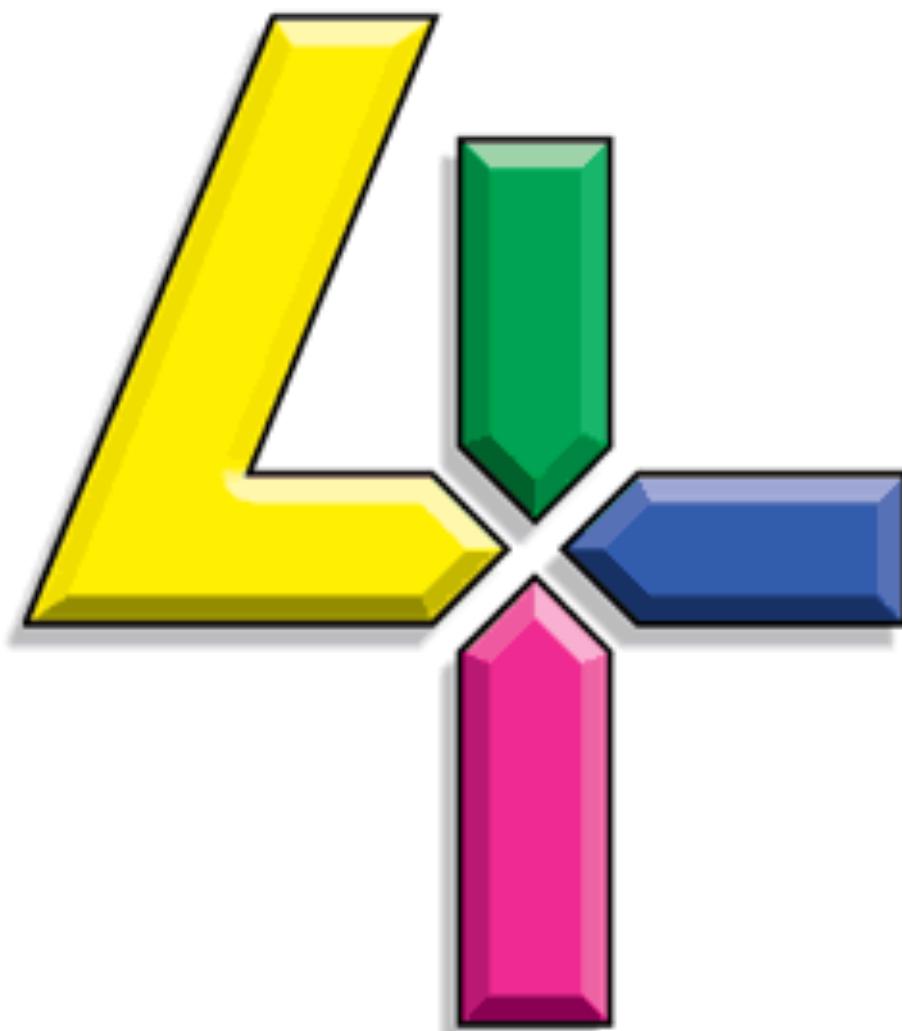


Leadership Judgement Navigator (LJN)

Formula



Leadership

in

Assessment Centres

Introduction

This booklet lays out how the Formula 4 Leadership Judgement Navigator (LJN) and its accompanying theoretical underpinnings can be powerfully applied in Assessment Centre settings. It shows how the Formula 4 Leadership approach can be used as a framework for planning the Assessment Centre and any follow-up activity.

What is the Leadership Judgement Navigator?

The Formula 4 Leadership Judgement Navigator is a uniquely powerful way of assisting leaders to make appropriate leadership choices when faced with any given set of circumstances. It is based upon a tried and tested set of principles that enable a leader to select the leadership style that is most likely to be successful in handling any team decision-making situation.

The Navigator consists of a series of no more than ten sequential questions that allow any decision-making situation to be methodically assessed to determine the most appropriate leadership style. Each of the questions addresses one aspect of the situation. Five of the questions relate to the attributes of the task in hand and the other five relate to the attributes of the people concerned – the leader and the immediate team directly involved in making the decision.

The Navigator takes a matter of minutes to get to the fundamentals of any leadership decision-making scenario. The result is clear and the thought process can be easily shared and explained.

An Example – Influenza Epidemic

An influenza epidemic has reduced the available personnel by fifteen percent and you are behind schedule in meeting the requirements of an important customer. If the customer's needs are to be met on time it is clear that a substantial reallocation of work will be needed. You are one of six senior managers involved and have been assigned the leadership in this situation as your line manager is one of the 'flu victims.

The other managers hold information that you do not possess but will readily cooperate and go along with what you decide. You now need to orchestrate an immediate rescheduling of tasks and also some transfer of personnel between teams. Even though this is a temporary move, you know you can rely upon your fellow managers to handle the process very delicately as some individuals may be resistant.

You feel competent to make the necessary arrangements, once you have all the information. The question is, how to engage with your fellow managers in order to satisfy the customer?

In order to arrive at this conclusion, the Navigator would pose the following questions, to which a respondent might reasonably select the following Yes/No choices:

Is this a really important decision?	Yes
Is this a good opportunity to develop your team?	Yes
Do you feel there is time urgency?	Yes
Do you know enough to handle this on your own?	No
Does this need the views of a group of people?	Yes
Could the team sort this out on their own?	No
Can you trust the team to do what is best?	Yes
Is there going to be quite a lot of disagreement about this?	No

This would lead the Navigator to offer the following as the 'best bet' leadership style for the circumstances:

TEAM PLAYER CONSENSUAL

I share the problem with my subordinates, but either rotate the chair or have no chair, as we together generate and attempt to reach consensus on a solution.

A Wide Range of Applications

The Navigator is a product that has been used successfully in all the following situations:

- Individual confirming and checking a particular decision
- Developing confidence in a new manager
- Training in Leadership decision-making
- Management teams submit forthcoming or historical decisions and the outputs are used for individual coaching or collegiate learning
- Self-development for established leaders
- Identification of training needs
- Culture change – mapping the culture and signposting where to make the most telling changes
- Culture change – one area of a business submits decisions to survey “how we go about making decisions around here”
- Work team negotiating a joint approach to a decision
- Project Planning

Users are, therefore, only limited by their imaginations in designing situations where this unique product can have a significant impact. Without prejudice or bias the Navigator, time and time again, will methodically assess the nature of the task and the attributes of the people concerned in order to reach a recommended leadership style that will have the greatest likelihood of success.

There are two main types of report generated, the Concise and the Full Report. An example of the latter is provided in Appendix A. The Full Report gives a unique opportunity to explore a person's preferences in terms both of leadership style and underlying competencies. It includes a personal history section which provides a summary of the outcomes of the situations that the person has analysed. It also offers an analysis of the way in which the person has responded to the leadership judgement questions.

In Conclusion

The Navigator is a powerful method for assessing any situation demanding leadership. Consideration of no more than ten questions allow the user, in a matter of minutes, to analyse the task and the people concerned to predict what style represents the best likelihood of success.

Through its unique mechanism for collecting a personal history, leadership competencies can be assessed. A key feature of the Navigator is that users relate their leadership responses to the real, practical day-to-day decisions that they are facing or might face.

The Formula Decision Making Model

An essential starting point in appreciating the Formula 4 approach is to study Figure 1 and understand the decision making framework which supports the whole of the Formula 4 Leadership approach. The accompanying model, in broad terms, describes the four main decision making approaches. In the example above, Influenza Epidemic, the Navigator has proposed one of the two Consensual styles, Team Player, as being the 'best bet' under the circumstances, as geared by the respondent's Yes/No responses to the eight¹ situational questions posed. The Model below sets that within the context of the complete leadership decision making framework.

