts, then you can be successful in making things happen.

I used a special method to develop this document for a specific reason. I wanted to use a natural structure to automatically lead you to the facts that make executives different from other people. I wanted to build up logically so that everybody shall say, "Yes, it's clear. Executives must be like this to make things happen".

To achieve this, I first wrote about how people act as subordinates. I wanted to show the important things that one has to know before one leads a group. If you want to make things happen, then you have to know how other people will react.

Secondly I defined some attitudes that a good leader must have. These points should automatically come out of my first part.

As a third part I wrote about running one's own business. This will include some special topics in addition to part two. You need to think about more things, if you run your own business, than if you lead a group. If you want to make your own business happen, then you need the attitudes from part 2 and some others described in the third and fourth part.

In part four I want to handle some very special topics. While working you will always encounter some general factors, which you should never forget. I wanted to write about these things in part four. These points are for me a kind of bible of behavior.

NON-EXECUTIVES

5 How People Act On Orders

This chapter is not about subordinates, but about people who shall do something under others' instructions. For this reason it is for almost all people, e.g. for a senior executive, a subordinate, or one who runs her/his own business. Even someone who runs his or her own business must do something for others! In her/his case it is the customer.

I will try to describe the attitudes and the behavior of people who shall act on someone else's request.

Why is it important to know how people who receive requests behave? We have to know it, because otherwise we run the risk that our instructions are given in a way, which is not understood or not executed.

People who want to make things happen have to know how they must address something to be successful. If we know the key points for communicating something to somebody else, then we have a clear guideline of how to be to make things run successful.

One thing is also true: people are different to each other. The people's differences belong to their culture, their age, their education, and their life experience. Nevertheless, the following rules are more or less valid for all of them.

5.1 Motivation

The motivation of people is very different. Think about yourself? If you are hungry and somebody offers you a job, you are very likely to do it – it is not important what it is. If you are wealthy, then you will carefully check, if the job is suitable or not.

As a key point, I would like to mention Abraham Maslow's "hierarchy of needs". The need for *food and water* is at the bottom of the pyramid, followed by the *need for safety*, the *need to belong*, the *need for status* and the need for *self-actualization*, which is regarded as the highest motivator.²

5.1.1 Fulfillment

People, whose basic urges are fulfilled, work, because they love their work. They work, because doing the job fulfills them.

People prefer to work in or with something that is closely related to their innermost wishes. If somebody is keen on solving analytical problems (e.g. finding bugs in software), then doing such a task will fulfill her/him. If someone likes to invent something, then she/he will not be fulfilled, if she/he does only a mechanical job.

Fulfillment is a very high motivator!

5.1.2 Appreciation

If someone is going to do a job, then this person wants to be valued afterwards. It is not a question of receiving only a reward or a salary. It is more important is to hear or to read that one is special and that others (e.g. colleagues, family or neighborhood) also know this.

The best case is, if a chosen person knows that she/he is the only one who can do the task. But even if someone knows that somebody else can also do it, if she/he gets to know why she/he was preferred to the others, then she/he feels appreciated.

It is not a question of being the only one: somebody does it faster, somebody does it better, somebody does it more creatively. If you are chosen and if your superior tells you why she/he chose you – if she/he points out your strengths for this task – then you feel appreciated.

If people are going to be dedicated to a task, then the task has to be worthy of them and they need to feel that they are special.³

From my own experience I can say that people will seldom ask: “Why shall I do this? My colleague can also do it,” - but they want to know. If they get the answer in advance “I

appreciate your work and your creativity is what is needed here!” then this person is motivated to do the task.

Appreciation is a high motivator.

5.1.3 Companionship

It is important to human beings to know where they belong. People need to know e.g.

- What kind of company am I working for?
- How large is the team in which I work?
- Who is my superior? Who is my colleague?
- What is the strategy of my company?
- Why are things happening in my company, the way that they are?

