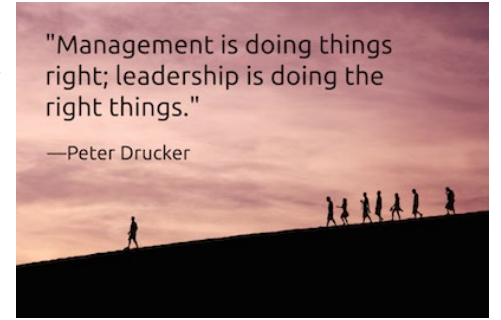


"Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things."

—Peter Drucker



LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF DENTAL TEAMS: THE MIDDLE WAY

"Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things" Peter Drucker



Orlando Monteiro da Silva, President of the National Association of Liberal Professionals. Former President of the Portuguese Dental Association.

There are many different leadership practices that are considered essential for a team, an organization, to be productive, to develop and to be a source of gratification for those who work in it.

Personally, I identify five as essential, when harmoniously combined with each other and with a fundamental 'spice': Common Sense.

Like this:

- **Observation**, collection of information and monitoring of the organizational environment and surroundings;
- Identification and emphasis of the **Purpose(s)** of the organization;
- Internal and external **Communication**;
- Horizontal and vertical **Collaboration** in the decision-making mechanism;
- Identification and implementation of new ideas, new **Processes** with a view to progression and excellence.

Let me frame:

Direct and/or delegated **Observation**, always supervised by the leadership, is essential to obtain all relevant information about the organization, teams, employees, customers, markets and, at a broader level, the entire regulatory, environmental, social and political environment. This observation, this "sensory" capacity of a leadership, monitored over time, allows the elaboration of strategic axes, of an adequate planning, of the consequent action plans and also of the permanent adaptability to realities that are in permanent mutation.

An organization without identified, shared and assimilated, transparent **Purposes**, whether commercial, industrial, clinical or other, navigates aimlessly, without destination. An organization without purpose may have all the capabilities within itself, crew, ship, compass, life jackets, but it cannot identify where it will not go, nor highlight the purpose, what makes it pulsate, what it intends to achieve. It will never have the energy to devise and implement a strategy, nor to motivate its employees, "passengers" in its journey, and inspire the recipients of its existence. Purpose in an organization comes from what that organization is capable or determined to do, but also, perhaps more relevantly, by identifying what that organization does not.

I identified **Communication** as central, for obvious reasons. There is no practice of leadership, implementation of processes, goal setting that resists lack of communication or poor communication. That is, all the aspects that I prioritized depend on a transversal and vertical communication, internal and external, proven effective. In substance and form.

Collaboration is the magma of organizations. It is what sustains, which is often not immediately noticeable. This strand includes aspects as fundamental as loyalty, psychological safety, openness to consideration and adoption of new ideas, the ability to integrate and even stimulate the diversity of elements in the teams and especially of points of view. And also the learning capacity of the various elements of the teams with reflections in the structure. This collaboration has evident reflections on individual and collective performance. It is like a magma, what is inside the "crust" of an organization.

I identify the **Procedural** aspect, in organizational performance as that resulting from the organization of learning flows and experiences, with appropriate methodologies in terms of good practices, conveniently identifiable, transmitted and incorporated, which constitute learning blocks that ensure progress, efficiency, effectiveness and performance of excellence. The procedural evaluation results in large part in the productivity and gratification of employees.

In organizations, especially in clinics, hospitals, companies or boards, several issues are crucial so that leadership practices can be accepted and implemented.

Successful organizations are also those that have the capacity to learn.

To learn from success and, above all, from failure. To systematically record what has been tried, what has been achieved, what has worked, what has proved inappropriate.

Leading an organization is also studying it in depth, its culture, its context, its history.

It is to have the greatness to value and extract the best from each element of the teams to value past leaderships, to respect them, to understand the regulatory, cultural and temporal organizational context of those who had to make decisions and face situations to solve problems.

The most effective leaders combine several styles and attributes: democratic, inspiring, intuitive, authoritarian, coaching, compassion, empathy, among others.

We also have, there isn't any lack of it I daresay, the opposite of a leader, the "always standing style", the passive style, the we will see style, the let's see what happens..."

But of all these leadership styles, of all these techniques that are learned and are not largely innate, there is one aspect that is absolutely essential. The leader has to have his own personality. It cannot be hostage to favors, to conditioning, to blackmail. One cannot take refuge in collective decision-making centers in order not to take a stand. To avoid doing what is right. Or what, in conscience, understands to be correct.

I end as I began, with **common sense**. In the sense of wisdom and reasonableness. Not to be confused with common sense. The common sense that Aristotle described as a central element of ethical conduct. The ability to find the right path.

The Middle Way. ■

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