

Application Guide

THE FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP WITH STEPHEN COVEY



BOTTOM LINE:

The world has changed, but the leadership landscape is stuck in old ways that no longer work. But there is a fresh approach that empowers teams to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

I. Potential, talent, and greatness is within everybody, but it may be dormant.

A. The job of a leader is to create conditions that allow these things to grow and flourish.

B. The life and power of an organization is in the people, so cultivate space for people to unleash the greatness within them.

II. Two common leadership styles:

A. Command and Control

1. Majority of leadership operates out of command and control.

2. It's traditional, top-down, hierarchical leadership.

3. Generally highlights the leader, not the people.

4. Does not allow for appropriate collaboration and innovation.

B. Trust and Inspire

1. The world is changing—younger generations entering the workforce, introduction of AI tools, WFH models, increased opportunity for choice, etc.—and needs a new style of leadership in order to keep up.

2. A culture of trust is like a magnet to people with talent, the more trust you have the more talent you will find within the organization.

III. The key differences:

Command and Control	Trust and Inspire
Manage things and manage people	Manage things and lead people
Achieves compliance	Elicits commitment
Tell	Show
Require	Inspire
The leader is a boss	The leader is a coach
Control and contain people	Unleash talent in people
Motivation—external, centered around rewards	Inspirations—internal, ignites passion within

IV. **Three key stewardships** needed to make the shift from “command and control” to “trust and inspire” leadership:

A. Model: This is who we are.

1. The leader must go first and display the behavior they desire to see.

2. This includes character competence, credibility, and trustworthiness.

B. Trust: This is how we lead.

1. To receive trust from employees, it must first be given to them.

2. The job of a leader is to see the potential in someone, communicate that potential to them, and develop the potential by trusting them to do things.

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C. Inspire: This is about connecting to why something matters.

1. Inspiration is the greatest felt leadership need today:
 - a. Studies show that inspired employees are 125% more productive than merely satisfied employees and 56% more productive than fully engaged employees.
 - b. Inspiration is good for the business and for the people; they want it, and when they have it, they are more productive and are overall happier.
2. Inspiration and charisma are not the same thing. Inspiring others is a learned skill and you don't need a big personality to inspire people.
3. When you connect someone to the overarching purpose and meaning of something, they will feel more inspired to become fully bought in.

V. **Five barriers** leaders must address personally in order to become a “trust and inspire” leader:

A. Context-Based Barrier

1. Says, “This sounds like a good idea, but it won’t work here. It won’t work in this industry. It could never work with my boss.”
2. Involves a failure to break out of what has been modeled to them and results in being stuck in the same context they’ve always known.

B. Fear-Based Barrier

1. Says, “I’ve tried this before and it didn’t work. What if I lose control? What if I’m not as confident as you think I am?”
2. These people need to reframe their fears, understanding that while there is risk, there is also a greater return that could be had.

C. Skill-Based Barrier

1. Says, “I’d like to do this, but I don’t know how to let go.”
2. Involves an inability to trust others to do tasks they can do.
3. These people need to shift their sense of control from micromanaging to building an agreement that will equip an employee with the skills needed to get the job done.

D. Ego-Based Barrier

1. Says, “I’m the smartest person in the room.”
2. These people need to adopt the paradigm that “none of us is as smart as all of us.” What we can do together is far greater than what any person can do on their own.

E. Identity-Based Barrier

1. Says, “But this is who I am, this is what got me where I am in my career.”
2. These people need to understand that rescripting themselves can be a good thing because it makes them more relevant to the time. What got them somewhere is unlikely to get them to the next place.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION

1. Who is someone in your life who had confidence in you and took a chance on you? How did this impact you?
2. Where have you seen “control and command” leadership in your life? How did you respond to this type of leadership? What was the culture of the organization like?

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3. Who is one person that could benefit from being trusted and inspired by you? What can you do this week to trust and inspire them?
4. Which of the five barriers do you find yourself coming up against? How can you take a step today to start overcoming them?

RESOURCES MENTIONED

[Trust and Inspire](#) by Stephen M. R. Covey

[The Speed of Trust](#) by Stephen M. R. Covey

[The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) by Stephen R. Covey

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