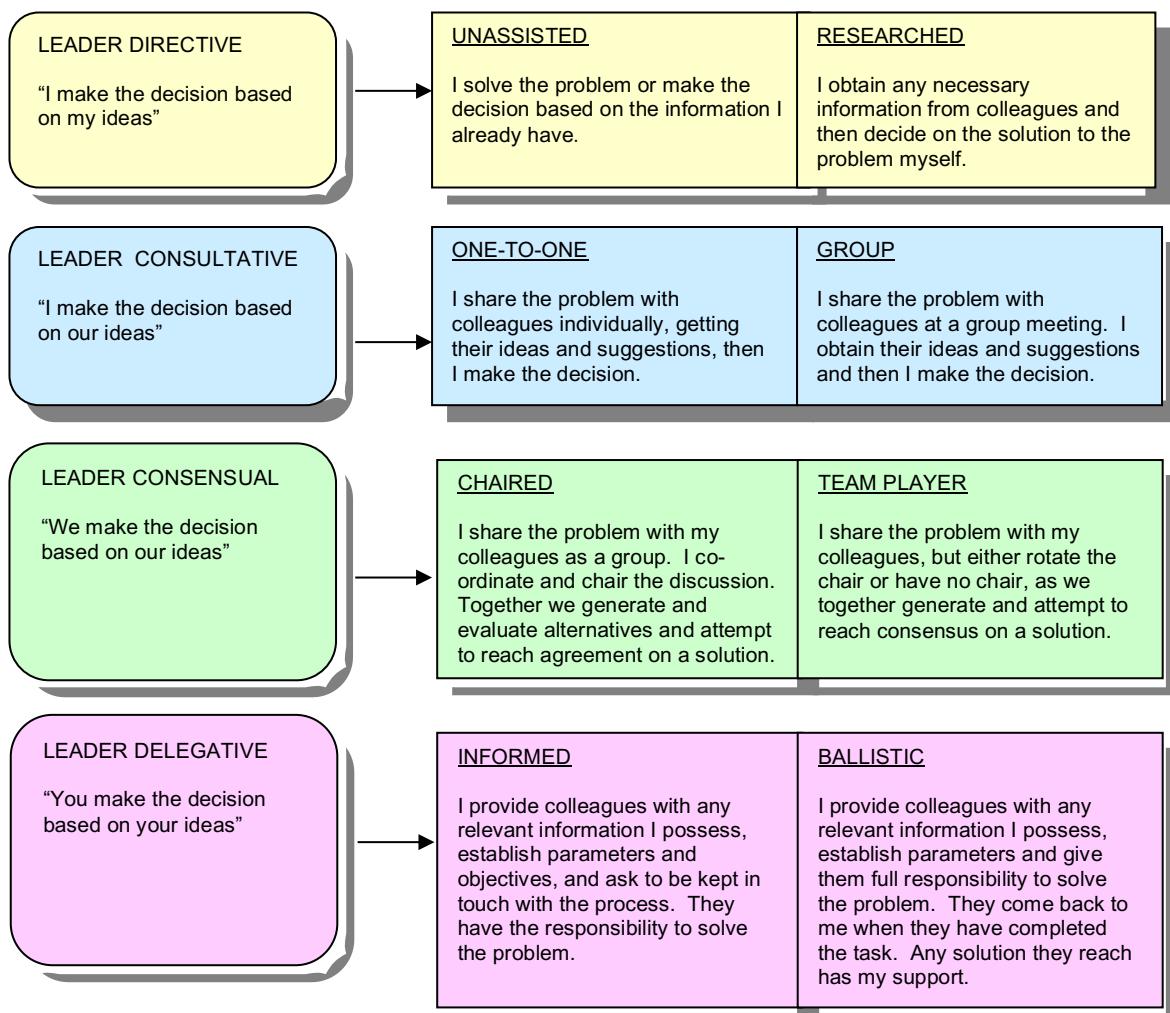


Figure 1 Decision Making Methods for Leadership

The eight styles that make up the Model are described in detail in Appendix I. The text is as given in the Full Navigator Report (for example, see Appendix A).

¹ Note that not all ten situational questions were necessary; two of them would have been redundant under the circumstances of this situation so were not posed. This is a function of the decision tree algorithm that underpins the LJT and a manifestation of its 'intelligence'.

Tenets of Formula 4 Decision Making

The 'best bet' solution arrived at in the scenario above, Influenza Epidemic, is one of eight possible, as depicted in Figure 1. The Navigator could have taken the respondent to any one of the eight decision making styles, depending upon how they responded to the challenges posed by the leadership judgement questions. It is important for any user and advocate of the Navigator to appreciate, therefore, the following tenets of the approach. These should be accepted as unarguable 'truths' before the Navigator is used in earnest. These can be listed as follows:

- No one leadership style is universally applicable to all decision making situations.
- No one leadership style is inherently better than any other.
- Effective leaders gear their style to the nature of the task and the characteristics of the people involved.
- Each decision-making situation can be methodically assessed to determine the most appropriate leadership style.
- Effective leadership involves a preparedness to adopt different styles of decision making.

The assertion that the ability to discern which of the styles is most appropriate in any particular leadership situation is grounded on a set of tried and tested leadership principles. These allow the effective leader to determine the 'best bet' way of leading one's team in any particular situation. The Principles can be summarised as follows:

Principles of Formula 4 Leadership

- always consider how important the decision is;
- see if the decision offers a development opportunity for their team;
- ensure that important decisions are worked on by the best-qualified people;
- stay personally close to important decisions which are unfamiliar in nature;
- seek to establish mutual interest so that subordinates share the same goals as those of the organisation;
- involve subordinates in decision making whenever their commitment is uncertain yet required;
- involve teams to improve the technical quality of decisions when breadth of information and multiple perspectives are called for;
- use appropriate individuals to improve the technical quality of decisions when intricate, sequential reasoning is required;
- evaluate their performance against these Principles in the short, medium and long term.

Any leader who uses these principles in their day-to-day interaction with reporting colleagues will find they are comfortably able to adapt and flex to changing circumstances and use the full range of styles in a rounded way. The Navigator will confirm that this is the case.

The Leadership Judgement Navigator is, in actual fact, no more than an operationalisation of these principles. Thus, the Leadership Judgement Navigator is a clear-cut way of addressing any leadership decision making situation and determining the 'best bet' way of proceeding: it is a principle-based approach to leadership practise.

The Leadership Judgement Questions

Leadership Judgement involves having the common-sense reasoning to be able to answer the following questions when presented with any leadership decision making challenge. These ten questions are the challenges offered to the respondent who engages with the Leadership Judgement Tool. The way in which a person responds to those questions when moving through the Leadership Judgement Tool will be a reflection of their leadership judgement².

These key questions are:

About the TASK

Is this a really important decision?

Is getting this right or wrong going to have an impact on personal, team or the organisation's goals? Is it important to the organisation which solution is adopted? Could the decision make say, a 5% difference to performance?

Do you feel there is time urgency?

Does this decision need to be made immediately? Is it imperative that you 'strike while the iron is hot'? Will the chances of success, or the efficient use of people or other resources be materially affected by a reasonable delay?

Do you know enough to handle this on your own?

Do you have sufficient information and the necessary expertise to make a sufficiently high-quality decision?

Does this need the views of a group of people?

Does the task need to be worked on through group discussion so that breadth of information and multiple perspectives are obtained and considered? An alternative is that this is a task of an intricate and sequential nature which would be better worked on through individual analysis – in which case the answer here is "NO".

Have you worked successfully on this type of problem before?

Are you clear about what you want and where you are going? Have you a good idea about what needs to be done in order to get there? Can you readily set clear targets?

About the PEOPLE

Is this a good opportunity to develop your team?

Does the task readily offer the opportunity to 'add value' by developing the skills, talents or confidence of subordinates? Is this a good opportunity to develop your relationship with your colleagues?

Will the team readily follow your decision?

Are you reasonably certain that the decision can be effectively implemented even if the subordinate(s) have not been collaboratively involved in the decision-making process? Could necessary levels of motivation and performance be maintained even if you make the decision yourself?

Could the team sort this out on their own?

Do subordinates have sufficient information, expertise, confidence and maturity to make a high-quality decision?

Can you trust the team to do what's best?

Can you trust your subordinates to pursue the best and most rational solution, rather than be unduly influenced by their own self-interest? Do subordinates share the organisational goals to be obtained in solving this particular problem?

² Which can be assessed normatively by completing the Leadership Judgement Indicator (LJI) – visit www.hogrefe.co.uk for more information

Is there going to be quite a lot of disagreement about this?

Is conflict among subordinates over preferred solutions likely? Is there likely to be substantial disagreement between you over which course to pursue? Is the decision controversial and likely to evoke very different views?

The Ten Leadership Judgement Competencies

Clearly, when any leader uses the Leadership Judgement questions to help them unravel the 'best bet' way of leading any particular situation, they are using their judgement. Thus, the Yes/No response to each of those questions is clearly geared by the level and degree of understanding and appreciation that the leader has about the situation. Therefore, it is quite possible for a leader to come to an erroneous conclusion by following the Navigator if they do not have the basic discernment to respond appropriately to the ten questions.

Therefore, underpinning each of the Leadership Judgement questions lies a competency and the ten Leadership Judgement Competencies follow.

The Leadership Judgement Navigator will always make clear to the potential user which of these competencies are having employed whilst a decision is made using the Leadership Judgement Navigator. The Full Navigator Report, as shown in Appendix A, also provides this information upon completion of the Navigator.

Assessment Centre Exercises

There now follows a set of example Assessment Centre exercises that can be used to explore leadership judgement and preferences in Assessment Centre settings. In each case the Navigator is a central part of the process and contributes meaningfully to the impression of the Centre being modern, leading edge and unique.

