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LDR 5223-531

INSTRUCTOR:

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If the current president of the United States contacted me for advice, and he agreed to meet with me for two hours, this is how I would advise him to lead both his staff, Congress, and the United States. First, I would remind him that (1) people are the vision, (2) to listen to criticism from the ranks, (3) that improvement only comes from thorough analysis, (4) that the character of a person is tested by praise, (5) the importance of inspiring people through storytelling, (6) the importance of making hard decisions for the good of the people, (7) change is exciting until people have to change, (8) fight poor management by listening to the right advisers, (9) to fill the vacuums of communication, and finally that (10) it is OK to relinquish the last word in arguments.

### **I: People Are the Vision – Steering Through Chaos, p. 77**

The American public elects people into office and expects them to function as the nation's servants. Americans expect their politicians to look for the betterment of their fellow citizens. Sadly, selfishness is the default, although this is not just a political problem. The public intensely scrutinizes every politician's move, as humanity is bent that way. For this reason, to become better leaders, politicians must remember that people are the vision and the mission (Wilson, 2015, p. 77). This principle assumes that politicians run for office to serve their fellow citizens and make a better world, not for selfish ambition or personal gain. This type of leadership is what we call servant leadership; it employs having the right conversations, charity, service, and love to influence the public and serve the nation. Letting people become the administration's agenda is more effective than solely allowing the issues to drive.

### **II: Listen to Criticism from the Ranks – Be a Motivational Leader, p. 17**

A significant part of leading in office is understanding that criticism will always be present. The best leaders understand that their responsibility is to process through the complaints

they receive (Eims, 2012, p.17). First, consider the type of criticism and the source. There are sources, especially in the media, that only aim to evoke anger and panic with their rhetoric. These types of critics often voice one-sided opinions. The rebuke holds more meaning and weight if the criticism comes from the ranks of supporters or political affiliates. Most rank criticism aims to strengthen the people at the top and not deflate them.

### **III: Improvement Only Comes Through Thorough Analysis – Steering Through Chaos, p. 133**

Conducting an honest analysis of the organization's wins, failures, and opportunities for improvement creates a rapport with the people the organization affects the most (Wilson, 2015, p. 133). Solely moving from victory to victory will not equip any organization for the future. Instead, leaders must know why their efforts are producing wins. With this mindset, look at the last efforts' performance to celebrate successes, resolve mistakes, add improvements, and clarify any confusing portions. Analyzing such matters helps facilitate open dialogue. In issues as vital as the nation's leadership, the American public expects people of integrity; therefore, look for people who can speak the truth to surround decision-makers. Honesty fosters an environment of trust and collective self-awareness that provides a healthy framework to analyze and improve.

### **IV: The Character of a Person Is Tested by Praise – Be a Motivational Leader, p. 57**

Any political office comes with much admiration and praise. However, political leaders must realize that those circumstances will test their character (Eims, 2012, p.57). Leaders at such levels are not immune to the effects of adulation. When people gain more power and influence, they seemingly become funnier, more intelligent, and charming in every room they walk in. Followers tend to perceive people with power with higher abilities than they have; it is the nature of power dynamics. However, the leader's job in such roles is to understand the power that praise

and adulation have in their own heart and judgment. Furthermore, understand that though some people mean well when they praise political leaders, too much praise can harm the psyches of any person, and therefore, balanced leaders know to keep this in mind. Finally, how an individual handles praise says more than how they handle criticism.

#### **V: Inspire People Through Storytelling – Steering Through Chaos, p. 153**

Storytelling helps leaders drive away from the broader issues and focus on people; it helps humanize the problems. Learning to tell compelling stories will help leaders inspire others by capturing their hearts as they paint a preferred version of tomorrow (Wilson, 2015, p. 153). It helps communicate why some initiatives are needed. Above all, inspiring people through storytelling helps the public focus on why laws need enacting, and reformation needs to happen. Great storytelling shows the audience the existence of problems and makes them care about finding a solution for the problem. It is a crucial tool for the leader to keep people as the vision and mission of the organization's engine.

