



The Essence of Leadership

Western and Pacific Northwest
Intergovernmental Audit Forum
September 18, 2008

Beverly Norwood
Director of Leadership Programs, GAO



Tempting, but not our goal today



POWER

**POWER CORRUPTS. ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY.
BUT IT ROCKS ABSOLUTELY, TOO.**

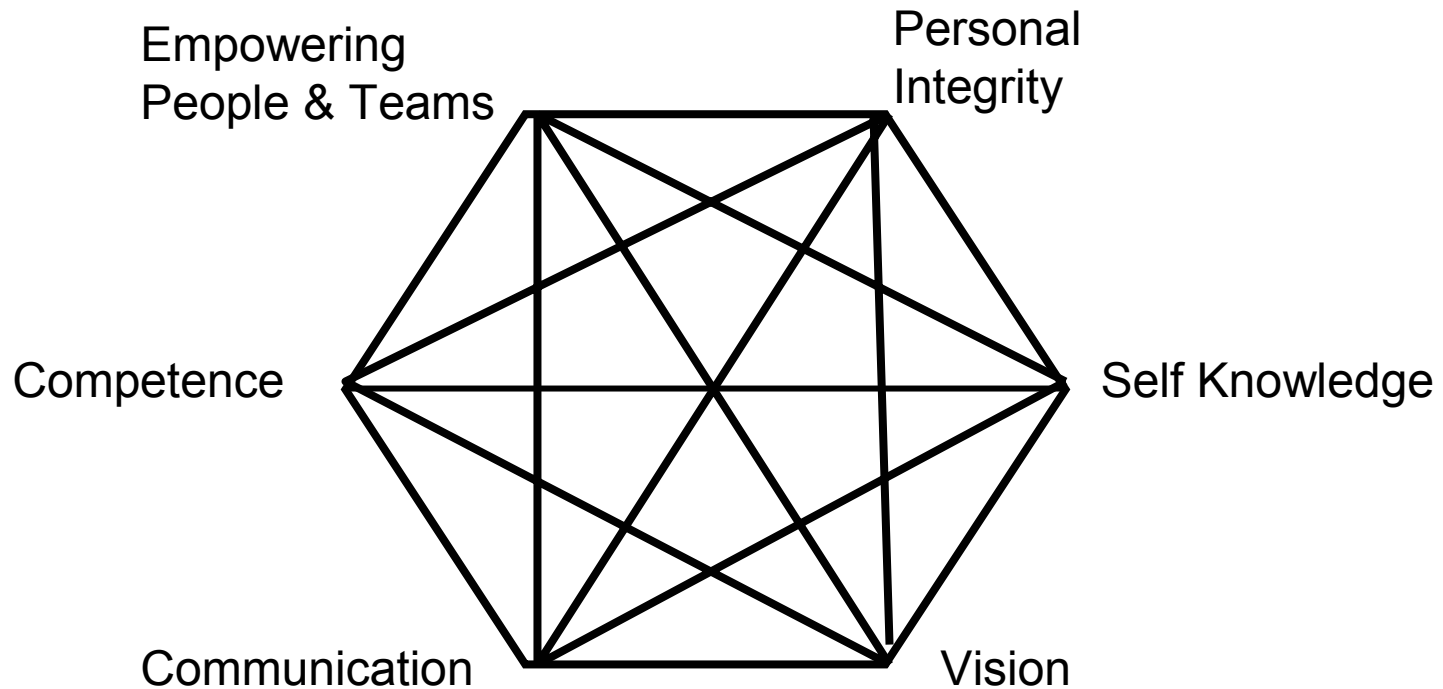
www.despair.com

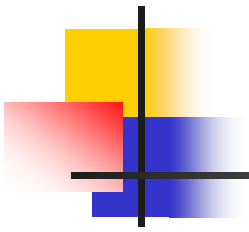


Avoiding waste and abuse

- “Your responsibility as a leader is to avoid waste and abuse. You must not waste the talents, intellect or efforts of those who work with you. You must avoid the abuse of trust, abuse of position, and abuse of power.”
- “People don’t leave organizations. They leave bosses. They just may not say so.”
- “Retention of qualified and fully engaged staff is the defining issue of organizational survival for the next decade.”

Key dimensions of leadership behavior – GAO 2007





Leadership Development



How do you find the path to power?