All these points have nothing to do with the real work the people have to do. But if they know all these things, they feel like partners in the company.

These points are especially important if you run your own business and you are going to hire somebody. The smaller your company is, the more information the employee wants to have before s/he joins your company. The larger the company is, the less information the employee wants at the beginning, but the longer the person works for the company, the more information she/he would like to have.

If we are treated like companions and not as slaves, then we will perform better.

5.2 Rules

Each person likes to know in which environment she/he is working. Everybody wants to know the rules under which she/he works.

It is quite essential to tell everybody what she/he is allowed to do and what he or she is not allowed to do, before she/he starts working on a task.

Maybe this point sounds strange to you. When I first read about this subject I thought, “Why should rules be defined for every task or job?” Due to my experience I can say that it has its justification. Consider the case where a separate team is brought together for a

specific task. This team might consist of experienced employees, but are the rules in this new/temporary team the same as in their former groups? That's not mandatory! Maybe the daily working time for this task changes. Maybe the working rules change. Regularly remind each person and each team about the followed rules.

Communicate each task or group rules.

If rules do not change for a long time, remind them.

5.3 Targets

It is essential for everyone to know the target. It is not enough to receive a task or a job description. It is very important and very useful to know the short and long-term targets. The more the employee knows the target, the better she/he can perform.

Why is it useful to inform the employee about the target?

1. It gives the employee the feeling that she/he is trusted. The superior tells the employee the target and tells her/him why the task is important. The employee gets the feeling that the superior informs her/him.
2. It gives the employee the feeling that no secrets exist. If you are asked to do a job, but you don't know why, then you imagine that you are not being told everything. Therefore it is difficult to believe in what you are doing.
3. If the target is known and the employee realizes during her/his performance that she/he will not reach the target by doing the job, then she/he can talk with the superior about her/his impression. The result can be an improvement of the process, which can hardly be achieved, if the target is not known.

What kinds of targets exist?

Some important aspects have to be taken into consideration: not everybody wants to know the target and not everybody will find that knowing the target is helpful. Some people like to work without knowing why. This is a fact and we have to accept this; but these people are the exception.

For some people it is more helpful to know the short-term goals and not the long-term goals. If these people know the long-term goals, they simply lose the focus on their direct task.

It is the executive's task to assign the appropriate target to the appropriate person.

5.4 Relationships

Everybody who has to do a task needs to be informed about the environment in which she/he works. She/he needs to know if she/he works alone or in a team. It is essential to distribute this kind of information.

Colleagues, contributors and contact persons need to be known. It is not unusual that time is lost during some operations because people have to search someone whom they can ask. This lost time is expensive. From my own experience, it is quite helpful, if executives spend time at the beginning of a job to define as much as possible about contact persons. Everybody must know this list, it must be up to date and it must be easily accessible.

It takes time to learn how colleagues work, how to communicate to get results and how to listen to what they have to say.

EXECUTIVES

Some mistakes are the result of misjudgment, but the majority comes about because something is taken for granted.⁴

6 Executives

In this chapter we will discuss the attitudes that people need to make things happen.

6.1 Acting

The leader must be walking and talking. She/he must be a visible example of what the ethics of the business are.

What does walking and talking mean? The executive is physically walking around the company. She/he is walking around the offices or the laboratories. During these walks she/he seeks out contact with the employees. She/he talks with the employees about problems and also about their personal life. It is important that s/he has an open ear to what the employees say. Try to understand what the colleague really wants to tell you. Sometimes you hear "It's good" but the colleague means, "It's almost good." You see there is a big difference. It needs some experience to get the most out of these talks, but if executives use them effectively, then they can learn a lot from them. From my own experience I would say that talks give more information than formal reports, if the employee or subordinate trusts the executive.