The exercises that follow can be summarised as follows:

- Situational Analysis – participants create consensus about leadership judgement questions for a given scenario.
- Best Bet Style – participants seek consensus about the 'best bet' way of decision making with a given scenario.
- Non-assigned Role – participants generate their own examples of good practice for a given style and then explore the style of a protagonist within the group.
- Total Leadership Judgement – this exercise allows participants to work through the Navigator on an assigned scenario before debating the required leadership decision making.
- Assigned Role – the participant group are loosely cast as members of a leadership team with a decision to make about how to engage with reporting colleagues.
- Leadership Discussion – participants are assigned a transcript of a leadership discussion to analyse in advance of the AC exercise. The observed meeting involves debate about the approach employed.
- Leadership Performance – reflecting on leadership behaviour in past exercises with a meta-task for this exercise.

THE TEN COMPETENCIES RELEVANT TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Task Orientated Competencies

T1. IMPACT JUDGEMENT
(Is this a really important decision?) The ability to discern how important it is which solution or decision is adopted. Can accurately judge the impact of adopting one course of action over another. Can tell how important a decision is in reaching personal, team or organisational targets. Can gauge the extent a solution will affect performance.

T2. TIME UTILISATION
(Do you feel there is time urgency?) The ability to use people and time efficiently to solve the problem or reach a solution. Able to take quick and effective action in a critical moment or crisis. Can 'strike while the iron is hot'.

T3. DATA RATIONALITY
(Do you know enough to handle this on your own?) Personally able to judge whether they have sufficient information and expertise to make a high-quality decision. Able to gauge the extent of their own knowledge, skills and experience in reaching a decision.

T4. TASK APPRAISAL
(Does this need the views of a group of people?) The ability to judge whether a task needs the breadth of analysis and multiple perspectives provided by group discussion to generate a synergistic solution, or whether it requires the intricate, sequential reasoning optimally provided through individual analysis (ie one or more team members work on the task individually).

T5. PROBLEM STRUCTURING
(Have you worked successfully on this type of problem before?) The ability to define a situation according to its current state and desired state, along with knowledge of the methods for transforming the former into the latter. Clear about what is wanted and the way ahead; can adequately define what the problem is and what needs to be done to solve it. Can set short, medium and long-term targets.

People Orientated Competencies

P1. DEVELOPING SUBORDINATES
(Is this a good opportunity to develop your team?) The ability to appraise and facilitate the development of reporting colleagues (and hence the relationship with them). Know when to 'add value' by developing the skills, talents or confidence of team members. Genuinely interested and motivated by creating opportunities for developing the managerial and technical skills of junior colleagues.

P2. GAUGING AND GAINING COMMITMENT
(Will the team readily follow your decision?) The ability to gauge the commitment of reporting staff or the likelihood of acceptance of decisions or solutions. Additionally, the ability to use appropriate bases of power and decision-making processes to gain colleague commitment or acceptance of a decision. Can do this in such a way that motivation and performance levels can be increased or maintained.

P3. SUBORDINATE APPRAISAL
(Could the team sort this out on their own?) The ability to weigh whether colleagues have sufficient information, expertise, confidence and maturity to make a high-quality decision. Knows which colleagues to involve in working on which solutions. Can judge their readiness.

P4. ESTABLISHING MUTUAL INTEREST
(Can you trust the team to do what's best?) The ability to find win-win formulas where colleagues feel they share the same goals as organisation. Knows in what circumstances to trust reporting colleagues to pursue the best and most rational solution rather than just look after their own self interest.

P5. DIFFUSING CONFLICT
(Is there going to be quite a lot of disagreement about this?) The ability to resolve disagreement with and between colleagues over differing solutions to the problem. Can predict when dispute is likely. Effective at conflict resolution and settling arguments amicably.

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Purpose

This exercise explores how individual AC participants:

- demonstrate leadership preference and judgement when making sense of pre-selected and standardised leadership decision making situations;
- show flexibility in adjusting their judgement in light of team discussion (and synergy).

Preparation

1. Selection or development of suitable leadership decision making scenarios typical of the environment into which the participants may find themselves.
2. Research into how high, average and low performers tackle the scenarios which offer a yardstick against which AC participants can be compared.

Materials required

- Copies of pre-prepared scenarios for each participant
- Navigator software loaded on laptop
- Beamer
- Leadership Judgement Question Rating Sheets for each participant
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

Step 1 – Individual reading task

Each participant within the Assessment Centre individually studies a given scenario. For example:

You have very recently taken ownership of a retail outlet, just before a very busy trading period. In addition to your complement of full time staff, you have two part-time staff, both on fifteen hours per week who, on two separate Saturdays, will not provide the flexibility you need to cover staff sickness. When they were telephoned they gave such replies as, "I can't do the morning ... I can't stay beyond 4.00 o'clock ...". The outcome is that you have to do the cover on those Saturdays when other things were pressing.

How will you now engage with each of these two staff members in order to resolve this situation?

Step 2 – Individual analysis task

Each person individually, and without discussion with the other participants, rates the Leadership Judgement questions on a named copy Leadership Judgement Question Rating Sheet (see Appendix B).

These sheets are handed to the Assessment Centre facilitator who returns a photocopy to each participant.

Step 3 – Group problem solving discussion

Using laptop and beamer, the Leadership Judgement Navigator is displayed for all with the scenario pre-typed. The group now proceed through the Leadership Judgement Navigator, negotiating Yes/No responses with fellow participants as they proceed.

Step 4 – Group problem solving discussion

The process is repeated, if appropriate, with a second scenario, which explores a different leadership decision making style and probably a contrasting route through the Navigator.

Step 5 – Presentation to observers

The group present their findings to the observers. They are given free rein about how they do this.

Step 6 – Scoring Participant Performance

1. The degree of discrepancy between individual situational analysis and the final team consensus³.
2. The degree of discrepancy (and similarity) between the individual situational analysis and the high/average/low performing job holder analysis.
3. If appropriate the participants can be rated by observers against the F4 competency model.

In addition, the participants can be rated as normal against the client organisation's competency framework as it relates to group discussion.

³ A further comparison can later be made about the outcome this would lead to and the actual 'best bet' solution that would be adopted by high performers.

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

‘BEST BET’ STYLE

Purpose

- To establish the individual style preferences of the AC participants.
- To gain insight into the rationale employed by participants in leadership decision making and how well this can be conveyed.
- To establish the adaptability of participants in light of the thinking of colleagues.

Preparation

Choice of standard scenarios previously subjected to analysis through the Navigator in order to provide the situational analysis.

Materials required

- Copies of four pre-prepared scenarios for each participant. It is likely that these represent each of the four main leadership styles.
- Individual copies of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

Step 1 – Individual exercise

Each participant studies the four pre-prepared scenarios.

Step 2 – Individual exercise

Each person is provided with a paper copy of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model, as depicted in *Figure 1*. They are asked to choose the ‘best bet’⁴ style for this scenario and one that would be ‘good-enough’⁵.

They should indicate their choices by writing scenario names on the Model. They should also write their own name on the top of the sheet.

Step 3 – Observed group discussion

Participants disclose their choices to one another and are asked to reach consensus⁶ about the ‘best bet’ and ‘good enough’ styles for each scenario.

⁴ The ‘best bet’ style is the one that would be most highly appropriate in that setting, given the limited information available. It would stand the best chance of achieving the leader’s objectives.

⁵ The style that is ‘good enough’ has less merit than the ‘best bet’ solution but more than the other two. The Formula 4 Leadership Model categorised into the ‘second order’ factors, as depicted in Figure ?, provides the logic for choice of ‘good enough’ solutions.

⁶ A consensus decision is defined for them as one that is acceptable to everyone.

Step 4 – Presentation to observers

The group are given the opportunity to present their findings to the observers. They are given free rein about how they do this but it must contain a rationale for each choice and the factors taken into account.

Step 4 – Scoring Participant Performance

1. The degree of discrepancy between each participant's analysis and the idealised solution (see Figure 2).

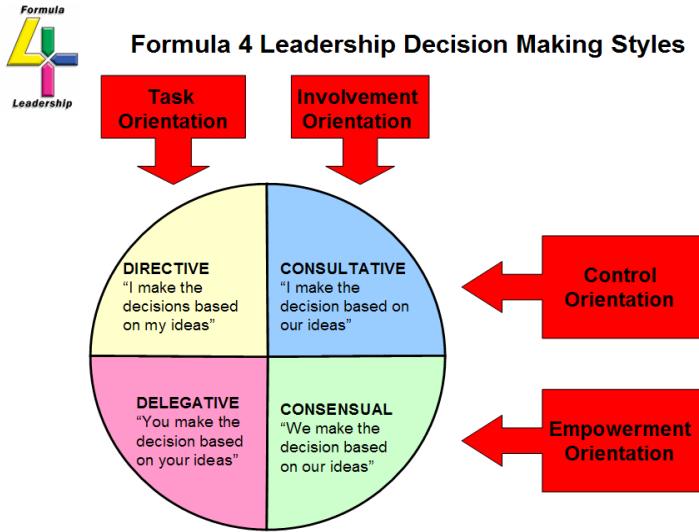


Figure 2 - Decision Making Styles As A Function Of Orientation Towards Task And Others

2. The rationale articulated by the participant in the meeting and its congruence with the key situational questions.

In addition, participants can be scored against the F4 competency model, especially the key competencies deemed to be relevant to the scenario under question.