Indirect Influence

Direct Influence

Control

That with which we must simply cope



Exercising Influence

- **The Situation:** You oversee multiple audit teams. Your junior staff need both audit and supervisory training. In addition, your upper level supervisory staff have asked you repeatedly for supervisory/leadership training. Your budget is tight and you have no money for training. The audit manager who preceded you said that this was an impossible situation that the teams would just have to cope with. Teams would just have to learn by doing on the job. You would like to explore the possibilities...
- **Your Assignment:** In your table groups, discuss the following with regard to providing training opportunities for your staff:
 - What things are outside of your control?
 - What things are within your control?
 - What things can you directly influence?
 - What things can you indirectly influence?
 - What steps might you take to provide both junior staff and supervisory staff with training opportunities?



What is within our sphere of control?

- Our **attitude** – Do you see people as potential allies, competitors or enemies?
- Our **motives** – For what outcome or purpose are you trying to exert influence and gain power?
- Our **skill in assessing and engaging other's interests** and/or values – Are you ready, willing and able to practice basic push and pull skills?
- Our **negotiating ability** – Are you ready to practice reciprocity?
- Our **commitment to honesty** – How much effort are you willing to put into ensuring that your walk matches your talk?



So, how do you gain influence?

- NOT by ordering people around
- NOT by assuming they have nothing better to do than to help you
- NOT by attempting to manipulate people

Instead:

- Ask thoughtful questions
- Notice what needs to be done, and step forward to do it
- Understand where your work intersects with or affects that of others
- Invest in relationships
- Learn to balance “push” and “pull” techniques



What are those techniques?

Push Techniques

- Suggest
- Express needs
- Offer reasons
- Refer to shared goals
- Offer incentives
- Describe consequences
- Envision positive results
- Encourage others to join you

Pull Techniques

- Ask open-ended questions
- Elicit information
- Check your understanding
- Test implications & reasons
- Identify with others
- Disclose your interest
- Work to clarify issues
- Pose challenging questions



Examples of “push” language

- I suggest (propose, recommend) that...
- One possibility is to...
- What I need is to have...
- What I would like you to do is...
- It's important to me that...
- Here's an idea. You could...
- One possibility is...
- What about this? If we...
- My analysis shows...
- Our common interests are...
- What if we were to...
- Here's why...
- If I were in your shoes...
- If we don't...the consequences are...
- If I do this, can you do...
- I know that you can...
- We would both gain if...
- Here's what I can offer...
- We should be aware that...
- It's only fair that I...



Examples of “pull” language

- What do you think about...?
- What concerns do you have about...?
- Tell me more about...
- Help me to understand your thinking...
- So, you’re saying that...?
- From what you said, I assume... is that right?
- What other possibilities can we explore...?
- Let me explain myself...
- I know that you are very busy...
- If I were in your shoes, I might...
- Let me see if I have this right, you think/feel/believe...?
- What would it take for you to...?
- How can I help you...?
- How does this fit into your other priorities...?
- So, you recommend that...?
- How can we...?
- What else might we do?



Practicing Your Influencing Skills

- **The Situation:** Your organization's junior staff need both audit and supervisory training and upper level supervisory staff have asked repeatedly for supervisory/leadership training. Your organization's budget is tight and your boss has no money for training. Your previous audit manager told you, your peers, and other staff that they would have to learn via on-the-job training. You would like to team up with another audit agency (e.g., at the local, state, or federal level) to develop and deliver training to your organization's staff.



Practicing Your Influencing Skills, cont.

- **Your Assignment:**

- Find a partner who is not currently sitting at your table and who does not work for your organization.
- Role play: You will each have an opportunity to play the reluctant boss and the enthusiastic upper level supervisor.
 - As the boss--Please provide some realistic resistance to the arguments presented.
 - As the upper level supervisory—Use the influencing skills that we just reviewed to convince your boss that s/he and the organization should provide you with the necessary political support and time away from your job to develop and deliver the training your organization needs.
 - After five minutes, switch roles.
 - We will debrief using volunteers from the group.

As we practice our influencing skills,
remember, we're all in this together



TEAMWORK

Share Victory. Share Defeat.



How can I influence more effectively?

- Develop a clear understanding of your influence preferences (both how others interact with you and how you interact with others)
- Pay attention to what works (and what doesn't)
- Expand your repertoire so that you are equally comfortable with "push" and "pull" techniques – practice with sentence starters in your handout
- Get feedback on how others experience your typical workplace behavior (see handout)
- Ask others how they prefer to be approached – and try to comply!



