Safe Production using Supportive Leadership Principles

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ABSTRACT: With the ongoing pressure on save production it is important to change the approach to save production. With the more focus and outside pressures on safety in Mines; it is important to find the correct actions to ensure safe production. Safety and production because both requires energy to realize. The inputs and actions for safety and production are the same, only the outputs are different. The results for safety and production must be analysed and if it is required made the necessary changes for improvement, re-write rules and re-train the affected employees and that become the new input strategy. When there are no action there will be no injuries or production. Therefore the action is where the challenges are and that must be addressed. To ensure that results can be achieved, it is important that the correct inputs are addressed in the process. The focus on the right people for the right tasks will ensure motivated, happy people and good results. People are complicated and it is important to keep him motivated and this can be achieved by treat them as human beings. In the current mining operations hierarchy the Manger is responsible for everything and the employees respond to orders from the Manager. Supportive leadership means that the roles, responsibilities, authority and the decision-making function are delegated to the responsible person of that specific activity in a job. The roles between the Manager and employees change because the employees will become responsible for the activities and management role changes to responsive. The leaders will assist the responsible person to overcome the barrier for not achieving safe production by supporting them, thus the leader focus on its area of responsibility and the employees on there area of responsibility. The area of responsibilities for leaders and employees is not the same and that happened in the past that the area of responsibilities were not well defined and lead to grey areas, the surprise element in incident investigations. The leader is responsible for the strategy of the company and the employee for the implementation of the strategy with the leader's support. This leadership style will then ensure that the employees are responsible for safe production and management is responsive to safe production.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the ongoing pressure on safety, the production output suffers and the working costs increases due to unplanned stoppages. The production targets are not met due to safety related incidents and work stoppages evoke a spirit of fear interfere with safe production. The inputs for safety and production in a process are exactly the same and cannot be separated, only at the output (data), the process safety and production is split. The outputs for safety and production must be analysed, corrective action being taken and feed back into inputs.

In times like these it is important to stick to the basics of mining and ensure everybody is aware what their exact job entails. The basic questions of why, what and who must be answered all the time. In any business the executives are responsible for the strategy of the company, the middle management for the methods to be used to meet and exceed the strategy and the employees do the work to achieve the strategy. That is where the chaos will end if everybody realises that because in panic stages the leaders want to do the "how" and forget the "why" and the employees the "why" and forget to do the "how". Therefore these borders must be clearly defined and the area of responsibilities of everybody concerned must be well demarcated and roles and responsibilities must also be known be everybody concerned.

Mining companies have waivers, off-specs and standard review decisions on the workplace conditions. This means that every unit is different. The patients see nothing wrong in this because they have carefully documented each non-conformance and ensured that it does not interfere with the form, fit, or function of the product. They fail to recognise that not only they lose control of the outgoing product, but all that fooling around costs much more than it would to make everything as agreed.

Management does not provide a clear performance standard or definition of quality, so the employees each develop his or her own standards. Schedule first, cost second and quality third becomes a tradition, once employee sees what happens to those who miss schedule or costs.

Management does not know the price of non-conformance. Companies spend 20 percent or more of their sales money doing things wrong and doing them over. These expenses are real and very high. A prevention-orientated management system can replace all that cost with the modest expense of an education and monitoring process.

Background
With the ongoing pressure on save production it is important to change the approach to save production. With the more focus and outside pressures on safety only in Mines; it is important to find the correct actions to ensure safe production.

The area of responsibilities for the leader, supervisors and employees are the same and that confuses everybody and grey areas exist due to this unidentified area of responsibility. For example in a haulage in a mine, the manager, mine overseer, shift supervisor, miner and team supervisor are responsible for this and the actual person who is responsible for the maintenance of it carries no responsibility. A solution is make the maintainer responsible and the rest of the team to support him in doing the job by supplying the training, tools and material to do a good maintenance job.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Supportive Leadership Behaviors
- Being considerate and understanding
- Helping followers develop abilities and careers
- Showing trust and respect
- Showing concern for followers needs
- Being friendly, informative, and encouraging
- Being sympathetic to other's problems

Supportive leadership behavior works because:
- They satisfy people's needs to be liked and appreciated by others, to be respected as capable and valuable, and to be continually improving; and
- Supportiveness helps keep a group together by promoting cohesion among members and keeping individuals from becoming alienated

A leader must be careful how supportive behavior is used and tailor the approach to the needs and concerns of followers.

