Lecture Overheads: Communication Skills for Leaders

Communication for Managers

15.279

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First, a definition

Leadership . . . the “process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task.”

From *Lincoln on Leadership*

Leadership requires aggressive individuals—those who accept a “take charge” role. Leaders, in general, are self-starting and change-oriented. They set a strategic direction and initiate as well as act. They achieve results as opposed to only carrying out activity.

Phillips, p. 108
Lessons from Charles Vest

• A leader is one who takes us elsewhere (Bob Galvin, president of Motorola)

• The source of leadership is respect for people and ideas

• Leadership requires sound values

Chuck Vest, “Thoughts on Engineering Leadership,” NSF Engineering Leadership Workshop, 10/09/07.
Ideas vary world-wide

“Incompetent? No, Just Not a Leader”

The New York Times, 03/10/09

“President of Toyota Apologizes”

The New York Times, 03/10/09
The Sloan framework for leaders

Sensemaking: Coming to understand the context in which the organization is operating

Relating: Developing key relationships

Visioning: Creating a compelling picture of the future

Inventing: Designing new ways to work together

D. Ancona, T. Malone, W. Orlikowski, P. Senge
Communication skills of leaders

- Influence
- Persuade
- Cajole

- Inform
- Define
- Articulate
- Challenge ideas*

- Motivate
- Relate
- Sooth

- Invent (images, metaphors, models)*
- Consolidate wisdom*
- Envision
- Organize meaning

Only rarely: Order

Obama’s speech to the DNC (2004)
