Web Exercises

# Chapter 5: Attending to Tasks and Relationships

## Put Yourself in the Picture

At the beginning of class, look up a Google image of a leader interacting with followers. Look for one where the leader’s style appears to be relational, task-oriented, or change-focused. If possible, find an image where followers seem to be responding differently to the leader. Show the image in class and discuss: What style does the leader seem to be using? How can you tell? How do people seem to be responding? Have students choose an individual in the crowd (or group): What might he or she be thinking about the leader? What affects people’s perceptions of a leader?

## Change Behavior

Have students look up and read the article on change behavior cited in chapter 5 (Yukl, Gordon, and Taber, 2002):<http://jlo.sagepub.com/content/9/1/15.full.pdf+html>

Discuss in class, or create a reading guide for students to complete and turn in:

* Why are there so many different taxonomies of leadership behavior?
* According to previous research, which of the three leadership behaviors – task, relationship, change – correlates most strongly with followers’ perceptions of a leader’s competence?
* According to previous research, which of the three leadership behaviors – task, relationship, change – correlates most strongly with followers’ satisfaction with a leader?
* What is a hierarchical taxonomy and why is it useful for understanding leader behavior?
* What criteria did the authors use to select the items that would be used on their survey to measure change behavior of leaders?
* Define each of the four main change behaviors.
* Give an example of each of the main change behaviors.
* What were the results of the field study to evaluate the taxonomy?
* What were the limitations of this study?
* Can you think of other ways to measure leader behavior besides a leader’s self-report, or followers’ perceptions?
* What follow-up questions do you have about this research? What more would you like to know?

## Cake Boss

Assign students to watch an episode of *Cake Boss* (<http://tlc.discovery.com/videos/cake-boss>). Clips are available for free online; full episodes can be purchased (or watched on TV in real time). Discuss in class: How does Buddy Valastro balance the task and relationship requirements of running a bakery? How would students categorize his style of leadership? Could Buddy be an effective leader in other contexts? What traits does he have that contribute to his leadership style? What is his underlying philosophy about the nature of people? The nature of work?

## Becoming a Whole-Hearted Leader

Ask students to watch Brene Brown’s presentation on “The Power of Vulnerability” at *TED talks* (<http://www.ted.com/talks>). Have them reflect on the following questions, in writing or in small group discussions:

* What does it mean to “lean into the discomfort of the work?” What is uncomfortable for you regarding your own qualifications for leadership?
* What is shame and how does it develop?
* What is worthiness and how do people develop it?
* How is vulnerability “the birthplace of joy and love?”
* How does vulnerability relate to leadership? How open should leaders be about their weaknesses?
* How does one learn to care about other people?

## Becoming a More Caring Manager

There are several interesting websites that offer information on how to develop relational skills as a manager. Ask students to find “5 Tips for Becoming a More Caring Manager” online at ArticlesBase.com. The article can also be earmarked and emailed to the class. Discuss: How realistic are these tips? Do students disagree with any of them? Do the same caring behaviors apply to men and women? Are there cultural differences in how caring is appropriately expressed in the workplace?

## Task Management Tools

Have students conduct a web search for task management tools. Ask them to identify one that looks useful and to explain why it might be helpful to them or what they like about it. Consider asking students to actually use one for their next group project and then to report back about the experience. Was the software or technique helpful? Did they find it easy to use? Would they consider adopting it if they were leading in a formal organizational setting?

## Brother vs. Brother

This HG TV series pitted two teams of carefully selected individuals against each other in designing and completing home renovations that increase the value of the properties. The ‘hook’ for the show is that it is a competition between the “Property Brothers” and their ability to select their respective teams. However, the show provides an interesting opportunity to see how teams without designated leaders work together to accomplish a clearly defined goal under circumstances that change from week to week. The twist to the show is that each week a person is eliminated from the competition, so it creates tension between working well together and demonstrating your individual skills.

Students may watch full episodes on the HGTV website in order to see the interactions of the team members (<http://www.hgtv.com/brother-vs-brother/show/index.html>). After watching, have them consider the following questions:

* How well do the teams balance task and relationship behaviors?
* What leadership strategies are used? By whom?
* What can you tell about the personal styles of each team member?
* How do the brothers function as leaders? Are they more task-oriented or relationship-oriented?