Skills, Traits, and Sources of Power
- Interpersonal Skills
- Technical and professional competence
- Reward Power
- Referent Power
- Expert Power
- Communication Skills

Where is Supportive Behaviors Likely to be employed?
- When superior is supportive
- Organizational mission
  – Human services
  – Work with volunteers
  – High involvement, high commitment cultures

Impact of Supportive Leadership
Follower Benefits:
- Satisfaction with work, job & supervisor
- Increased commitment
- Reduced stress
- Increased self-confidence
- Increased performance

Organizational Benefits:
- Increased cohesiveness & harmony
- Lower turnover, absenteeism, lateness, grievances

- Increased cooperation
- Increased productivity

Situations Where Supportiveness may or may not be effective:
- Followers are under high stress while trying to complete a dangerous task.
- Followers are new to the job and are unsure of their abilities and positions.
- Followers are small group of counselors in a student services dept. of a state university.
- Followers are very opinionated and stubborn in their point of view.
- Followers are a large group (over 30) who work at widely varying tasks at different locations.
- Tasks require creativity and new learning with much competition and possible conflict with other groups.
- Work involves designing & testing computer programs. Personnel is highly trained and competent and obtain a great deal of satisfaction from their work

Situational Factors that Increase Effectiveness of Supportive Leadership
Follower Characteristics
- Low self-confidence
- Low self-esteem
- Insecurity
- Expectation that leader will be supportive
- High growth needs

Task Characteristics
- Dissatisfying
- Stressful
- Highly structured
- Requires creativity
- Requires learning

Organizational and Group Characteristics
- External Conflict
- Newly formed group
- Cohesive group with shared beliefs in leader
- Formal plans, goals, and procedures
- Mission emphasizing human services
- Authoritarian superior
- Task Influences: Showing confidence in workers, treating them with empathy relieves stress and allows works to be more effective.
- Organizational and group influences: External Group conflicts - workers appreciate leader reassurance. Also newly formed groups highly influenced by supportive leader when he/she helps define goals and role definitions. These people need more support and attention than other groups.

A cohesive group has a high degree of solidarity, unity, and felt closeness among the members, and supportive leadership often pays off well in increased productivity as well as worker attitudes. Group norms can influence outcome here--if favorable to leader, works for, if not favorable will work against and decrease the positive effects of a leader's supportive behavior.

Followers in bureaucratic organizations respond well to supportive behaviors. Apparently seen as rare caring human rather than organizational machine.

Follower Characteristic Influences: Followers w/above characteristics see supportive leader as considerate and understanding as a source of comfort and encouragement and therefore show positive reactions to this behavior. Leaders who are supportive in individuals reaching their goals is well received.

In large groups, leader is not as visible and cannot carry on intimate relations as easily. Leader has less opportunity to interact with individuals because he/she is spread too thin.

Dogmatic followers do not react well to supportive leaders. These individuals are usually respectful of formal authority and prefer strong directive leadership. A supportive, concerned leader may be seen as weak or touchy-feely and have little effect on their performance.

As one moves up the organization, one becomes more engrossed in the work and relies on the leader to a lesser extent for encouragement and satisfaction of needs.

Situational Factors that Replace the Need for Supportive Leadership
Intrinsically satisfying task
• Interesting
• Gratifying
• Meaningful
High importance placed on organizational rewards
• Pay Raises
• Promotions
Feedback from Task
• Rapid
• Specific
• Accurate

Leadership Process Model for Supportive Leadership
Supportive leader behaviors are shown to influence follower/group psychological reactions, which in turn affect the followers' behavioral outcomes. Situational factors that can increase or decrease the effectiveness of supportive behavior are shown on each side and their impact comes to play when they interact with the supportive behavior. The arrows from the leader supportiveness box to situational factor boxes indicate that the leader sometimes can manipulate situations to improve followers' reactions indirectly and thereby replace the need to provide supportive behaviors.

