



# FROM DOER TO LEADER

5 TIPS TO MAKE THE TRANSITION



# DEATH BY DOER

*While many a doer get promoted, few take on the true characteristics of a leader. Instead, they stay in doer mode causing frustration, resentment and turnover in their organization. This is what I refer to as "death by doer."*

*Killing all hope, creativity and productivity of a team.*

*Don't become the grim reaper of your team. Instead adopt these simple behaviors to ignite passion in your group and share your doer gifts.*

# STOP DOING AND START TEACHING

*Why were you such a successful doer? Because you thought differently than your peers. It's time to share that thinking with your team. As a leader it's your job to teach your team how to think, not what to think. Many a leader get caught up in micromanaging tasks. They believe there is only one way to accomplish a task and it's theirs. This is the wrong approach.*

*Instead sit down with your team and teach them how you get to conclusions, how to problem solve and how to think like a resourceful person.*

*Teaching is a skill that takes time and practice. As a traditional doer you will want to simply 'do' the task for them because it's faster but you will need to free up your typical doer time for other leader tasks. Transition your doer duties quickly to move into the role you now have.*

## **E M B R A C E   W E**

*Truly great leaders never say 'I' unless they are taking the blame. Watch any football quarterback worth his salt at a post game press conference and you'll hear it. "We won the game" or "if it weren't for Jim we would have not been able to successfully score the game winning touchdown".*

*You are now part of a joint effort. You are no longer doing the work but instead overseeing the team that does. With this in mind, you would come off arrogant saying "I accomplished this goal."*

*Get comfortable with the word we. There's no I in team right?*

## **S T A R T   T H I N K I N G   O U T   L O U D**

*What I really mean here is over communicate. It's great to talk about your thought process but it's also important to tell your team what you don't know, what you're struggling with and any new ideas that come into your head.*

*Being relatable not only helps your team open up about their own questions and concerns but you also open the door to new ways of thinking and creating. Some of the best ideas come from a group setting where ideas are morphed into even better actions that the entire group creates.*

*The number one reason employees leave a job? They don't like their boss. If you are sharing with them regularly you take out the totalitarian behavior many bosses possess that drive employees away. Fostering a cohesive environment gives your team a sense of worth. They are now contributing to the team and creating long term success for the company.*

## **YOU HAVE TWO EARS AND ONE MOUTH FOR A REASON**

*Communication is important but listening is imperative. Have you been steamrolled by a boss? Someone who won't listen to your concerns about a project and instead tells you "just solve it, I don't have time for this, make it work."*

*This is the mark of a weak leader who misunderstood their role on the team. It is your job as the team lead to listen to your employees. You may learn something in the process and you may also realize your original idea was critically flawed.*

*At one point in my career I steamrolled an employee costing my organization almost \$1 million. I thought I knew better when in reality I wasn't as close to the data as she was.*

*Learn from my expensive lesson. Listen to the people in the weeds. They are your subject matter experts.*

## **ASK "HOW ARE YOU?" AND MEAN IT**

*A leader's role is 1 part guide and 2 parts therapist. It's important to talk with your employees, not just from a work standpoint. Who, after all, is only their work?*

*It's important to schedule one on ones but don't forget about random phone calls, texts, a quick message on the company messenger system or simply walking by their desk to chat about their weekend.*

*When you know more about your employees you will find out what drives them, what may be going on behind the scenes and if they need a shoulder to cry on. I have cried with several of my employees over the death of pets, relatives and work frustrations.*

*Sometimes sitting with someone in their dark moment is all they need to get on with their day. You'd be shocked by how many people don't have someone close to them to process emotions with.*

*If this part of leadership scares you, look for a role that doesn't involve people because this is the task you will find yourself in most often.*

## **ONE FINAL THOUGHT**

*There are two types of leaders. Ones given the title and ones living the title. Living the title doesn't necessarily mean you have a leadership role in your company. It means you see other people's value, you appreciate it, you grow it and you inspire it.*

*Who wants to be a doer anyway? The fun is in leadership.*

# LEADER CHECKLIST

WHEN YOU READ THIS ARTICLE I TRULY HOPE YOU BEGIN PRACTICING THESE BEHAVIORS. TO MAKE THIS A HABIT I HAVE CREATED A QUICK CHECKLIST FOR YOU. EACH WEEK LOOK AT THIS LIST AND ASK YOURSELF "AM I WALKING THIS WALK?"

I USE THE WORD WE REGULARLY

I TEACH ONE CRITICAL THINKING SKILL A WEEK

I COMMUNICATE ALL MY LATEST NEWS WITH MY TEAM

I HAVE WEEKLY OR BIWEEKLY ONE ON ONES WITH MY EMPLOYEES

I REGULARLY ASK FOR INPUT ON TASKS FROM MY TEAM

I KNOW AT LEAST 3 PERSONAL THINGS EACH MEMBER OF MY TEAM

I STOP BY DESKS AT LEAST ONCE A DAY TO MAKE SMALL TALK

I KNOW WHAT MOTIVATES EACH MEMBER OF MY TEAM

I REWARDED MY TEAM THIS WEEK

I SERVE MY TEAM