#### **VI: Making Hard Decisions for the Good of The People – Steering Through Chaos, p. 69**

The head of state regularly experiences this predicament more than any other person. So what should the leader do when he is in the middle of a hard decision that affects many? First, as public servants, elected officials need to remember that every decision they make ought to be filtered through the lens of people. Keeping people at the heart of every decision will produce more compassionate choices when hard decisions arise (Wilson, 2015, p. 69). Furthermore, what should the president do when he cannot do all the good he wants but for only a select few? Do for one as they wish they could do for all, explaining why they made such a decision and why it was not feasible to do it for everyone. This principle is helpful when awarding a scholarship, an award, or creating something for a particular set of individuals.

## **VII: Change is Exciting Until People Have to Change – Steering Through Chaos, p. 189**

When it comes to making hard decisions that affect a broad range of individuals, do not be surprised if the people that were for the initiatives in the first place abandon them after they realize that change is uncomfortable (Wilson, 2015, p. 189). It is human nature to quit when the situation becomes more adverse. Today we enjoy the freedom that many fought for centuries ago. If we were to conduct a poll of people asking them if freedom was of any value in their life, the response would be a resounding yes. There is no doubt that freedom is of much value for the lives of Americans. However, there was a time when freedom did not exist as we know it today. Something had to change in the land. Political figures such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson were spearheads that emulated change to the people. Because of the response to change in the lives of these political figures, other people could buy into the vision of freedom for themselves. How many presidents or political figures could rally the whole nation and place them in favor of a significant issue as they did? The American people recognize that the president, his cabinet, and congress are the pacesetters of the country. Therefore, heads of state are responsible for modeling how to handle change and transformation to inspire the people they are trying to lead.

## **VIII: Fight Poor Management by Listening to the Right Advisers – Be a Motivational Leader, p. 63**

As Wilson points out, “poor management is one of those behind-the-scenes problems that generally surface after it is too late to do anything about it” (2015, p. 63). Organizations and administrations can survive on poor management for some time, but it is not a long-term strategy. What needs to change? If the leader fills their team with yes people, that is a telling sign that honesty is not at the center of their priorities, and instead, compliance is the defacto

response. Astute leaders understand that plurality of voices will lead to more effective decision-making. As Scripture reminds us in Proverbs 11:14, “Without wise leadership, a nation falls; there is safety in having many advisers” (Holy Bible, New Living Translation [NLT], 1996/2015). Wise leadership is the result of listening to many advisers. A plurality of good advisers will bring to light any mismanagement behind closed doors before it is too late.

**IX: Fill the Vacuums of Communication – Steering Through Chaos, p. 92, 190**

Adversaries will take advantage of a vacuum of communication (Wilson, 2015, p. 92). For that reason, it is the leader’s responsibility to communicate clearly and effectively to fill the vacuum. Furthermore, “poor communication leads to heightened frustration and fear because it fails to manage the expectations of others” (Wilson, 2015, p. 190). Some political powers thrive in misinformation because they want to keep their people frustrated and afraid. However, a great leader will grant their people the right to information. When the leader does not fill the communication vacuum with the correct information, others will. While elected officials need to keep national security in mind, they must do their best to routinely communicate the information they know to be true to the public.

**X: It Is Fine to Relinquish the Last Word – Be a Motivational Leader, p. 152**

Although the last point emphasizes filling the communication vacuum, there is an appropriate time to remain silent. Eims states that when leaders are confronted, they must “yield to the temptation to justify themselves, put other people in their place, or insist on the last word” (2012, p. 152). This point speaks to the necessity for political leaders at the highest realms to take the higher road in confrontation, especially for fights that are not to the level of their office. For example, in cases where a media outlet spreads rumors about their office, instead of attacking with discord, let other people speak of the integrity of the person holding the office. In

an even better scenario, the leader could let their actions speak louder than any words spoken against them. When a person becomes a public servant, in a way, they relinquish some personal rights to conduct themselves at the level of their new office.

Furthermore, relinquishing the last word and letting other people or the politicians' actions speak presents the politicians as more authentic and more admirable in the minds of their followers. The public knows the president's office holds tremendous power but is the person holding the office humble enough not to let power consume them? That is the kind of leader the public wants to see in office.

## Reference list

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