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

NON-ASSIGNED SCENARIO

Purpose

This exercise is principally designed for use in development settings, perhaps where participants are known to each other and there is an identified need to compare and contrast styles. In so doing it:

- provides examples of what participants deem to be their own ‘good practice’;
- provides information about how participants model their own leadership;
- elicits behaviours relevant to coaching and developing others or being coached oneself in leadership decision making.

Materials required

- Individual copies of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model
- Navigator software loaded on laptop
- Beamer
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

Step 1 Individual exercise

The participants study the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model. They are asked to write down an outline of a situation where they have demonstrated a selected style⁷. This should be a good representation of their capability as a leader in this respect, but one they are comfortable discussing with the other participants.

Step 2 – Group exercise

Each person describes their choice to the other participants, who are welcome to comment⁸. Their task is to select one of the scenarios that they would like to analyse in more depth.

The criterion for selection is that the scenario chosen should be the one that resonates most strongly with others in the group. This must be articulated.

Step 3 – Group exercise

The scenario chosen is submitted to scrutiny by analysing it using the Navigator. Using laptop and beamer, the Navigator is displayed and the group proceed through the Navigator Navigator negotiating responses Yes/No responses with fellow participants as they proceed.

⁷ It is envisaged that the Assessment Centre Panel will, through the prior job analysis process, have a preferred style that they want to assess or develop in participants which they prescribe at this point.

⁸ It is wise to offer participants a prescribed time period for this phase and their deliberation should be completed by the end of it. They should be given the responsibility for monitoring the passage of time and not the observer running the exercise.

They should debate the outcome and be permitted to re-evaluate their Yes/No responses by revisiting the LJT as many times as is necessary to come to a consensus view about the observed conclusion as depicted by the Concise Report⁹. This debate will include deliberating over the congruence or discrepancy with their previous view.

Step 4 – Presentation to observers

The group present their findings to the observers. They are given free rein about how they do this.

Step 5 – Scoring of Participant Performance

1. Do the individual scenarios chosen indeed belong to the asserted category?
2. Is the actual 'Best Bet' solution provided by the Navigator congruent with their initial rationale? How do they account for that?
3. Do the participants use the style during the exercise that the model suggests is the most appropriate?

⁹ At each stage of questioning, as participants go through the Navigator, they can see the route they have followed. If they wish to reconsider any response, it is simply a matter of clicking on the arrow next to the question they wish to reconsider. This will automatically take them back to that point in the decision tree that they wish to rethink.

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

TOTAL LEADERSHIP JUDGEMENT

Purpose

This exercise allows the individual participant access to the Leadership Judgement Navigator to analyse a given scenario through to generating a 'best bet' solution. The ensuing group discussion enables participants to compare and contrast their analyses, both at the level of the situational questions and the final solution obtained.

Preparation

Selection of scenarios from standard set exploring the key challenges faced by leaders in the local environment.

Materials required

- Individual copies of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model
- Hard copy of LJT instructions
- Leadership Judgement Questions Rating Sheet
- Leadership
- Navigator software loaded on individual laptops
- Beamer
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

Each person is provided with a laptop on which the Navigator software is loaded. They are presented with the same scenario already typed into the program. They are offered a demonstration, via the beamer, about how to use the software, using another scenario. They should also have a hard copy of the Navigator instructions to hand as well as the Leadership Judgement Questions.

Step One – Individual exercise

Without discussion each person uses the Navigator to analyse the given scenario. They proceed through to the outcome and feedback on the 'best bet' style. They then save the Concise Report down to a recommended file. On an accompanying Leadership Judgement Question Rating Sheet they note their responses. They also note the style they have arrived at on a hard copy of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model.

Step 2 – Group discussion

Discussion exercise where participants compare and contrast their analyses and the outcomes they have reached. Their task is to arrive at a consensus view about:

- the ideal situational analysis, recorded on a separate Leadership Judgement Questions Rating Sheet¹⁰.
- The 'best bet' style for this scenario, plus a rank order of the competing styles¹¹.

The conclusion they come to should be acceptable to all; if that is not possible, any dissenters should have their doubts recorded.

Step 3 – Presentation

The group are given a time limited period to present their conclusions to the observers. They should be given freedom as to how this is done, but their presentation should also include an evaluation, in terms of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model, about how they organised themselves for this meeting.

Step 4 – Scoring Participant Performance

1. Discrepancy between individual participant's situational analysis, using the leadership judgement questions, and an 'expert' view.
2. Discrepancy between each individual participant and the group consensus.
3. Use of the appropriate style for the meeting itself.

¹⁰ That is, the ideal pattern of Yes/No responses.

¹¹ It is permissible to rank order as follows:

1. Highly appropriate (i.e. the 'best bet' solution)
2. Appropriate (i.e. the 'good enough' solution)
3. Inappropriate
4. Highly inappropriate

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

ASSIGNED ROLE

Purpose

This exercise casts participants as a coherent team of managers who have an important leadership decision to make. They are each assigned a job title, but are free to play the role of the manager in the manner they see fit. They have to work collegiately through the Navigator to devise a strategy for the implementation of the leadership decision.

Preparation

Role descriptions for the number of participants assigned to the exercise.

Materials required

- Tailored scenario, created using the methodology described above, with opportunity for role allocation.
- LJT software loaded on laptop
- Beamer
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

Participants are allocated a role in the department, although they have to devise their own script for the meeting during the individual preparatory time.

An Example Scenario - Achieving Consensus

Your department of 60 people is going through a major reorganisation which will have an impact on the jobs of virtually every person. The changes will meet with considerable anxiety and some resistance even though there will be no job losses. You are a member of the leadership team and wish to use the Navigator to reach consensus about the best way to approach staff about this.

The leadership team of the department, of which you are a member, consists of six¹² people. You know that the six of you have somewhat different views about the most appropriate way of engaging with the staff. You are now to use the Navigator to explore the best way of leading their colleagues through this process of change. You will have 40 minutes to do this by which time you will have come to an agreement about the best way forward. You will then have five minutes to present your case with a clear rationale to the observer panel.

Step 1 Individual exercise

Having had the role allocated each participant is given ten minutes to write their script and position for the forthcoming meeting. This should be without debate with the other participants. They should

¹² Or the number of attendees at the Assessment Centre.

feel a sense of ownership over their script, so it will be as close as possible to how they would actually behave in such a meeting.

Step 2 Group exercise

Observed discussion where the group come to a consensus about their 'best bet' way of dealing with reporting colleagues in this situation. They are permitted in this instance to move through the Navigator as many times as they wish, exploring decision alternatives, seeking to gain consensus in every step of the way in order to arrive at a solid decision.

Step 3 – Presentation

Participants are given free rein to present their conclusions and justification. They can organise this as they wish. The Presentation should also include a statement from the group about they worked together and to what extent the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model helps explain the process they used to arrive at their conclusion.

Step 4 – Scoring Participant Performance

- Expressed opinion concerning leadership judgement questions.
- Expressed opinion concerning the solution adopted.
- Quality of their contribution to the exercise referenced against the F4 model.

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION

Purpose

Participants are given a pre-reading task in the form of a transcript of an actual Leadership Discussion between a leader and a reporting colleague. They have to analyse the transcript using the F4 model and then enter into a critical discussion with colleagues about improving leadership performance.

Preparation

Selection of the transcript that most address the issues that need exploration.

Materials required

- Individual copies of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model
- Individual copies of the Formula 4 Leadership Judgement Questions Rating Sheet
- Individual copies of one of the four transcripts available in Appendix C.
- LJT software loaded on laptop
- Beamer
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

The Scenario

You are a new Sales Manager, in post for four months, and your Senior Account Manager, Mr Peter Boehme, is about to have his first formal meeting with you. You accept that this is long overdue but there has been plenty informal contact, Mr Boehme is very competent and you have been exceptionally busy settling yourself in your role and dealing with your own customers. However, you have recently become conscious that Boehme's motivation, a quality for which he was once renowned, is apparently on the wane. You have been prompted to call the meeting now because an important price harmonisation project has landed on your desk. You now want to enlist Mr Boehme's active support, not least because of his long experience and knowledge of the industry. The issue is, how should you engage with Peter Boehme?