Why is it important to be walking and talking? An executive who walks and talks is visible. He can be contacted in case of issues. For the executive these talks offer a great opportunity. She/he learns something about preferences, ideas and wishes of the employees and the employee becomes familiar with the attitudes of the superior. The employees gain the feeling of being important.

This attitude can be used for the chapters "*Appreciation* page 9", "*Companionship* page 10", "

Targets p.11", and "Relationships p.12".

6.2 Integrity

The leader has to create the integrity of the operation by personal example.⁵

What is integrity? Integrity inside an organization means different things e.g.:

- Keeping one's promise.
- Gives correct answers or none, if you don't know the answer.
- Honesty.
- Same rules for everybody.

Integrity is a very general topic, which cannot be placed in a subchapter of "*How People Act On Orders*". Integrity is important in creating the atmosphere in the company, which in turn ensures good working results.

6.3 Managing Change

During change the proper people must know what is happening and must have an opportunity to state what they will need in order to accomplish the change.

This point is very practical. Whenever an executive has to change something, she/he has the opportunity to do it alone and secretly or to involve the employees. My experience shows that employees have a very clear understanding of and feeling for, when changes are planned. If they are not informed, then they are fearful.

Fear is one of the hazards of productivity!

6.4 Handling Statistics

An executive must be aware of any numbers concerning his/her business. Statistics refer to numbers inside the company (e.g. persons, age, income and outcome) as well as outside the company (e. g. market, tendency and public relations).

Statistics can be utilized throughout the company. They can substantiate any progress or any failure. They can be used to report a project status or to compare one factory with another.

But don't trust statistics too much. I advise any executive to carefully check the contents of a statistical report. Most people tend to give you the report they think you want to have. Use your common sense to evaluate the report you are given.

6.5 Handling Time

The handling of time is one of the most important issues of an executive. On one hand the executive is responsible for running the business and on the other hand the executive should have regular talks with the employee.

To handle this challenging conflict, two things should be put into practice:

1. Delegate as much as possible
2. Follow the next ideas to reduce the amount of time required:
 - Telexes / fax: Ask a secretary to pre select the incoming telexes. Just read telexes where your action is explicitly requested.
 - Meetings: Meetings are important and big time consumers. Try to reduce the number of meetings as much as possible. Always set a concrete time frame so that the end time of the meeting is settled before the meeting starts.
 - Use a day scheduler / day planer / PDA to structure your day.
 - Most time consuming are e-mails and telephone calls.
 - Telephone: don't use answer-machines: the person that needs something will call again. Don't let calls interrupt a conversation unless it is unavoidable.
 - Emails: don't analyze all emails after your vacation; just have a glance at them; if possible, let them lie. If something is important, the person will contact you again. Check where your action is needed and what you can delegate.

6.6 Handling Of Success

Good executives always have one eye on their target. They regularly check if their way / the way of their business is on a profitable path. The point is that entrepreneurial leaders focus on the target whereby others focus on other things e.g. on the time frame. If you focus on the time, then you will not finish before the end date, if time is still left. You will always find something that must be done just to use the time you are allocated. If you focus on the target, then you will end your task as soon as possible. You will use the gained time for new important tasks.

It is a good practice to define intermediate targets and to celebrate reaching each intermediate goal.

6.7 Handling The Downs

One of the most difficult situations in the life of an executive is, if the business runs badly.

There are some actions that will reduce the fear of employees. If executives follow the next proposals, then the impact on productivity will be reduced to a minimum.

- Bring the management team together and do an autopsy of the status. Look for ways to reduce expenses.
- Search for the reason.
- Search for a problem solution.
- Talk to the employees about it, when a solution is found.
- Set up crisis meetings on a weekly basis for overall actions and on a daily basis for team status. Keep minutes of meeting. Keep track of action points and ensure that they are defined whenever necessary. Keep track on who is responsible for action points.
- Talk to your customer(s).
- Talk to your supplier(s).
- Reexamine your marketing plan(s).
- Talk to your creditor(s).