LEADER SUPPORTIVENESS
• Concerned, trusting, and respectful of followers
• Considerate understanding attitude
• Friendly, encouraging, communicative
• Fostering follower development

ENHANCERS OF SUPPORTIVENESS
• Dissatisfying or stressful job
• Low follower self-confidence, insecurity, or self esteem
• Follower expectations of high growth needs
• Structured work tasks
• Complex creative task
• External group conflict
• New or cohesive group
• Organizational mission
• Authoritarian superior

Neutralizers of Supportiveness
• Dogmatic followers
• Large group
• Broad task scope
• High job level

Follower Psychological Reactions
• Satisfaction of esteem and acceptance of need
• Satisfaction with work and supervisor
• Overall job satisfaction
• Organizational commitment
• Lower perceived stress and burnout
• Group harmony and cohesion
Follower Behavioral Outcomes
• Lower Turnover, tardiness, absenteeism, and grievance rates
• Increased individual and group performance

Replacements for Supportive Leadership
•   Importance placed on organizational rewards
•   Intrinsically satisfying tasks
•   Task feedback

Applying the Model of Supportive Leadership
•   Diagnosing the Situation
•   Providing Supportive Leadership
•   Modify Followers and/or Situations

A leader first diagnosis the situation by answering a series of questions regarding followers and their task situation. These questions identify factors that can increase the impact of supportive leadership. If the answer to at least one of these questions is yes, then supportive leadership is probably called for.

Once the leader carries out the appropriate supportive behaviors, follower and situational characteristics should be examined to see if any exist that may be decreasing the effectiveness of leader supportiveness. Eliminating these situational factors, if possible, should improve the leader's influence on followers.

1.   Diagnosing the Situation
•   Are followers faced with high amounts of job stress, danger, or insecurity?
•   Do followers lack self-confidence or have low self-esteem?
•   Is followers' group experiencing much external conflict, excessive rules and regulations, or high authoritarian upper level management?
•   Does followers' group have a human services function?
•   If "yes" to one or more, then leaders' supportive behavior will probably be effective.

2.   Providing Supportive Leadership
•   Leader demonstrates supportive behaviors with followers by:
o   Showing concern
o   Being sympathetic, considerate, and understanding
o   Encouraging two-way communication
o   Being friendly and informative
o   Showing trust and respect
o   Providing for career development

3.   Modifying Followers and/or situations Leaders also act to:
•   Alleviate stressors, insecurities, and conflicts facing followers
•   Modify followers' situations to increase intrinsic satisfaction and task feedback
•   Manipulate the reward system to improve follower attitudes and performance

The leader must establish the strategy to ensure a successful future for the company. The strategy is determined by the leader and he is responsible to inform the sub-ordinates. The leader must ensure that the strategy is well thought out and aligned to achieve company goals.
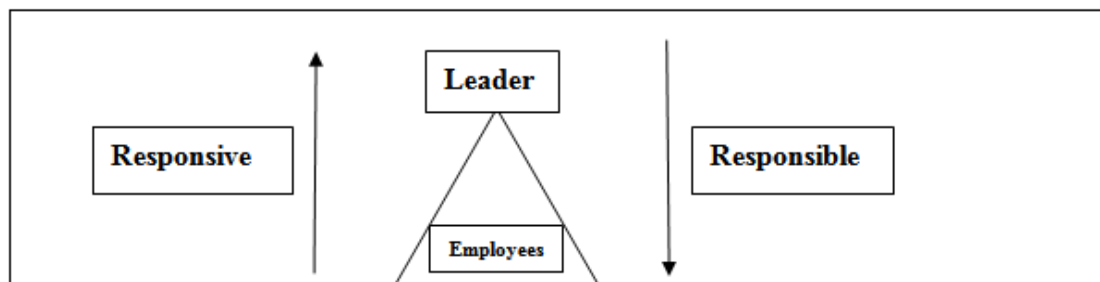

Figure 1: Leadership Hierarchy

As the *Figure1,* indicates that the leader is responsible for the strategy and the employees are responsive towards the strategy.

When this step change can be achieved from the leader to the employees and vice versa the planned targets will be met. The leader knows that a sound strategy is implemented. The employees know the strategy and what is expected from everybody and when the strategy is implemented the employees are responsible for that and the leader is there to assist in achieving the required results. Therefore the leader knows it is a good strategy and trust the employees to execute because he knows they are competent to do the job safely.