Envisioning Leadership



Envisioning Leadership Exercise

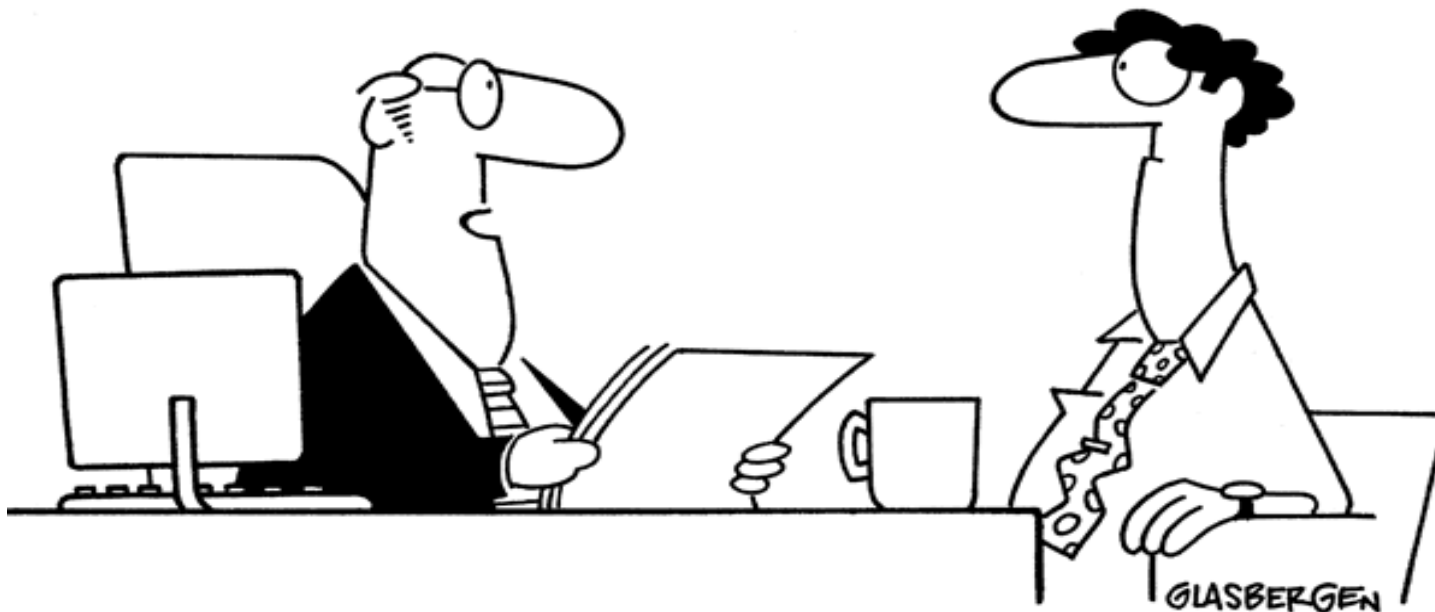
- View the pictures on your table
- Select the one that best captures “the essence of leadership” for you
- Pair up with someone at your table and discuss why you selected a particular picture
- We will debrief as a whole group



The Art of Effective Feedback

What Ideas Do you Have for Improving Your Feedback?

Copyright 2006 by Randy Glasbergen.
www.glasbergen.com



“I haven’t read your proposal yet, but I already have some great ideas on how to improve it!”



The Art of Effective Feedback

- As auditors and analysts we spend the majority of our time analyzing data, developing findings and conclusions, and making recommendations.
- However, we rarely invest the same level of effort and attention to evaluation of our most important asset—the performance of our staff.
- Giving effective feedback requires the same attention to detail and precision that you use in conducting an audit or engagement.



Art of Effective Feedback

- Creating and delivering a specific message based on observed performance is key to effective feedback.
- When you tell a direct report, coworker, or even your boss that s/he is a good leader, or that s/he communicates well, or that s/he needs to be more strategic, you may believe that you are providing helpful feedback, but these statements only evaluate or interpret behavior.
- They don't describe behavior in a sufficiently specific way that a person can learn and develop by repeating or avoiding the behavior.



