JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

I once asked a manager "how many people work here?" He replied, "About half." Our subsequent consulting assessment work within his organization showed that he was wrong. He was too optimistic. They had a major commitment crisis. People were disengaged and morale was sinking to new lows.

This month's issue is focused on this huge leadership problem. I have compiled excerpts, an assessment, and practical application ideas from the **Passion and Commitment** chapter of *The Leader's Digest* (go to http://www.clemmer.net/books/tld.shtml) and its *Practical Application Planner* (go to http://www.clemmer.net/books/tldpp.shtml).

Digestible Bites on Passion and Commitment

Help yourself to a few *The Leader's Digest* excerpts. Go to any of the web site references to read the article.

Leaders Foster Individual Passion for Change and Improvement (go to http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/leaders_foster.shtml): Strong leaders harness the passion of the monomaniacs on their team to bring about change.

Empowerment Through Passion and Commitment (go to http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/empowerment.shtml): Making jobs more rewarding is the best way to influence motivation and job satisfaction. It requires giving employees more control over the processes they are involved in for real empowerment.

Emotional Empowerment Builds Commitment (go to http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/emotional_emp.shtml): Most managers recognize that one of their key roles is motivating others, and the key to motivation is empowerment. Internal commitment is participatory and very closely allied with empowerment.

Customer Satisfaction is a Reflection of Employee Satisfaction (go to http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/cust_satisfaction.shtml): A company's external customer service is only as strong as the company's internal leadership, and the culture of commitment that this leadership creates.

A Tale of Two Managers: Command versus Commitment (go to http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/tale_two.shtml): Motivation or morale problems are usually rooted in leaders failing to engage people in the broader aims and ideals of the organization.

JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action,* Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

Page 2 of 8

Engaging Commitment

1. Distribute 15 points across the following factors that you feel will have the greatest impact on increasing passion and commitment in our organization.

# of Points

	a)	More involvement in planning processes
	b)	Improved meeting effectiveness
	c)	Increased openness and information sharing
	d)	More recognition, appreciation and celebration
	e)	Higher training and development
	f)	Better coaching and developing
	g)	Greater job enrichment
	h)	Higher laughter index
	i)	Aligning work to individual strengths
	j)	Changing our expectations/beliefs about frontline staff
	k)	Less rules/bureaucracy and more trust
	l)	Enhanced collaboration and partnerships
	m)	Less position power and more persuasion power
	n)	Profit-sharing
	o)	Improved frequency and quality of communications
	p)	More listening to frontline concerns and issues
	q)	Seeking input and ideas for improvement
	r)	Better processes for frontline servers to pass along customer feedback
	s)	Increasing frontline autonomy and local decision-making
	t)	Improving the physical work environment
	u)	Enhancing work-life balance
	v)	Stronger emotional connection to our vision, values, and purpose
	w)	Decreasing conflict and increasing teamwork
	x)	Nurturing champions who have high passion for their ideas
	y)	Spending more time hiring the right people
	z)	Only promoting strong role model leaders

JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

Page 3 of 8

2. Add up the points each factor was given within our team to identify our team's top five or six.

3. Discuss why these factors were chosen and what needs to change/improve.

4. How will we get input from others in our organization on which factors would have the greatest impact on increasing everyone's passion and commitment?

Practical Application Ideas to Increase Commitment

- Work with your staff/frontline people to develop an annual Listen-Feedback-Action process. This generally starts with a survey or third party interviews or focus groups. The outside company then prepares a summary report. This is taken back to everyone in the organization for feedback, clarification, priority-setting, and action planning. Once these sessions are completed, broader organizational issues are identified and actions set for implementing those changes. This is reported back to everyone.

- Engage frontline service providers in a systematic process of identifying changing customer expectations against your organization's performance. Get their help in analyzing trends and planning for meeting those shifting needs.

- Hold regular breakfasts ("muffins with management"), lunches, and celebration dinners with frontline teams. Take this time to ask for feedback, concerns, and suggestions. A simple question such as: "What's the dumbest thing management asks you to do?" can produce powerful insights and engage people in resolving the issues raised.

- Keep highly visible scoreboards, big thermometers (like a fundraising campaign), bulletin boards, Intranet sites, voice-mail messages, newsletters, and the like to update everyone on your progress toward key goals or change and improvement targets. Make goals/targets and progress as visible as possible.