Leadership

Leadership comes in many forms, dependent on the leader's personality, the group situation, and the problem at hand. Leadership refers to the activities involved in enhancing one's ability to establish vision and goals, and motivate and guide others to achieve the vision and goals.

Effective leadership motivate people to adapt to the organisations purpose as their own and to do their best to fulfil that purpose. Inspire people to achieve more than they ever thought they could. Generate loyalty to the organisation and get people to work together rather than against each other.

Supporting Leadership

By implementing supportive leadership as indicated in the figure below during the execution stage bring a new scenario to the Mining industry because that the employees are responsible for there own actions and management play the responsive role, thus supporting the employees and treat them like human beings.

This can be achieved by delegating tasks to subordinates for them to perform. This is how work gets done through others. Good delegation calls for knowledge of the underlying principles: responsibility, accountability and authority.

Gradually the team member's technical ability will increase until they are at a stage where they can actually do everything required of them, however they may still lack the confidence to actually do it off their own backs. You should no longer have to tell them what to do, although they may think otherwise. You should seek their opinions on the next stage, and be seen to take notice of their ideas.

Supportive leadership changes the roles of the leaders and the employees, because the leaders are responsible for the strategy of the company but the employees are responsible for the implementation of the strategy. The leader then support the employees to achieve their tasks as specified in their area of responsibility. This creates a culture of belonging and empowerment.

Supportive leadership is a very effective leadership to build trust, share a vision, focus people on the right tasks, create accountability, and maintain alignment and coach and mentoring.

A good technique to engage people with people is visible felt leadership. This approach gives the leader to listen to an employee's version of his job and his understanding of the job. The leader then can coach him the correct way if the work is not done to best practices or standards.

1. Observe.
2. Get the person's attention.
3. Comment on what the employee was doing safely.
4. Comment on what the employee was doing unsafely.
5. Establish the duration of this unsafe situation?
6. Discuss with the employee:
■ The possible consequences of the unsafe act.
■ Safer ways to do the job.
■ Fix it now.
7. Get the employee's agreement to work safely in the future.
8. Discuss other safety issues of the job.
9. Thank the employee.

Implementation of Supportive Leadership

When the strategy is implemented the role changes in that the employees become responsible and the leader responsive to the specific tasks, as indicated in the *Figure 8*.
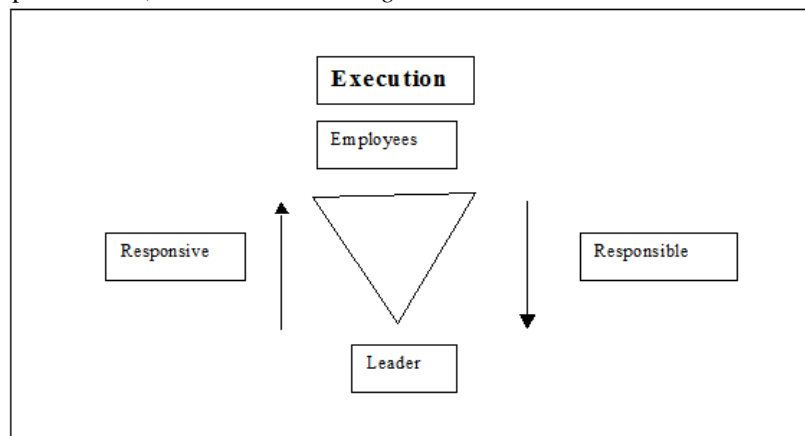

Figure 8: Supportive Leadership

Teamwork

One function that a leader of a team must perform is holding the team together. A leader is responsible for:

❑ Ensuring project goals are met.
❑ Ensuring a full team effort.
❑ Keeping the team happy.

Team Motivation

The key to holding the team together is motivation. To motivate is to:

"Cause (person) to act in a particular way; stimulate interest of (person in activity)."

In simple terms, motivation can be considered as the amount of effort an individual is willing to put into their work. Therefore, it is important to ensure that any team is highly motivated towards their work. A lack of motivation in any member of a team can have a negative affect, reducing the group's effectiveness and possibly leading to the demotivation of others. Given the fact that different people are motivated in different ways, the problem facing someone in the role of leader is to create an environment in which each individual fulfils their potential.