The four 'episodes'

Appendix H has the transcripts of four versions¹³ of the overdue meeting depicting very distinct styles of engagement between the Sales Manager and Mr Boehme. These follow the Formula 4 Decision Making Model, being variously Directive, Consultative, Consensual and Delegative. Three of the four transcripts illustrate how the wrong approach, whilst entirely appropriate for other situations, can lead to very poor outcomes. However, the 'right' approach, if employed with wise judgement, can produce a result that is good for the Sales Manager, the Senior Account Manager, the Business and the rest of the sales team.

¹³ These are also available in DVD format from Formula 4 Leadership Limited

The Four Styles Depicted

Transcripts One and Two present the Sales Manager taking a 'task' orientated approach in attempting to remotivate Peter Boehme. Here, the Sales Manager wants little personal engagement with Boehme, really only desiring to get the price harmonisation project quickly underway, having little interest in the team dynamics.

In the first transcript, which depicts a more Delegative style, the Sales Manager is seen attempting to get Boehme centrally involved in the project, whilst retaining much of the glory for himself. Thus, he is disinterested in Boehme as a person, in his troubles and problems within the team, and really only interested in his own agenda.

The second of the transcripts sees the Sales Manager taking a very Directive approach. In fact, as the meeting continues, the Sales Manager becomes more and more domineering and autocratic. A lack of tolerance emerges and it becomes acutely obvious that he is only sees the situation from his point of view. The outcome is perhaps inevitable, unless Boehme had been a very submissive sort of subordinate, which he is clearly not.

Both of the task orientated styles, therefore, fail in their attempt to enlist Boehme's support in a full and co-operative way. However, transcripts Three and Four show the Sales Manager changing tack entirely. In the third transcript we see him operating from almost the other end of the participative continuum, displaying a highly Consensual approach and, so much so, that power is given away almost entirely. Then, by becoming too accommodating, the Sales Manager essentially gives in to all of Boehme's requests, and is open to all types of manipulation.

The final transcript is also 'people' orientated, being Consultative in nature. This is considered to be the 'best bet' approach to this particular situation for here we see the Manager retaining control in this important piece of dialogue, yet displaying constructive engagement with Boehme and remotivating him for the project.

Step 1 Individual exercise

Give each participant the same scenario transcript to analyse¹⁴. Their task, without discussion, is to uncover:

- What Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Style was employed in this scenario.
- What choices did the leader make about this situation if analysed according to the ten situational leadership judgement questions?
- How successful was the sales manager in meeting his objectives? Why?
- What are the Plus points about the way he tackled Mr Boehme?
- What are the Minus points about the way he tackled Mr Boehme?
- What are the Interesting points about the way he tackled Mr Boehme?
- What would be your recommended style for this meeting?
- Explain your logic using the Formula 4 Leadership Judgement Questions to guide you.

Responses to these questions should be collected for examination at the end of the exercise.

Step 2 – Group discussion

Observed discussion of the group debating these questions and preparing for a presentation of their joint findings and conclusions.

Step 3 – Presentation

¹⁴ Choice of scenario will depend upon the goals of the exercise and the prior job analysis. It is rarely the case that more than one transcript is explored in the manner described here.

The group present their conclusions to the observers. They are free to organise this how they will. They must address each key question and comment upon any lack of consensus between them. They should also state how they organised themselves for this discussion with reference to the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Styles.

LJN ASSESSMENT CENTRE EXERCISE –

LEADERSHIP PERFORMANCE

Purpose

This exercise should only be used following other exercises where the group have undertaken individual analysis of scenarios followed by group discussion. The exercise centres on exploring the discrepancies and any congruence that has emerged as well as synergies that have been apparent. It is a challenging exercise which has the additional twist of requiring the group to implement improvement ideas in the present moment as they go along.

Materials required

- Individual copies of the Formula 4 Leadership Decision Making Model
- Navigator software loaded on laptop
- Beamer
- Observer materials

Administration

The structure of the exercise and its broad purpose are explained. It is important to mention that the exercise has three main phases:

- individual deliberation
- group discussion
- presentation of findings

Step 1 Individual exercise

Following the completion of any one or more of the preceding exercises, participants are asked to consider the discrepancies that have been made obvious between individual prediction/ analysis before the exercise(s) began and the actual outcomes. They are to write a written reflection¹⁵ which covers the following points:

- What discrepancies did they observe within their own 'before and after' thinking and around the room, with other participants?
- How do they account for those discrepancies? Was that anything about the group dynamics or was it more about the support offered by the Navigator?
- What improvements would they like to see in their own performance if they were to do a similar exercise again?
- What improvement ideas have they for other participants at an individual level?
- What improvement ideas have they for the group as a whole?
- Given that they are going to debate this in a few minutes, how should they organise themselves? What leadership style would it be most appropriate to see in anybody chosen to lead the exercise?
- What qualities would they need to respond optimally to this leadership style?

This reflection sheet should be handed to the observer group after the exercise.

Step 2 – Group exercise

¹⁵ Of course it is possible to vary the way in which this critique is orchestrated as it is also possible to incorporate these questions into:

- an individual interview
- an individual presentation exercise
- a 'homework' task over-night before the next day of the Assessment Centre

The participants use the Navigator to determine the 'best bet' style for their imminent meeting. They discuss how they will organise themselves in light of that.

Step 3 – Group exercise

The group discuss their thinking on the reflection sheets and come to a consensus about:

- What they have noted about the pattern of discrepancies.
- How they account for those discrepancies.
- Learning points and improvement ideas for future individual working.
- Learning points and improvement ideas for future group working.

Throughout, they should review how they are handling their current debate in light of the findings of their discussion.

Step 4 – Presentation exercise

They should organise a group presentation that:

- Summarises the conclusions they have drawn.
- The degree to which they have worked together in this meeting in accord with the prescription of the Navigator.

APPENDIX A

Formula 4 Leadership® LNJ Outcome

eMail: Info@formula4leadership.com

FULL REPORT

Name: XXXXXXXX

Number Of People Concerned: 6

Date LJT Run: 13 November 2000

Description of the Leadership Issue:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.

Based upon your analysis of the situation, the recommended Leadership Style that would have the best likelihood of success, would be:

GROUP CONSULTATIVE

I share the problem with
subordinates at a group meeting.
I obtain their ideas and
suggestions and then I make the
decision.

In order to arrive at this solution you made the following choices:

Is this really an important decision?	Yes
Is this a good opportunity to develop your team?	Yes
Do you feel there is time urgency?	No
Do you know enough to handle this on your own?	Yes
Does this need the views of a group of people?	Yes
Have you worked successfully on this type of problem before?	Yes
Could the team sort this out on their own?	No

Your LJT History:

You have gone through the LJT 2 times

Resulting Decision Style:

Unassisted Directive	0 times (0%)
Researched Directive	0 times (0%)
One-To-One Consultative	0 times (0%)
Group Consultative	2 times (100%)
Chaired Consensual	0 times (0%)
Team Player Consensual	0 times (0%)
Informed Delegative	0 times (0%)
Ballistic Delegative	0 times (0%)

Competency Usage History:

When tested on a particular competency, your response was:

Developing Subordinates	Yes	2 times	No	0 times
Gauging and Gaining Commitment	Yes	0 times	No	0 times
Subordinate Appraisal	Yes	0 times	No	2 times
Establishing Mutual Interest	Yes	0 times	No	0 times
Diffusing Conflict	Yes	0 times	No	0 times
Impact Judgement	Yes	2 times	No	0 times
Time Utilisation	Yes	1 times	No	1 times
Data Rationality	Yes	2 times	No	0 times
Task Appraisal	Yes	2 times	No	0 times
Problem Structuring	Yes	1 times	No	0 times

EMail contact@formula4leadership.com for information about how to acquire a team or organisational History Report

In order to get to the solution on this occasion you used these competencies:

People Competencies -

- **Developing Subordinates**
The ability to appraise and facilitate the development of subordinates (and hence their relationship with subordinates). They know when to 'add value' by developing the skills, talents or confidence of team members. They are interested and motivated by creating opportunities for developing the managerial and technical skills of subordinates.
- **Subordinate Appraisal**
The ability to weigh whether subordinates have sufficient information, expertise, confidence and maturity to make a high-quality decision. Knows which subordinates to involve in working on solutions. Can judge subordinate readiness.