6.8 Be Open

Good executives are open-minded. They know that people behave differently. They also know that they cannot automatically transfer a proven management style to a new situation. They are open to new employees and to new teams. They don't regard new situations as threats but as new challenges.

RUNNING ONE'S OWN BUSINESS

7 Running One's Own Business

In the previous chapter the focus lay on the attitudes of executives with respect to subordinates or to the climate in a company. It was closely related to the chapter, "How People Act On Orders", page 8.

The focus of this chapter shall be on the attitudes people must have to build up their own organization. It describes more fully, the attitudes of entrepreneurial leadership. In addition to the knowledge that was previously described, entrepreneurial leaders need additional tactics and tools to be successful.

It is important that the next topics be regarded in addition to the previous chapter, "Executives", on page 13, and not alone.

7.1 Arrange The Environment

When running an own business, you have to establish a good and clear environment. You have to arrange the *work that must be done* and the *environment in which it is done*.

Good leaders have to do the same when they are employees of a company, but if they fail to do so, they don't always suffer the consequences. Sometimes they can hide their failure or sometimes they get another chance to do better.

If you do badly in your own business, then you are directly affected by your mismanagement.

If you run your own business, then it is in your own interest to focus on your work environment.

Think about what is necessary to run an own business. You have to do the following:

- Employ people (Charter).
- Tell them (the employees) what to do (Purpose).
- Specify details (Requirements).
- Inspire the employees (Motivation).
- Give Appreciation.
- Demonstrate Attitude.
- Build up an organization.

Let me explain in detail what I mean.

7.1.1 Charter

If you need to employ people, then you place an advertisement in a newspaper and people will apply for an interview.

What are you going to tell them?

You have to tell them:

- Your ideas about your business.
- The purpose of your business.
- The financial situation of your business.

If you really want somebody to work for you, then you have to inspire her/him. You have to convince the person that your ideas are unique and your business is profitable. You have to tell her/him why it is better to work for you, rather than work for a competitor.

All of this information requires a long and clear preparation. You have to have an idea. You have to check the market requirement. Sometimes you have to convince some banks to lend you money. You have to develop a market strategy.

You see, before you are going to hire an employee a lot of work has to be done. All of this information is important for the employee.

A person will become an employee, if you are able to inspire her/him.

7.1.2 Purpose

If you want to run your own business, then you must clearly know what the business is going to do. The business must have a purpose and the purpose must be convincing to be successful. Before you start your own business take time and think about the purpose of your business.

7.1.3 Requirements

If you want to run your own business, you have to clearly think about your requirements. What do you need to run your business?

If you are going to hire people, clearly define what you expect of them. The more detailed your requests are, the better it is for you and for the person who wants to become your employee.

It is valid through your whole life: the better you know what is expected from you, the better you can decide if you want to take over the task and the better you can perform.

7.1.4 Dedication

It is important to regularly repeat inspiration – don't just do it once when hiring somebody.

If you once inspired a team, keep them on fire. You have to regularly tell the team members about the targets, about the time frame, about the mission and about everybody's importance.

It is essential for the success of your company to remind the employees about the company's mission.

Treat your team members like you treat yourself. When you run your own business, you will remind yourself every morning why you work. This is automatically done. Don't take it for granted that your employees do the same. Don't expect your employees to have the same targets as you do. They won't, although they earn money.

There is not much magic behind this topic – it's just pure practice.

Talk regularly about short and long term goals and about the company's goal in order to inspire the team member and employees.

7.1.5 *Appreciation*

One of the most difficult things is to make other people feel appreciated; it is also one of the most important things.

It is important to appreciate other people's work, because they spend a lot of time doing it for you. It is a big difference to just work for somebody or to give everything for somebody. The normal employee's performance might be around 50% of what one is able to give. So the question is: "How can we get the other 50%?" To get the remaining 50% the employee has to be highly motivated. She/he must love the work. If an executive finds an employee that gives more than others do, then s/he must make the employee aware that the executive has recognized her/his work.

