

Leadership Strategies: A Productivity Model

By Julie Fuimano, Personal Development Expert & Success Coach



In 2005, as president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the International Coach Federation, I held a meeting with the Board of Directors because in some areas we seemed to be hitting snags in accomplishing our objectives. While people were working hard and committed to achieving our goals, we were off base with some of our efforts. People needed to be focused and reoriented so I designed an outline for understanding productivity in a more strategic manner.

When operating as part of a high level team, it's essential that all parties are on the same page and operating in harmony. When problems arise, it's easy to complain, place blame, or focus attention on a person or circumstance when, in fact, the problem is a systems issue such as a lack of awareness of the vision or a misunderstanding of priorities or expectations. Sometimes people have their own agendas that don't match with the group. Other times, people are charged to do tasks that do not play to their strengths so they struggle.

To achieve success in life or at work, there is a process or path that needs to be followed. In order to ensure success, you need to take purposeful action to create what you want. Each step along the way requires proper consideration without which bottlenecks occur and productivity suffers. Understanding the steps to success will help you as the leader clear the path so success can occur. This way, whenever you encounter stuck points in your team or in achieving your goals, identify what step is causing the problem. Then you can strategize possible solutions with greater ease.

The six steps include:

1. Strategic Vision
2. Projects (or Goals)
3. Plan
4. Details
5. Action
6. Follow through

The entire process requires commitment to the group and to each of these strategic steps. Without commitment, it is quite difficult to achieve success.

Strategic Vision: Vision is essential for success and is often overlooked. It provides focus for everyone's actions. A vision is like a beacon of light way out on the horizon guiding you and your team in that direction. Without vision, people flounder. They move in all different directions rather than as a cohesive unit. A strategic vision must be compelling and clearly articulated to all involved parties. Leaders must be able to see the bigger picture and paint this picture for others. You cannot be a leader with no followers. People need to *want* to follow you, which means you need to give them reason to get excited. When people can see the vision, they become enrolled in its achievement. People need to envision their role and how they can take part in creating the picture you have painted.

Project Development: When you're clear about where you're headed, then you can identify projects or goals to help move you closer to that end point. Essentially, you break the bigger vision down into smaller, more manageable parts. There should be a vision for each project and an understanding of how this project will bring you closer to achieving the bigger vision. There should always be a vision for success so people know what they are working toward.

Plan: Once your projects are clearly defined, then you create a plan for completion. The plan will include the steps needed to achieve the results you seek. Then people need to accept responsibility for completing those steps or you need to delegate or outsource. This area is critical; people need to own their part in making



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things happen. If people aren't clear about who is responsible for doing the work, then it's not likely to get done.



Details: The details are outlined and processes are put into place. The detail oriented-person thrives in this area and this strength should be maximized by allowing them to lead the effort here. People with the keen ability to see each step required to achieve the desired results can, however, get lost in the details and lose sight of the bigger picture. Detail-oriented people are not necessarily good visionaries so someone on the team may need to act as the lighthouse to hold the vision for the rest of the group.

Action: When action seems to be stalled, identify where this person is stuck in the chain. Are they not clear about the vision? Do they not understand their role in the project? Do they require training? Are they the wrong person with the wrong skill set for the project? Perhaps the project is not in alignment with the vision or perhaps the plan for completing the project is faulty.

Procrastination sends a message. If the person is missing deadlines or struggling, then it's best to confront the person's behavior by asking a series of questions to get to the route of it. We all procrastinate for a multitude of reasons. It's not because we're lazy. Often it's because we are fearful, we don't have enough information, we are unclear about how to proceed or how to organize the project, or we do not have a clear vision for the results expected. Perhaps the timeline for completion is unrealistic. What was expected to take one week will take three. Don't assume the person is just not doing the work; step into the conversation curious about why this normally exceptional human being is missing the mark. Your job as a leader is to help people excel. Find out why she is not excelling; what is getting in the way?

Follow Through: Follow through requires consistent focus and commitment to completion. When people lose their ability to stay in action, you have to ask more strategic questions. Is this project worthwhile? Is the vision clear? Are people still excited and passionate about the vision? Is there a fear about completion and not knowing what comes next? Fear is a strong motivator. It can motivate people to act as well as to hold back. Completing a big project means change again and some people don't manage change well.

Celebrate the successes along the way. People need to feel valued for the efforts. We all need to feel that what we do matters, that we are not just cogs on a wheel moving around and around.

Your job as leader is to eliminate obstacles or impediments to achieving success. Each of your employees will have different obstacles or things that get in their way to being effective. Your job is to help them identify and eliminate those things so that you have a productive team. When people are engaged and excited about their work, when they are using their skills and talents and are appreciated for their work, then they are productive.

When they are unclear about the direction they are headed, when people are taking actions that don't seem to make sense or that aren't moving the team in the direction of the vision, then they get discouraged. There are those people who get so involved with the minutia that they cannot step back to look at how their behavior affects others. As a leader, it's your job to manage all of this. When you are able to identify where the stuck points are for each person, you can better coach them through and eliminate the barriers to achieving their highest potential and reaching your goals and objectives.

Want to learn more about this topic? Contact Julie@NurturingYourSuccess.com to arrange a free coaching session. Julie Fuimano, RN, MBA, CSAC is named one of the TOP 100 THOUGHT LEADERS in personal leadership development. Your happiness and success is her business! As a certified coach, accomplished writer, and motivational speaker, Julie empowers your personal best teaching you simple, practical strategies for meeting your goals, communicating effectively, establishing personal boundaries, managing your emotions, and living happily. Coaching clients experience dramatic and profound results in their productivity, level of confidence, and relationships. She is the author of the life manual and confidence builder, [The Journey Called YOU: A Roadmap to Self-Discovery and Acceptance](#). Visit www.NurturingYourSuccess.com to learn more about coaching or contact Julie@NurturingYourSuccess.com to have her speak at your next meeting or conference.



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