Task Competencies -

- **Impact Judgement**
The ability to discern how important it is which solution or decision is adopted. The person can accurately judge the impact of adopting one course of action over another. They can tell how important a decision is in reaching personal, team or organisational targets. They can gauge the extent a solution will affect performance.
- **Time Utilisation**
The ability to use people and time efficiently to solve the problem or reach a solution, plus the ability to take action quickly in a critical moment or in a crisis. Has the ability to 'strike while the iron is hot'.
- **Data Rationality**
The person has the ability to judge whether they have sufficient information and expertise to make a high-quality decision. S/He is able to gauge the extent of his/her own knowledge, skills and experience in reaching a decision.
- **Task Appraisal**
The ability to judge whether a task needs the breadth of analysis and multiple perspectives providing by group discussion to generate a synergistic solution, or whether it requires the intricate, sequential reasoning optimally provided through individual analysis (i.e. one or more team members work on the task individually).
- **Problem Structuring**
The ability to define a situation according to its current state, desired state and knowledge of the methods for transforming the former to the latter. The person is clear about what s/he wants and where s/he is going. They can adequately define what the problem is and what needs to be done to solve it. They can set short, medium and long-term targets.

Expanded description of the recommended Leadership Style:

GROUP CONSULTATIVE

The recommended leadership decision making style for you to use in this situation is Group Consultative. Consultative decision making involves gathering the ideas and opinions of reporting colleagues and then making the decision yourself in accordance with your own values and judgement. The Group Consultative approach is one way of doing this; as its name implies, you gather your team together, usually at one sitting*, and listen to what they say. You collate their views, and record these in whatever way appears appropriate, and then make your decision. You would normally announce your final decision after sufficient time has elapsed to signal that you have been pondering on the views expressed seriously, giving them due consideration. However, you would not delay your announcement any longer than is necessary as this could imply lack of respect.

The LJT yields the Group solution quite frequently, given that 23% of the routes through it culminate at this outcome. It is the second most frequently occurring end-point of the LJT. Therefore, the likelihood is that leaders will have plenty of practice in using this approach. The skills of chairing group discussions, and managing such meetings to best effect, are clearly an essential pre-requisite to its success. If these represent a training need for you, this must be addressed.

The thing is, you must not shy away from this approach or you could drive morale down in your team. Getting the group together allows you to gather their multiple perspectives, and to hear their debate about the breadth of issues. You might also use this as an opportunity to express your own line of thinking, or to develop your ideas through debate. The insight that can flow from such a meeting can enable you to make the decision with greater awareness of all factors involved. The feeling of involvement and your trust in asking for their opinions can give them confidence and a greater motivation to implement the decision.

However, on a note of caution, you are not advised to use this approach if your mind is already made up. You could then appear manipulative as you are seen to 'rail-road' the discussion along your preferred track, which will be quite obvious to your more perceptive colleagues.

If you do have a position before the views of colleagues are expressed it is best to disclose this from the start. You should also always declare up-front that this is a consultative meeting, not a joint decision making one. If the meeting starts off with the appearance of being consensual, but you then impose a decision at the end, your team will view you as lacking respect for them and just 'taking them for a ride'. In these circumstances, people will feel less rather than more commitment to the outcome.

Therefore, grasp this opportunity with open-mindedness and enthusiasm. Set your stall from the start, working openly with your team throughout. Also, communicate the logic of the LJT approach so that they can grow in understanding and learn the power of the model for themselves.

* A variant on this is where the leader separates out the problem analysis from the actual decision making. The leader might then delegate an exploration of all variables and factors which are relevant to the problem, and then ask colleagues to come up with a range of solutions for him/her to consider. It must be made clear, however, that the final decision is to be made by the boss. Even if he/she chooses one of the solutions the team have proposed this is essentially a consultative process and not one where the decision making has been delegated (see the Formula 4 Leadership Model for a description of the eight decision making styles).

Final Note:

The Formula 4 Leadership model predicts the style with the highest probability of optimal results, based upon your analysis of both the Task and the People concerned. Think about your reasons if you do not intend to follow the suggested approach.

If it instinctively seem to be the right style, you may find it valuable to go through the Formula 4 Leadership LJT again, questioning the responses you have given.

Always be ready to reconsider the Leadership style that is required in the light of unfolding events and the reactions of the people concerned.

APPENDIX B

Leadership Judgement Question Rating Sheet (Short Form)

NAME:

About the TASK

Is this a really important decision? YES or NO

Do you feel there is time urgency? YES or NO

Do you know enough to handle this on your own? YES or NO

Does this need the views of a group of people? YES or NO

Have you worked successfully on this type of problem before? YES or NO

About the PEOPLE

Is this a good opportunity to develop your team? YES or NO

Will the team readily follow your decision? YES or NO

Could the team sort this out on their own? YES or NO

Can you trust the team to do what's best? YES or NO

Is there going to be quite a lot of disagreement about this? YES or NO

Leadership Judgement Question Rating Sheet (Long Form)

These sequential questions allow any leadership decision-making situation to be methodically assessed to determine the most appropriate leadership style.

Name _____

Scenario Title: _____

Task Attributes

T1. ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT

Was getting this right or wrong going to have an impact on personal, team or the organisation's goals? Was it important to the organisation which solution was adopted? Could the decision have made say, a 5% difference to performance?
Was this a really important decision?

Yes No

T2. TIME URGENCY

Did the decision need to be made immediately? Was it imperative that you 'struck while the iron was hot'? Did you use people and time efficiently?

Yes No

T3. LEADER INFORMATION

Did you have sufficient information and the necessary expertise to make a high-quality decision? Did you know enough to handle this on your own?

Yes No

T4. TASK REQUIREMENT

Did the task need to be worked on through group discussion so that breadth of information and multiple perspectives were obtained (rather than of an intricate and sequential nature of the type better worked on through individual analysis)?

Yes No

T5. PROBLEM STRUCTURE

Were you clear about what you wanted and where you were going? Had you a good idea about what needed to be done in order to get there? Did you set clear targets?

Yes No

People Attributes

P1. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

Did the task readily offer the opportunity to 'add value' by developing the skills, talents or confidence of subordinates? Was this a good opportunity to develop your team (as well as your relationship with them)?

Yes No

P2. COMMITMENT

Were you reasonably certain that the decision could have been effectively implemented even if the subordinate(s) were not collaboratively involved in the decision-making process? Could necessary levels of motivation and performance have been maintained even if you made the decision yourself? Would the team readily follow your decision?

Yes No

P3. SUBORDINATE READINESS

Did subordinates have sufficient information, expertise, confidence and maturity to make a high-quality decision? Could the team sort this out on their own?

Yes No

P4. GOAL CONGRUENCE

Could you trust your subordinates to pursue the best and most rational solution, rather than just look after their own self interest? Did subordinates share the organisational goals to be obtained in solving this problem?

Yes No

P5. SUBORDINATE CONFLICT

Was conflict among subordinates over preferred solutions likely? Was there likely to be substantial disagreement between you over which course to pursue? Was the decision controversial and likely to evoke very different views?

Yes No

APPENDIX C

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION

TRANSCRIPT ONE

Manager: Mr Boehme, please take a seat.

Mr Boehme: Mm.

Manager: Ah, good to see you, good to see you.

Mr Boehme: Thank you and you too.

Manager: How's life?

Mr Boehme: Not too bad.

Manager: So, how are you?

Mr Boehme: You've just asked me that. I'm fine.

Manager: Oh ... well, you know, there are different ways of putting it. How's life at work?

Mr Boehme: There's some good things and some bad things ... I would say.

Manager: Well what I'd like to do today is to talk about the OSS Project.

Mr Boehme: Alright.

Manager: I want to talk about the OSS Project. It's a project which is tremendously important as far as price harmonisation around the globe is concerned. As you know, at the moment, we've got some differential pricing of customers. The very fact that we've got that situation is creating tensions; it's creating difficulties with some customers, so is something we need to address.

So the OSS Project is about optimising our selling strategy. We've got six months to do it and basically what I want to do is to get you involved at the heart of it. As you know, I started this job four months ago and there's a lot to get my mind around, with my key account work and so forth, so what I want to do is invite you to get involved. This is a wonderful opportunity for you, to grasp this particular project, rather like you did with the DP Project which we were all pretty impressed with.

Mr Boehme: It's nice to hear that.

Manager: No, no, no ... it's well known and recognised. You've got an immense amount of experience and it came through well in that project - you brought that to bear, delivered on time ... I was impressed and I think it gives me confidence in saying OSS, over to you. What do you think?

Mr Boehme: What do I think about the OSS?

Manager: Yes, what do you think - OSS, over to you?

Mr Boehme: Well, I'm not surprised!

Manager: No.

Mr Boehme: I think it's well known that I was the motivating drive behind it in the first place. I'd recommend we do it quite a long time ago so I'm glad to see that it's going ahead.