The first thing is to thank the employee for her/his efforts. This must be done personally during a face-to-face talk.

If an employee has been working hard and his/her work is of real value to the company, then a reward should be given. As a reward, money is good, but it is not necessarily as good as other things might be, e.g. something one can put on her/his desk or something the

employee can put on the wall. If an employee receives something that others automatically see, then the reward has another value. It makes a difference, if you receive \$100 or a beautiful pen that costs \$100. Money doesn't give a personal touch, but a pen does.

Never take something for granted.

An employee works for money, but absolute encouragement cannot be received without appreciation.

7.1.6 Attitude

Employees adapt to the company. If a new male employee sees that all other male employees wear suits, then he will also wear one. If a new employee sees that work is not taken from desks before going home, most probably she/he will also not do so.

The same is valid concerning attitudes. If a new employee comes into an environment where everybody just complains about too much work and bad relationships, then she/he will consider her/his situation in the same way.

From all this it becomes clear that executives can and must verify their own attitudes. They must be optimistic, but not blind to problems. They should smile, but should not wear a false grin. If somebody tells them a problem they should not react and say "Oh, what an unsolvable situation", but they should say, "OK, let's sit together and let's see, how we can solve the problem."

Executives must be living attitudes. They may not request something from others if they don't do it themselves. Don't ask others to wear uniform clothes, if you don't.

Show your attitudes by living them.

7.1.7 *Building Up An Organization*

If you are going to hire somebody, one of the first things to consider should be how the company is organized. The larger the company is, the more important it becomes, however, employees need to know the following from their very first day in the company:

- Orientation (what are we all about?).
- Communication (how do we know what is what?).
- Development (how do we get better?).
- Appreciation (how am I doing?).

7.1.7.1 *Orientation:*

New employees require at least one day of basic orientation and then a week or two refreshers. All the necessary material can be inserted into procedure manuals. Unfortunately that is no guarantee it will be read. You have to read it to them.

7.1.7.2 *Communication:*

Don't believe that you will find a perfect way of communication. It is inevitable that you will distribute information, but you will forget to put someone on the distribution list.

You may distribute information and forgot nobody on the distribution list but unfortunately, the interpretation of your documentation differs from person to person. Don't undervalue this point. It happens often during your life.

To minimize these problems I advise the following:

- After distributing information verify that key persons received it, read it and understood it. Ask these people to communicate it internally.
- Make it clear to everybody, which communication medium you will need.
- Make it clear to everybody how she/he shall handle distributed information (e.g. read it immediately or just in the evening)
- Use different communication channels (persons) and methods (e.g. e-mail, phone calls) to distribute information

The following methods can be used to distribute information inside a company:

- Meetings.

- Emails.
- Newsletters.
- Memorandums.
- Conversations (leader is walking around).
- Phone calls.

7.1.7.3 Development

A company should take care of the development of their employees. Employees need help to define their own goals. People need help to find out their strength and their weakness. A progressive company defines development proposals for their employees. Doing so gives the employees a chance to track their own progress. The employees know where they are and they know how they can develop.

Remark: this is not common in every country and in each company. Some companies follow a completely different approach. They say to find out the best executives, the executives have to be able to develop without help. With this method they identify the strongest persons in the company.

GENERAL TOPICS

8 General Topics

In this chapter I will handle topics that an executive should not forget.

8.1 People Are Different

Never forget that people are not identical.

Some people put work first, some put people first. Before you go to criticize a person evaluate, if the criticism is justified. Check, if the criticism is against the person's work or behavior!

