IDEABRIDGE

THE LEADERSHIP SERIES: COURAGE AND RISK TAKING

Summary

Leaders must constantly be on the lookout for great ideas, not just consensus. This takes courage because it's simple to get a unanimous vote to do nothing. The true test of leadership is to get the full support of your team when you don't have a unanimous vote to take action. This is an important article about the necessity for a Leader to have the courage of conviction to take calculated risks.

Courage and Risk Taking

- Great Leaders are trailblazers. They are experimenters. They stick their necks out and therefore inevitably make lots of mistakes. Great Leaders have the courage to take action where others may hesitate.

- Pressure can often come in the form of criticism. Yet criticism is often the price to pay for being successful. If you don't have critics, you usually aren't having a lot of success. One of the biggest challenges Leaders face in their careers is being able to handle the pressure that comes with success.

- Most Leaders have followers around them. They believe the key to leadership is gaining more followers. Few Leaders have the courage to surround themselves with other Leaders. The ones who do, bring great value to their organizations. And not only is their burden lightened, but their vision is carried on and enlarged.

- Leaders are faced with very tough situations, balancing the varying pressures of making money for stockholders or being popular with employees, while doing what they believe to be ethically right.

- Very few people step-up to leadership without being frightened. We are by nature afraid of looking silly, of people not responding to our lead, of being wrong about where we are taking our organization; it's normal. Some aspiring Leaders are never able to get over this fright. They prefer the safer "manager" role. A person who refuses to risk change, fails to grow, and the Leader who loves the status quo soon becomes a follower.

- Standing up for what you believe in will put you in confrontation with others. Confrontation involves risk and there are many who avoid it. As the CEO or Executive in charge, you must have the courage to stand up for your ideas and your ideals.

- Leaders don't blaze trails to show it's safe, they do it because it is a functional way to get others on board. Leaders must have the courage to make mistakes, learn from them and continue to pursue their vision until it becomes a reality.

- Leaders must have the personal courage to try something new, to go where others fear to tread, to face adversity, to support their people, to protect their subordinates from unfairness and to stand up to their superiors when necessary.

- Great Leaders respond well under pressure. They are decisive, thrive on challenges and love competition. A Leader who is secure and feels good about himself can stand the pressure and do what he believes to be "right" rather than what is popular or politically correct.