But you were asking me earlier in the meeting how are things at work. Well, to be perfectly frank, at the moment, I feel as if I'm being taken for granted quite frankly and, my contribution is not always being recognised; it's nice of you to say it's much appreciated about my DP

Project, but it isn't often that is vocalised. So I feel things are expected of me that I will deliver the OSS. Of course, I will, but I do feel as if I'm being ...

Manager: That's great, you feel you will tackle the OSS and you will deliver the OSS Project?

Mr Boehme: Yep, yep.

Manager: Excellent, excellent. Okay, so what we need to do then is to agree staging posts on the way to doing that. How do you see delivery in six months. What do you see as the first step that you need to be doing?

Mr Boehme: Well a lot of the preliminary work I have already done -I did a lot of the ground work whilst engaged in the DP Project; that's one element of it. And I think the second stage is identifying where the most likely points of conflict are going to be with clients and where we have to tread very carefully because there will be winners and losers in this situation and we have to be mindful about. We have to be very aware of what the impact's going to be on our relationships with our customers.

If I may, there is another issue that I would like to take the opportunity of discussing because, as you pointed out, you have been in your position there for four months and this is the first opportunity formally that we've had the chance to have a meeting. So there is another issue that I would like to raise if that's okay with you?

Manager: Before you do, OSS-wise, could you just go over what you were saying a few minutes ago in terms of the steps? If you wouldn't mind just going through that again as I didn't quite capture everything you said.

Mr Boehme: The first element, the first major element which I would class as actually being preliminary preparatory work on the project is data gathering and I have already completed a large amount of the data gathering through the DP Project. But what we have to be most aware of, in the implementation stage, is the impact of implementation on our relationships with our clients because there are going to be winners and losers. For some, we are going to have to explain the long term benefits of OSS, although in the short term they are actually going to suffer financially: they're going to lose out financially in some instances!

Manager: Yeh, yeh.

Mr Boehme: So we're going to have to manage that very sensitively.

Manager: How will you do that?

Mr Boehme: Well, we need to begin now introducing the benefits into our dialogue with these guys and making them aware of how their long term interests are going to benefit through OSS. The world is changing and we are simply moving in the same direction as all our competitors; and I think they will see the sense of that. But that has to be very carefully managed.

Manager: I think you're right.

Mr Boehme: ... and so that brings me on, in fact, again to the issue that I would like to take the opportunity to discuss if we can in this meeting.

Manager: Can we just get this out of the way first because I've got to talk to one or two of the more senior people who are going to be overseeing our efforts, and I just want to make sure I've got everything clear when I talk to them about what you're going to be doing.

Mr Boehme: But we're not going to spend the whole of this meeting simply discussing the OSS?

Manager: Erm ...

Mr Boehme: Are we, or are you ...

Manager: Look. This is the priority for me at the moment, but you say there are one or two other things as well ...

Mr Boehme: Yeh. But this is exactly what I'm talking about ... you see, I don't really feel that I'm being valued. Its taken four months to arrange this meeting and the agenda of the meeting, as far as I can see, is not me it's the OSS. Now, whilst I fully accept the OSS, I understand how important it is and the strong ...

Manager: Look, can we turn to the other matters in a minute? I just want to get these points down so I'm quite clear in my mind what I'm going to be saying to the powers that be. I just want to get that sorted and then we can talk about these other issues, if there's time.

This is very important and I am keen as you that we don't rock the boat with existing clients and customers. This issue of sensitivity in handling them is vital, making sure that we don't actually unsettle customers so much that they go elsewhere. This seems to me a very, very important dimension. Have you any thoughts about the way in which we begin to broach these issues with them; what is the best way of beginning to enter into that dialogue? It seems to me that there are so many potential pitfalls and problems that we could be shooting ourselves in the foot. I mean, what would you do with your clients who are particularly in the firing line as far as this is concerned, who might very well be perceiving this negatively when it's put to them?

Mr Boehme: As I said already, we have to manage the impact and that begins by introducing them into dialogue that we have with them and we have to be proactive in extending benefits. There are benefits although, in the short term, there have to be winners and losers on price and there's no way of getting around that.

Manager: Yeh, yeh. What are the benefits?

Mr Boehme: Ah, the benefits are that it's going to be easier to plan and budget, both for us and for them.

Manager: Easier to plan ... yep ...

Mr Boehme: In the long term and in an increasingly globalised market it's going to be easier to harmonise everything from packaging to delivery, everything will be easier.

Manager: That's good, that's a good one.

Mr Boehme: So there are benefits and I think there's a certain amount of realism out there and an understanding that this is inevitable, that this is coming, come what may. We're not being maverick about this; in fact we're later than the competition.

Manager: Yeh, yeh.

Mr Boehme: Many of our competitors have already taken such steps so I think we mustn't be fearful; whilst we have to be sensitive with them but we don't have to ...

Manager: Oh no, no, no. I'm really impressed with this. I can say to my boss that we've got our heads around this, that we know what we're doing and that will impress. I must say that I'm really very, very pleased that you're going to be getting stuck in on this.

Now look, I'm just wondering, you wanted to touch on one or two other issues with me, can you capture these on an e-mail or just jot me a note about them?

Mr Boehme: No! I understood we were having this meeting to discuss my development, my position within the Company, not to simply discuss the OSS.

Manager: This is the biggie! This is what is important.

Mr Boehme: With respect, to me personally, the issues that I'm raising are very important as well.

Manager: Well, okay then, tell me what they are, but just bullet point them would you, just bullet point them?

What are those issues? Tell me what they are in a nutshell and I'll jot them down.

Mr Boehme: A feeling of being undervalued.

Manager: A feeling of being undervalued, yep.

Mr Boehme: A crisis in my relationship with Mrs Grabert.

Manager: Right.

Mr Boehme: And promotion opportunities.

Manager: Okay. Well, dealing with the last issue first: more strength to your elbow with what you've done with DP. There's no doubt about that. You come with a track record of excellence and you'll give me an enormous amount of ammunition to make a case for promotional opportunities ... on delivery of OSS.

I think you're really going to add another feather to your bow with OSS. It's going to make that argument stronger. I think also that promotional opportunities are not only about how well you manage this project but they're also about how you go about managing colleagues. So, I think what I want to see from you is not bringing problems like difficulties with Mrs. Grabert to me but actually coming to tell me how you have sorted it out. What I'd be very pleased to hear would be that you've analysed the problem with her in the way you've analysed the OSS Project; you've thought about issues of sensitivity, you've talked about the benefits, you've constructed some advantages, you've gone away and you've solved it in just the same way.

Then, as we get to know each other you will see how much I value you manifesting itself in promotional opportunities down the line, as our relationship grows and develops. That's the way it's got to be. And it's great to see your thinking on OSS. That's very helpful to me!

Therefore, promotion is clearly dependant on delivery of the OSS, built on strengths already demonstrated, but also on delivery as far as team working is concerned. I want to put the onus on you: put the onus on you.

Mr Boehme: Well, with respect, the team aspect is not in my control.

Manager: I know you say that but I think you have a bigger challenge with the OSS and our customers; you seem to have got your mind around that and those sensitive issues. On a micro scale you have the team situation which I believe you can handle. You can handle them.

Mr Boehme: I can't ...

Manager: You don't need me, you don't need me ... you can handle it!

Mr Boehme: With respect you don't even ... you haven't even asked me a question about what the nature of the problem is. I don't think you can understand what the problem is.

Manager: I don't need to, I don't need to know the ins and outs of it, I don't need to know. What I do know is, give you the target, give you the challenge, I've a belief that you can sort it. You know what you've got to do, you know what's at the end of the journey if you achieve success. Go for it, go for it! You've got my backing all the way, and my support.

Mr Boehme: To do what? How do you suggest that I solve the issue, the crisis in the relationship with Mrs Grabert?

Manager: Using exactly the same qualities, exactly the same problem solving approach that you are going to bring to bear on OSS!

Mr Boehme: Well, I've tried all that.

Manager: Mm ...

Mr Boehme: I've tried all that. The difference is that in relationships with clients I'm dealing with people behaving in a reasonable way. In the case of Mrs Grabert I'm dealing with some who is volatile, unreasonable and shows utter contempt towards me. That is a situation which I now find intolerable and I am not prepared to remain in a position where I am exposed ...

Manager: Oh, come on!

Mr Boehme: ... exposed to that sort of ... contempt.

Manager: Come on, come on!

Mr Boehme: It's not a question of ...

Manager: Come on! Obviously you're having a bad day today, obviously ...

Mr Boehme: Sorry, you're not listening to what I'm saying.