- To get partnering behavior, treat everyone like partners. Share financial and other "confidential" information openly so everyone can see how his or her efforts contribute.

- Use focus groups (a cross-section of frontline staff) to test new management directions before making grand announcements to everyone. Even if you press on against the advice of the focus groups, you'll have deeper insight on how to face the issues the new direction may raise.

JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

Page 4 of 8

Thoughts That Make You Go Hmmmm…on Engaging Commitment

"Of the over fifty pride-builders we have studied during the last two years, all deliver superior performance results for their enterprise, and all attribute their success to an ability to instill pride among their people. People who are emotionally committed to something – be it a person, a group, an enterprise, a cause, or an aspiration – behave in ways that defy logic and often produce results that are well beyond expectations. They pursue impossible dreams, work ridiculous hours, and resolve unsolvable problems."
- Jon R. Katzenbach, *Why Pride Matters More Than Money: The Power of the World's Greatest Motivational Force*

"It is actually more important today for organizations to pay close attention to the health and well-being of all their workers than it was 50 years ago. A knowledge-based workforce is qualitatively different from a less-skilled one. The challenge, to repeat an old saying, is 'to make ordinary people do extraordinary things.'"
- Peter F. Drucker, "They're Not Employees, They're People," *Harvard Business Review*

"In a study of workers like teachers, clerks, insurance reps, and police officers, the key to how much effort they put into their work was how emotionally attached they felt to their organization - how proud to work there, how large their job figures in their sense of identity, how much they feel 'part of the family'. High levels of commitment allow employees to thrive under challenges and pressures that those who feel no particular loyalty to the organization find only stressful and onerous."
- Daniel Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*

"An army's effectiveness depends on its size, training, experience and morale, and morale is worth more than any of the other factors combined."
- Napoleon Bonaparte

"The majority of employees are not engaged at work. More than forty-two independent Gallup studies indicate that approximately 75 percent of employees in most companies are not engaged at work. Disengaged employees cost companies hundreds of millions of dollars annually. Employees who are disengaged from their current roles cost companies fortunes in lost revenue, higher turnover, lost workdays, and lower productivity."
- Curt Coffman and Gabriel Gonzalez-Molina, *Follow This Path: How the World's Greatest Organizations Drive Growth by Unleashing Human Potential*

JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

Page 5 of 8

"A leader will only command the level of loyalty he/she is willing to give to others."
- Winston Churchill

The Deadly Search for the Right Path to Process Management

After last month's focus on process management (to read the newsletter from July, go to http://www.clemmer.net/newsl/july2005.html), I received an e-mail from a reader who was recently promoted into a process improvement coordinator role working with their management team. He asked me for the right path to begin.

The root of this kind of question is what has caused so much of the fad surfing and rigid off-the-shelf programs that have messed up so many organizations. The search for "THE right path" leaves management teams wide open to gurus, consultants, and software vendors selling canned solutions. They are main contributors to the 50 – 70% failure rate in organization improvement efforts like process management.

Prescribing without diagnosis is malpractice in medicine. So is it in the world of consulting. There are core approaches to process management. But run very fast from anyone looking to fit your process problem into their process solution without a very thorough diagnosis that includes a broad and strategic look at the organization. That vital work must be focused upon and driven by the management team leading the department, division, or corporation. "Delegating" (which more often means abdicating) this leadership role to staff support people, consultants, vendors, or other process specialists is a sure-fire route to being part of the 1/2 to 2/3 failure rate.

Over the years, we have evolved an approach to "Transformation Pathways" (outlined at www.clemmer.net/oassess/tranpath.shtml) to help management teams establish the top pathways they need to begin with and then use to put together an implementation plan. In my previous company (The Achieve Group), we followed a two-day executive retreat with a five-day "service/quality academy" (today this would be called a "boot camp" or "black belt training") for support people like this new coordinator. Today, The CLEMMER Group, follows a two-day retreat with a few weeks of consulting and co-operative work with internal coordinators. One of our pathways (Improvement Infrastructure/Process) outlines some of this approach at www.clemmer.net/oassess/tr_improvement.shtml

JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

Page 6 of 8

I am sure I frustrated this reader by not giving a clear response to his question. But asking "what's the best way to get there" demands:

1. An accurate assessment of where you are now;
2. Management team agreement on just where "there" is;
3. True management team commitment to moving the improvement effort beyond "bolt on" to "built in" (go to January 2004 newsletter at www.clemmer.net/newsl/jan2004.html and scroll down to "Assessing Management Commitment"); and
4. A strong implementation plan.