8.2 Becoming Unpopular

A special problem can occur, when a high-appreciated person becomes unpopular. This can happen, if after some years of hard work the work is not rewarded by superiors or not rewarded by colleagues. People who work very hard for a company expect that their work and themselves are appreciated. On one hand they are right and this assumption can be justified. On the other hand, this can be questioned. In the first instance these people work hard for themselves. As I wrote before, people only give everything if they love the work. For that reason these people love what they do and love is without reward. But even if people just work hard, because they love the work, the executive has to respect it, otherwise she/he runs the risk of the employee becoming unpopular.

Hard working people become annoying if they expect the same amount of work from their colleagues. Then colleagues will *not* want to work with them, which is harmful for the company.

The most important thing is that you accept the behavior of others.

The second most important thing is that you verify your own behavior; check that you are cooperative and kind to your colleagues, however stressful your work is.

8.3 Ability

To recognize ability, keep an open mind because ability does not come in a specific package. However, qualified people will have most of the following characteristics:

- They will know who you are.
- They will have goals that make sense to you.
- They will not consider money in their first comments.
- They will ask questions in order to understand the tasks assigned to them.
- They will not require direction after that.
- They will complete their tasks properly and on schedule.
- They will create work.
- They will be the same all the time.
- They will not make trouble unless it's necessary.
- They will be pleasant all the time.

8.4 A Person Changes Her/His Attitudes

What if a highly valued person changes her/his attitudes, e.g. the person is not pleasant all the time or does not complete work anymore? A good executive can and must react to this. If you run your own business, then you will immediately react, if an employee's performance decreases. If you are a leader in a company, then you have the same duty, but often you will not do so, because it is an unpleasant task to talk with a subordinate about her/his decreasing performance.

If you follow some simple rules, then this task can be efficient for all sides. First of all, you have to arrange a private talk with the employee. Second, you should create an informal atmosphere - something like a private atmosphere. Then you need to start talking about the subordinate's good work. Tell her/him that you appreciate the work and the collaboration with her/him.

Now the difficult part begins. Start discussing what you have recognized. Cite detailed examples of the decreasing performance. Don't be general; use examples! Next, ask for an explanation.

As a final point try to come to an agreement about the future. Try to clarify that you need and expect the old performance and try to establish a surrounding for the employee under which she/he agrees to perform better again. Identify if it is a problem that needs to be changed within the company, how this can happen and what measures can be put in place to ensure that it is? Be prepared to listen to the employee, s/he may not be completely at fault. Agree about the next steps, about a time frame of evaluation and about the next talk to her/him.

8.5 Guide Employees

What if a subordinate does not show/have the characteristics listed in chapter "Ability"? Then an executive cannot expect the same amount and quality of work as she/he can expect from subordinates who have the attitudes. Can a good leader create / improve these capabilities? If not, then it is for her/his own benefit to continuously verify the steps of the subordinate.

You may leave your employee to work alone but you would have no control over the results and the things that the subordinate does. As a consequence, you can also not help him/her develop.

You can define someone who works together with her/him. This helps the executive have results on which she/he can rely on. However she/he still has no control over the development of this person.

You can define intermediate steps outlining when you want to hear of the results. You can check the intermediate results and you can check the process the subordinate used. In this way the executive can detect an incorrect move early and can verify the quality the end-result might have.

You can work together with this person. This is the most time consuming variant. It costs you a lot of time but you have the best possible guarantee concerning quality. The biggest disadvantage is that the subordinate is not forced to work alone. If a subordinate works together with the executive, then the subordinate could be too shy to try something or

could be passive just acting on the executive's suggestions. I regard this alternative useful if you need fast results and high quality. In all other situations I would recommend avoiding this solution.

8.6 Absenteeism

People who love their work appear every day – anyway. How should an executive react to absenteeism? Bad reactions are:

- They don't check up on people.
- They don't have an interview with the subject after each incident.
- They give the impression that employees are expected to be ill sometimes.

All these behaviors give the employee the feeling of not being important.