It is important to highlight the major influences in the motivation of people. According to the influential motivator-hygiene theory, motivation occurs when people have job satisfaction. Job satisfaction can be improved by increasing opportunities for:

• Achievement
• Recognition
• Responsibility
• Career advancement

While not increasing job satisfaction, improvements in the following areas can lessen job dissatisfaction:

• Supervision
• Salary
• Working conditions

The following steps can be taken to help achieve and maintain group motivation:

❑ Provide opportunities for group members to become acquainted.
❑ Indicate the importance/value of the group.
❑ Make people feel they are important.
❑ Clarify goals.
❑ Identify progress.
❑ Acknowledge achievements.
❑ Teams are made up of people with complementary skills, committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and an approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.
❑ A team is a small group of people with abilities, who is bound to a common goal, achievements and approach whereto they are all accountable.

Selection

Select people for their talent and not for skills needed for the role. Most managers would agree that the caliber of an organization's employees is vital to its business success. However, to many managers, selection is a headache: job descriptions have to be written, advertisements placed, a shortlist of candidates agreed, assessments of candidates carried out, and a final decision reached. The process is time-consuming, costly and an unwanted interruption of critical business activities. Throughout the 1980s, many advances have been made in personnel selection by occupational psychologists. Unfortunately, the substantial developments have not been taken up by many practicing managers in South Africa. Review and summaries the critical trends and themes in the advances in systematic staff selection over recent years.

Before assessing people for a new job they must be screened on the following:

❑ Integrity.
❑ Intelligence.
❑ Maturity.

When passed the above mentioned screening the next step before hiring is:

❑ Positive energy.
❑ Energies others.
❑ Edge.
❑ Execute.
❑ Passion.

Behaviour

Behaviour is the way one acts or conducts oneself, it is not what you think, it is not what you want to do, and it is what you actually do. A behaviour problem can simply be as a lack of knowledge or skills.

Maintaining appropriate behavior in the workplace is important for employees in all fields of work. Expectations regarding behavior can be written as part of job descriptions and workplace standards; however a lot of behavior appropriate to the workplace is 'unwritten' or just known as per standard social situations.

Workplace solutions and adjustments:

❑ Some people may not be aware of their inappropriate behavior at work and the impact it has on relationships and interactions with others. Awareness can be increased and positive behavioral changes made, with the provision of relevant strategies and support. However, it is important to recognize and respect that people have the right not to change their behavior, even when they are made aware of the difficulties it causes in the workplace.

❑ There are a number of strategies and support services available to assist in promoting interaction according to social rules within the workplace.

❑ On-the-job Strategies

❑ Develop and or promote awareness of a code of conduct for employees within an organization (a code of conduct is a set of rules outlining the responsibilities, proper practices and appropriate behavior expected of employees – one of its aims is to support the rights of all employees within an organization by encouraging respect, fairness, co-operation, common courtesy and professionalism in the workplace) role play or demonstrate desired or more appropriate behaviors such as greeting co-workers in a friendly manner in the morning, then allow the worker the opportunity to practice for themselves, providing feedback as appropriate and potentially appointing a mentor or "buddy" for ongoing support

❑ Praise a positive change in behavior which can be as easy as a simple "well done", showing gratitude for a change in behavior or offering rewards for positive behavior changes, in order to maintain motivation levels.

Critically reflective work behaviour was defined as a set of connected activities carried out individually or in interaction with others, aimed at optimising individual or collective practices, or critically analysing and trying to change organisational or individual values.

Corrective action

Suggestions to turn the quality around are:

♦ Have the tools to turn quality around.

♦ Ask people what bugs them and then eliminate it all.

♦ The measuring reports need to be analysed and then be shared with all concerned.

III. CONCLUSION

Save production will be achieved by becoming a supportive leader who got the vision, commitment and management skills. The employees will grow and becomes a whole person and will not feel that the company only requires his hands by doing the job. The employees will feel that they are an essential part of the business and they can make decisions that effecting there directs area of responsibility. Success in business comes from diligent, daily execution of the basics. Master these and you will be a master of business.