

SOUTHWESTERN ASSEMBLIES OF GOD UNIVERSITY
HARRISON SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

FOUNDATIONS OF LEADERSHIP: HIS, THEOR, APP, & DEV
LDR 5233-530

INSTRUCTOR:

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ASSIGNMENT: The Motive Assignment (M1A1)

STUDENT DATA:

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Introduction

The Motive is one of the most relevant books on leadership I have read during this program. We are all looking for authentic leadership, and Lencioni provides a way to deliver that kind of leadership to the world. Genuine and caring leadership is within reach, but those who aspire to lead must ask themselves if they desire leadership for the right reasons. If our motives to lead are selfish, and we only seek to reward ourselves, we will fall short of giving exemplary leadership to those in our care. However, if we learn that leadership is a service to others, we may be able to provide the type of leadership the world so desperately needs.

Motive Example from the Fable

One example from the fable that characterizes reward-based leadership is when the character of Shay discusses the activities he does to help the business. They are the tasks he enjoys the most and on which he is most comfortable, such as reviewing numbers and determining the activities of the marketing and sales team (Lencioni, 2020, p. 28). Shay had ample experience running marketing and sales campaigns for the company, and he felt that running those things took precedence over managing his executive team. However, by turning his attention to those things, he was abdicating his leadership in other areas, as Liam points out in their meeting.

Another example from the fable that exemplifies reward-based leadership happens when the author introduces the character of Jackie (Lencioni, 2020, p. 44). Her attitude and roughness around the edges need attention from her supervisor, but Shay has not made any comments or indicated that she needs help. By abdicating his responsibility to help his executive act more politely, he only wants to approach conversations that he believes are fun or do not deal with people's characters.

An early example of service-based leadership happens when Liam gives his time to invest in Shay, the CEO of a different company (Lencioni, 2020, p. 9). Although they are seemingly competitors because their companies operate in the same field, Liam wants to take the opportunity to help another CEO with whom he believes he has much in common.

Finally, the ultimate example of service-based leadership comes from Shay. At the fable's end, Shay states that he wants Liam to become the CEO of the new company formed from merging their companies (Lencioni, 2020, p. 122). At this point in the story, Shay had understood the qualities of an effective CEO; he understood that he was not quite ready to do the work of a Chief Executing Officer, and he found the best candidate to take the role. Shay's action showed humility and self-awareness, as he was willing to do what was best for the newly formed company.

The Five Things Rewards-Centered Leaders Are Tempted to Abdicate

The first thing rewards-centered leaders are tempted to abdicate is developing the leadership team (Lencioni, 2020, p. 142). Often, as long as a team can produce in some fashion is enough for most leaders. So instead of helping their team to develop their character, they focus on their productivity. If their numbers are all right, then they think everything looks fine. Leaders who do not develop their team abdicate their ability to help them grow; in the long run, it growing a team aids the organization more.

The second thing they abdicate is managing subordinates (and making them manage theirs) (Lencioni, 2020, p. 144). Often leaders abdicate managing their subordinates because they want to avoid micro-managing. CEO's often lead exceptional executives who arrived at their positions because they were capable and had tremendous skills. So it is counterintuitive to establish checkups; they think executives should be competent enough to handle anything that

comes their way, and their only responsibility is to report it to the CEO once they have dealt with the difficulties. Often managing denotes an adverse action (Lencioni, 2020, p. 146). However, managing his executives allows the CEO to align his team with the overall vision and mission of the organization; this will enable CEOs to solve problems in their infancy before they become more complex (Lencioni, 2020, p. 146).

Having difficult and uncomfortable conversations is the third thing reward-centered leaders tend to abdicate (Lencioni, 2020, p. 147). It is often problematic for leaders to find the right time to have hard conversations. However, creating safe spaces to have complex discussions is imperative; it also helps create an atmosphere that will help them as they encounter behavioral roadblocks. More than anything, difficult conversations are about accountability, and leaders must hold their teams accountable for their actions.

Running great team meetings is the fourth thing reward-centered leaders abdicate (Lencioni, 2020, p. 154). Because running great meetings is essential to lead organizations, leaders should be the most passionate about optimizing them and making them appealing. If the leader runs meetings well, the people in the organization will benefit from excellent decision-making, increased innovation, and greater satisfaction with their work (Lencioni, 2020, p. 158).

The last thing reward-centered leaders tend to abdicate is communicating constantly and repetitively to employees (Lencioni, 2020, p. 158). While it often appears as a nuance for leaders, communicating constantly is a tool that helps leaders bring organizational alignment. Many leaders opt not to overcommunicate because they do not want to insult their team (Lencioni, 2020, p. 159); however, the opposite is not helpful when running an effective team.

It is necessary for any organization that effective leaders should uphold these five precepts. The leader's responsibility to run a successful organization hinges on how he responds

to these five challenges. The more the leader understands that he is responsible for bringing clarity and alignment to his team, the faster he will realize his role in the organization.

Comparing and Contrasting My Understanding of Motive

Before reading the book, I had yet to see how the author approached this concept. So often, we think about leadership as aspirational and in the cards for anyone who has been with an organization for many years. Some people aspire to it after working in a place for a certain number of years or after holding a type of position level. However, the responsibility of leading an organization is high, and people who aspire to reach leadership need to do so with the right intentions and heart behind them. It is only for some.

Reading *The Motive* has prompted me to think correctly about my leadership aspirations. Do I want to do it for the right reason? Or do I think I deserve it because I have been in line for a certain number of years? Leading people is taxing. Leading others will bring your ulterior motives to light. It will expose nasty behaviors and thoughts. If leaders do not work on having the proper thinking behind their aspirations, they will quickly burn and fade away; or implode from the added expectations in their lives.

The Motive by Lencioni is a book that has made me question my desire to lead. I need more time to fully assess all the thoughts that have come up from reading the book, but it makes for a great start in uncovering intentions. Ultimately, doing the hard and long work of introspection will benefit others, not just me.

Biblical Understanding of Motive

Romans 15:1-2 is an excellent example of the issues that Lencioni speaks into. Leaders with strength need to serve those lacking strength; “strength is for service, not status” (Romans 15:1-2, 2018, MSG). However, in the world, the opposite is the norm. We have seen so many

leadership problems that we become numb to those who mishandle their strength and influence. When we as leaders do not seek first to serve others, we fall to the temptations of seeking status and comfort.

Using the strength of leadership to serve others is a paradox; it is contrary to what we have come to expect of leaders. So when Christian leaders operate in the manner Lencioni proposes, they exemplify the same principle that Paul offers to the Romans in this epistle. So, while seeking status and striving for personal success is the norm, we ought to live paradoxically, using our leadership strength to serve others and not to reward ourselves. This book invites leaders to renew their commitment to others, just as Paul did in Romans 15. Leaders, especially Christian leaders, should seek to serve and love their neighbors just like Jesus taught them.

Conclusion

Operating in the examples the book proposes is suitable for people who seek to become great leaders. As Christian leaders, the strength our position gives us is never to justify finding status. We should never seek to lord ourselves over others, even if they are in subordinate positions. This book intends to help leaders find ways to help those in their leadership sphere. Suggesting that leaders should manage others better is not an excuse to micro-manage people. However, it is evident that we need to offer more to people than just wishful thinking; leaders should be there to provide accountability throughout the whole process. To become service-based leaders, we need to seek to help others even when it feels like a sacrifice.

Reference List

Lencioni, P. (2020). *The Motive. Why So Many Leaders Abdicate Their Most Important Responsibilities*. Jossey-Bass.

Peterson, E. (2018). *The Message (MSG)*. NavPress.