The Art of Effective Feedback

Effective feedback enables the receiver to walk away understanding EXACTLY what he or she did and the impact that it had on you and/or the situation. The feedback should be:

- Timely
- Concrete
- Specific
- Nonjudgmental
- Actionable



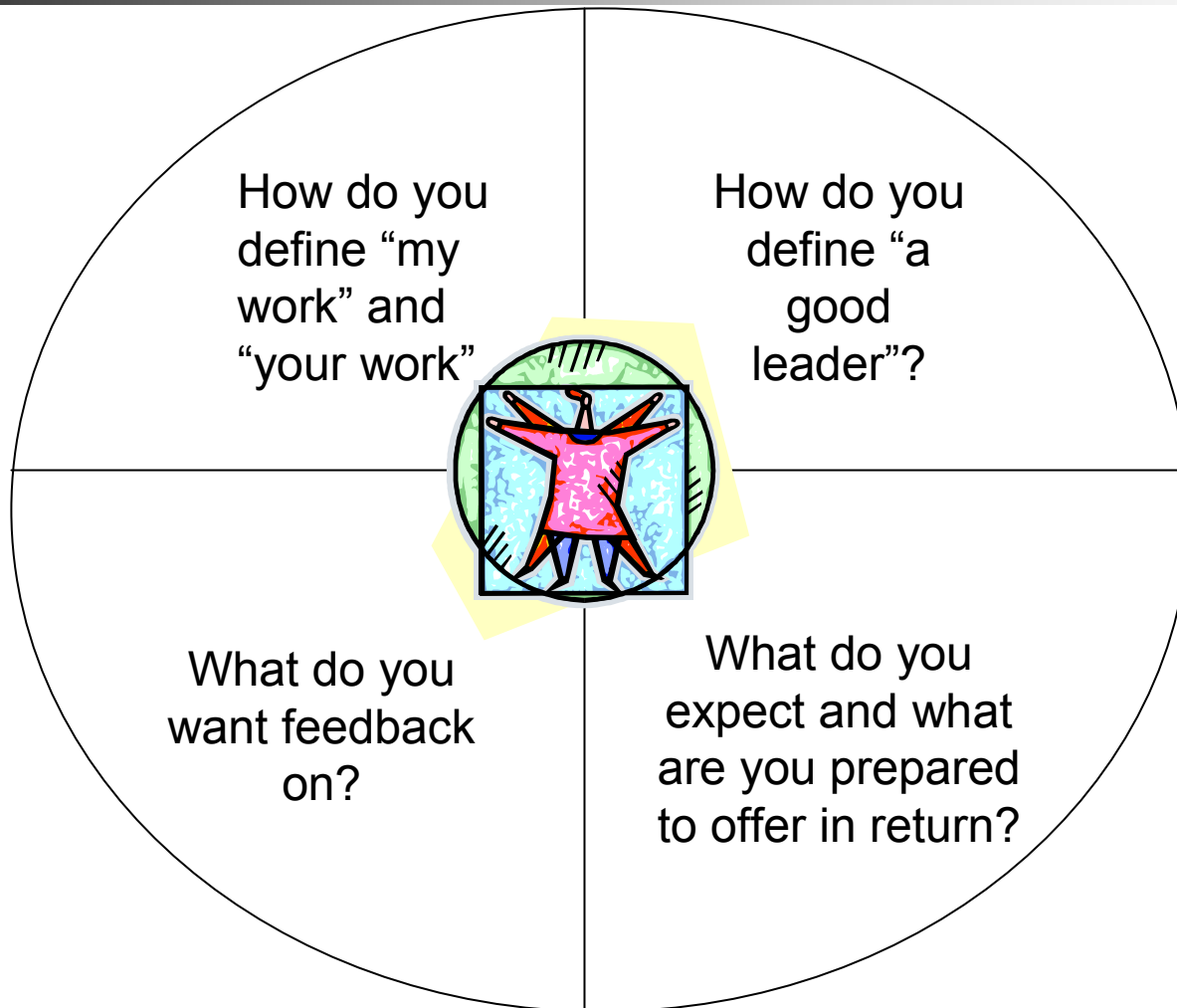
Principles of Effective Feedback

- Capture the situation
- Describe the behavior
- Describe the impact (“so what”) on you, the organization, coworkers, on a program, etc.



Pulling it All Together

What are your answers?





The Essence of Leadership

What will your next step be toward becoming a more effective leader?

Questions?

Comments?

Thoughts?