There is no one pathway to successful process management. The management team needs to assess, chart the way, and drive the implementation.

Top Improvement Points from July

Of the short quotes with links to full articles that were e-mailed out as complimentary **Improvement Points** last month, the most popular with subscribers were:

> **"The old adage teaches that "it's hard to see the picture when you're inside the frame." It's hard for many team members to get excited about the work they are doing if they don't see how it fits together or if they don't feel like what they're doing matters all that much. We've seen many teams dramatically notch up their performance once a strong leader has shown them just how what they do plays an important part in a much bigger effort."**
> - from "Leaders Transform Groups Into Teams"
> http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/leaders_transform.shtml

> **"Navigators choose to make things happen. Survivors watch things happen. Victims complain bitterly that 'this crap is always happening to me.'"**
> - from "Leaders Inspire Their Teams With Optimism"
> http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/leaders_inspire.shtml

> **"Too often, clients and customers have their expectations raised by shiny and expensive facilities, only to be treated like intruders once they step inside. Companies can make huge investments in technologies yet have indifferent frontline staff who demonstrate about as much enthusiasm for customers and their needs as a teenager for more rules and supervision."**
> - from "Team Spirit Built from the Top"
> http://www.clemmer.net/excerpts/team_spirit.shtml

Subscribe or view the archives by topic area here: www.clemmer.net/improvement.shtml.

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Communications and Leading Change

> *"I am working on a presentation for Grad school on Communication and its importance in Leading Change. I would really like to quote/source some your work if possible. Have you done much study on this specific topic?"*

Most of my books have included communications as a key element in leadership of change and improvement efforts. You can read some book excerpts and articles on this at www.clemmer.net/excerpts/communication.shtml. I hope that helps.

All the best in your presentation!

Jim

The Emerging Science of Believing

A reader read one of my articles on how Claude Bristol's work influenced me as I was starting my career 30 years ago. Here's the e-mail he then sent me and my response:

> *"I also read The Magic of Believing by Claude Bristol. I didn't know he had a second book, I'll have to look for that one too. I'm also looking for TNT: It Rocks the Earth. Have you read that? Also, do you think this science would work for an atheist? I have everything I need to "get started", except faith in a god that doesn't exist (for me). But I do believe in science. What do you think? Thanks..."*

I actually started with Claude Bristol's second book. It is called, *TNT: The Power Within You*. In my third book, *Pathways to Performance: A Guide to Transforming Yourself, Your Team, and Your Organization* (go to http://www.clemmer.net/books/ptp.shtml), I wrote about the major impact *TNT* had on my life. You can read the excerpt on this at www.clemmer.net/excerpts/how_visioning.shtml.

Quantum physics is a rapidly growing scientific movement uncovering the nature and power of the forces Claude Bristol wrote about so many decades ago. Deepak Chopra is the most widely read modern author writing about these forces and some of the research showing their powerful impact on our physical and emotional well being. Another insight to this field is the movie, "What the Bleep Do We Know." It is a fascinating blend of documentary film with about a dozen highly credentialed scientists discussing quantum physics and a story unfolding between interviews. Learn about the movie and explore links from this work at www.whatthebleep.com.

Hope that's helpful!

Jim

JIM CLEMMER

Practical Leadership:
Inspiring *Action*, Achieving Results

Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

August 2005, Issue 29

Page 8 of 8

Feedback and Follow-Up

I am always delighted to hear from readers of *The Leader Letter* with feedback, reflections, suggestions, or differing points of view. Nobody is ever identified in the *Leader Letter* without their permission.

I am also happy to explore customized, in-house adaptations of any of my material for your team or organization, drop me an e-mail at Jim.Clemmer@Clemmer.net.

I hope to connect with you again next month!
Jim

Please post or forward this newsletter to colleagues, clients, or associates you think might be interested.
If you received this newsletter from someone else, and would like to subscribe, go to:
www.clemmer.net/subscribe.shtml