What can an executive do about this? If an employee calls in sick, then the executive could say (if the executive personally talks to the ill employee) that s/he hopes the illness is not dangerous (like a traffic accident or similar). Just ask about the seriousness and not the reason. This gives the employee the feeling that she/he is important and doesn't feel tested.

8.7 Commitment

On one hand a commitment is essential during your work life. . If you have given a commitment and then renege on it, your reputation may be damaged. If you always uphold your commitment, then everybody will trust you. This is a very precious attitude.

On the other hand, nowadays companies tend to ask for commitments in many situations, even if you are not able to guarantee the outcome (e.g. outside influences) or you don't even believe in what you are committing to.

My clear advice is to always be honest and only commit, when you can stand the result. It is much more important to guarantee that you will do everything to reach your goals.

If someone questions your commitment to something, the proper response is, „What would I have to do to convince you I am serious about it?“⁶

8.8 Competition

Most people perform best when they feel they have some competition. Companies perform best when they feel they have some competition. Of course there are other people who cannot stand the pressure of competition, but I don't want to focus on this subject here.

What happens, when companies don't have any competition? They might get tired and self-confident. Productivity might decrease.

What happens, when companies shrink and the number of employees decrease? At some moment in time the company will just have specialists. They will just have one person for one job. There might be no internal competition anymore. This is a danger that companies can run into, when they reduce the number of employees, which is a normal strategy if they get into financial troubles. If there is no internal competition anymore, how can the company motivate their employees to give as much as they would do if there was competition? I don't think it's possible. From the point of competition, a company must ensure that internal competition is kept alive. If the number of employees is reduced to such an extent that there is only one person for one task, then a strategy could be to let two people share two tasks. Then the company achieves two things: first, they have a representative (e.g. during vacations) and second, they have (again) some internal competition.

8.9 Corrective action

When a problem occurs, a company must take two steps:

- First, deal with the current situation; solve blocking problems; get things running.

- Second, analyze the original problem and find the root cause. Eliminate the root cause forever.

8.10 Creativity

Creativity is the ability to invent something that did not exist before. Take new ideas seriously. Don't make jokes about it. Try to understand why they were created. Ideas arise due to specific reasons and not without any reason.

If somebody has a new idea help her/him to put it into practice. Don't look for another person to put someone else's ideas into practice.

8.11 Development

There is no more urgent task than helping people to be more competent.

Successful executives learn how to let people grow and prosper.

8.12 Teams

There is a big difference between an employee and a team. If you run your own business and you need to hire more than one person, sometimes it will be necessary to build up a team.

Be careful, a team is something different than some people put together.

A team is a group of people selected to achieve a particular task. It consists of a team leader and team members.

8.12.1 The Purpose Of The Team Leader

The purpose of a team leader is:

- To pull everything together.
- To get everything defined (e.g. tasks, processes and relationships).
- To get everybody working.

- To overcome personality conflicts.
- To keep everybody's eyes on the goal.

8.12.2 Time Limit

A specific team, established for a specific task, should also have a specific time limit on its life. It's better to have a victory party and to disassemble a team than to let the team continue without changing its objectives or members.

It is important to know that a team needs some time to establish itself. If the team members already know each other, then this (forming) time might be very short. If they don't know each other, the team members need some time to learn how the other team members think and work. Team meetings are a good instrument to speed up this process. During team meetings the team members get to know their colleagues and they learn how the colleagues behave. I realized that team members consider the first team meetings as very important and useful. They appreciated the meetings, because they learnt a lot about the other team members.

8.12.3 Team Meetings

Team meetings are important. I am not going to describe here how to organize or to hold meetings, but I want to stress the importance of them.

Imagine a situation where you build up a team for a specific task. Sometimes the team members already know each other, but sometimes they don't. In the latter case, the team members first have to learn how their colleagues behave, think and work (see previous chapter). In any case a team is always established, if one person cannot do the work alone. If some persons are working together on the same product, then the work must be synchronized, the workload must be distributed and the results and problems must be communicated. For all these things team meetings serve an important function.

Some of the most difficult questions are:

- How often?
- How long?
- In which environment?
- With whom?

From my experience I can say that the answers to these questions belong to several facts e.g. culture, team leading style, the current situation and the length of the task.

In some countries it is common for the superior to define everything and the employees just do what she/he says. In such a culture the team leader will strictly organize meetings. In other cultures the team is really a team where every team member puts her/his ideas into the work. In such an environment the team will communicate when a meeting is necessary. I recently faced the situation that I considered team meetings as superfluous (I was a team leader of two huge teams). The team worked for weeks together and everybody knew each other well. Suddenly several team members asked me to regularly (every morning) hold meetings.

What is important in this example? First of all it is good that the team members told me that they wanted to have meetings! They clearly felt the urge and they were comfortable enough to ask their leader. In other cultures a team would never ask for meetings. Secondly, it was impressive that the team members were not able to organize the meetings themselves. They asked the team leader to hold, to organize and to structure the meeting. Why weren't they able to organize the meetings themselves? I assume the reason was that the team was not totally grown together. The team consisted of members who grew up in four different countries. I recognized that we had no communication problems between team members with the same nationality. All problems and solutions were immediately communicated. However, the communication to the team members of other nationalities was not automatically done. After we hold the meetings for around two weeks, the communication between all team members increased dramatically. After two weeks the daily meetings were not necessary anymore.

How is a team leader able to find out how many meetings are necessary? By walking around, talking and listening! It is a simple and profound mechanism. For some (intuitive) leaders this is common, but all others can learn this. Leading is not only a birth given gift, but some simple techniques can be learnt.

Here are some reasons why team meetings should be held regularly:

- To hold the team together.
- To communicate the tasks of the team to the team members.
- To distribute the workload.
- To discuss problems (technical as well as process related) and to solve them as a team.
- To define responsibilities.
- To communicate the work status.
- To share success!

The following points should always be a part of meetings:

- There should be an agenda
- Minutes should be taken and circulated.
- Agreed actions should be assigned to specific people.

Don't take it for granted that the team members talk to teach other and that everybody knows about the other team members' work.

Don't take it for granted that all team members know the project's status. Communicate this in team meetings.

The team leader must, and can, guarantee communication inside the team by regular meetings.

FINAL STATEMENT

9 Final Statement

I hope that I have given a picture of how an entrepreneurial executive should be. The focus of this document was on the behaviors and attitudes of entrepreneurial leaders. Not every leader is an entrepreneurial leader.

I left out many aspects (e.g. team management, organizing meetings, marketing, finance) to limit the size of this paper. For me it was important to show that many techniques of successful executives can be learnt. Some good leaders might have birth given talents, but I am convinced that many other leaders learnt some principles and these help them to be successful.

I also hope that I could point out the difference between a normal leader or a normal executive, compared with an entrepreneurial leader. An entrepreneurial leader must have additional abilities that other executives don't need or don't have.

I would like to close this writing with one remark: do not think that entrepreneurial leadership is the same as someone running his/her own business. I think that most people who run their own business are entrepreneurial leaders, but I think that employed executives can and should be entrepreneurial leaders, too.

For my understanding the following description is valid:

<p><i>Every leader who inspires others and who brings employees to regard their tasks as their own business is an entrepreneurial leader.</i></p>

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¹ “Running Things. The Art of Making Things Happen” (1987); P. B. Crosby; p.8

² “The Ten Day MBA” (1999), S.Silbiger, p. 114

³ “Running Things. The Art of Making Things Happen” (1987); P. B. Crosby; p.18

⁴ “Running Things. The Art of Making Things Happen” (1987); P. B. Crosby; p.10

⁵ “Running Things. The Art of Making Things Happen” (1987); P. B. Crosby; p.51

⁶ “Running Things. The Art of Making Things Happen” (1987); P. B. Crosby; p.144