Manager: Look, you've got yourself into a very sticky place here, into a pretty negative way of thinking about this situation. This is not the buoyancy for which you're renowned, you know. I think you can do it, you can do it. You don't need me to do it for you. And what's more, if I do it, who gets the credit? I do! I do! I don't want the credit for that. I'm much more interested in the credit for this OSS thinking.

Mr Boehme: Yeh, well, I can quite understand why that would be the case, but the difference is that I cannot sort things with the Grabert situation. It needs something coming from you - you have the position of authority. This is a team issue, the team leader has to resolve it. I have done everything that I can, believe me. I mean, seriously, in all the time that I've been with this Company, I have never had a personal issue with a member ...

Manager: Look ...

Mr Boehme: Excuse me, let me finish ...

Manager: I know, I know. It's difficult. Bear with me ... bear with me as well. It is difficult!

Mr Boehme: What is difficult?

Manager: Well these interpersonal situations ...

Mr Boehme: I have never ... you're not listening to what I'm saying. In ten years I have never had a personal issue with another team member before, ever. I have never gone to a senior colleague and said that I had a crisis in a relationship with a fellow colleague, ever. This is the first time in ten years that I've encountered such a situation. If you knew anything about my character, you would know that.

Manager: Okay.

Mr Boehme: If you want confirmation of how this situation has arisen, talk to any of the other members of the ...

Manager: This is what we'll do. What I want you to do is to capture your concerns and your issues in writing. You're to write to me formally about this situation and you're to write about what the situation involves, what the difficulties are, what you've done about it so far and what has happened as a result of each one of those particular strategies. I will then forward that paper to the HR Department and talk with them about ways in which you and the team might be supported in this difficulty.

Capture it on paper, A, B, C, exactly what you've done. I think that process of getting it out on paper, getting it in black and white, is going to be helpful - it'll help me enormously. E-mail that to me or pass it on to me at the beginning of next week. I'll have a think about it, have a look and see what you've done and the strategies you've employed and I'll pass it on to HR.

I want to draw this meeting to a close now we're clear about where we're going forward: I'm now in a position where I can go and talk to my boss about the OSS Project: you know what you need to do as far as promotional opportunities are concerned: if you've got any difficulties within the team which have reached a point of crisis, then capture them on paper. I will then consider what you've said, involve the appropriate HR training department and see whether or not we can resolve it.

Now, you've got to go. You've got a meeting to go to. I've got a meeting to go to, so we'll meet again very shortly and pick this up. Okay?

Mr Boehme: Fine.

Manager: Great, lovely. All the best. Good to see you, good to see you.

Mr Boehme: Yeh.

END OF TRANSCRIPT ONE.

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION

TRANSCRIPT TWO

Manager: Thanks very much indeed for coming along. Good to see you again today.

I mean, this is really the first time in four months that we've had a chance to have a formal chat like this. We've talked in the past, but it's good to see you - good to have this opportunity. How are you?

Mr Boehme: Oh, not too bad, thank you.

Manager: Good, good. Look, there are a number of things I need to raise. But, we are short of time, we're pressed for time.

Mr Boehme: I mean, if you want to reschedule this meeting for another ...

Manager: No I don't, no I don't. I think it is important that we talk. We've got 20 minutes or so now - if we need to continue then we'll do so next week. But, there are some things I need to talk to you about. There are some things that are on my mind that I want to raise. I hope you appreciate straight talking.

Mr Boehme: Yeh

Manager: I prefer that sort of relationship. There are a number of things that I want to raise. I want to raise some things about your performance at the moment.

Mr Boehme: Right.

Manager: I also want to talk about something which is up and coming. A significant and interesting project that I'm very keen you participate in.

Mr Boehme: You're talking about the OSS Project?

Manager: I am! So I'd like, in a few moments time, to talk about that AND the DP Project which you completed very well recently. But we'll address those things in a few moments. Before we do, how do you think you're performing at work at the moment?

Mr Boehme: Extremely well. I mean I don't think there's any cause for concern ... I think you obviously seem to have some sort of concern there. I'm reading between the lines. Should I be concerned about my performance? I can't think why ... in fact ...

Manager: Do you mind if I write some notes while we talk? You don't mind?

Mr Boehme: No.

Manager: Look, your performance! My understanding was that you were a fine well respected and hardworking chap before I joined the Business. However, there's just an emerging feeling, a sense, that the behaviours for which you were once renowned have evaporated, or are evaporating, and if we could nip that in the bud, so much the better.

Mr Boehme: I think that's grossly unfair. I don't think there is any evidence ...

Manager: You know, in all fairness you haven't heard me out.

Mr Boehme: I apologise.

Manager: I have two principal concerns that I want to talk about; the first of these is the lack of time you're putting in and around the office. This may or may not be significant but it need to be discussed. Then there are the increasing expenses claims that you are making at the moment - when I look at your log it's going up and up and up.

So that's one area that I'd like to cover and discuss with you. The other area I think I'd like to discuss with you is the manner of your participation with other members of the team.

Now, do either of those issues strike any chords with you?

Mr Boehme: Well no, absolutely not! I reject both of them and I am grossly offended that you are accusing me of falsifying expense claims and of being a poor member of the team. I utterly reject those accusations! I am shocked! But I'm very glad you have been so frank because I know exactly where I stand now. I know what my position is, so I do thank you for that at least.

Manager: Well, I think you have picked that up and taken it somewhere where I wasn't going to go. There was nothing at all in what I said about dishonesty or any hint that you might be attempting to claim for things that were false. On the expenses side of things, all I noted was that they're getting greater.

Mr Boehme: Right.

Manager: Now that doesn't suggest that they're not 'genuine', but it could imply that you're spending more time out in the office: it could imply that you're spending a lot more time in the professional association work. Now, I don't doubt that you bring a lot of benefit back into the Business from that activity but I'm thinking about the big picture here - there's some link between these things!

Now, you might be offended but you said you wanted me to be blunt and you said you were prepared for me to be frank. I think I've just got to put these concerns on the table; only then can we resolve them, eye ball to eye ball. We can talk about and then move forward; I just want to register my concerns and hopefully we can move on.

Mr Boehme: Well ...

Manager: The thing is, you're just not around as much as I want you to be and you're not around as much as you used to be. It is actually difficult to get hold of you sometimes. There is an elusiveness about you.

Mr Boehme: Do you want me to respond to that?

Manager: If you will.

Mr Boehme: I reject the fact that I'm elusive and I reject the implication that I am not doing my job properly. I totally reject that! It seems to me you're measuring my contribution to the Company by how much time I spend in the office. Well, quite frankly you can be here from six o'clock in the morning and the last person to leave at night and be totally non-productive. You can actually be diminishing the output of the team despite the fact that you are spending the longest time at work. For example, Mrs Grabert, our junior colleague, could spend twice as much time in the office and still not contribute half as much to the team performance as I do. So I utterly reject that my contribution can be measured simply by the amount of hours that I'm clocking in. I think that's a very blinkered way of looking at it indeed.

I also do resent the implication that the time I spend in the Trade Associations is at the expense of my work. I've never allowed that to affect that in a harmful way. It's always about keeping a balance and I think I've always maintained that balance.

Manager: Okay, well look I want to register those concerns. They may or may not be significant. They're things that I have noticed. There is a sort of drift, it seems to me, and I want it to stop.

Mr. Boehme: You're telling me that I have to keep up my ...

Manager: I'm telling you that I want to see a better balance with regard to your Association work and the office. I want to see you thinking a bit more about this increase in expenses which, if you're not careful, could get out of hand.

Mr. Boehme: You're hardly saying that it has ...

Manager: Do you mind! I need to finish what I'm saying.

The big issue for me is whether this is indicative of some sort of change in your motivation. That could be because I am on board and you wanted my job. It could be about team dynamics; for example, I am concerned about the lack of communication between yourself

and Mrs Grabert. Now, I have my ideas about that, and I'm clear about how I'm going to tackle it, but it's something I wanted to flag up with you because it could be a test of the temperature.

Mr Boehme: I'm sorry I don't understand, test of the temperature of what?

Manager: I'm talking about motivation. I'm talking about your motivation. I'm talking about your engagement.

Mr Boehme: Are you questioning my motivation?

Manager: I'm questioning your motivation. I'm wondering about your motivation. I'm questioning your engagement with the team and I am concerned about it. We are going to run a tight ship here - I'm determined that we're going to have healthy dynamics in this team and now I am in charge we are going to do things differently.

Mr Boehme: If you are genuinely concerned about running a tight ship and maintaining good team dynamics then I suggest that you begin by addressing the problem of Mrs Grabert; if there is anybody who is doing anything that's harmful to team spirit it's her. But don't take my word for that, you can ask Mrs Feyr - you can ask any members of the team and they'll corroborate what I'm saying.

So, if you genuinely want to change dynamics I suggest you start by having a word with that young woman and telling her that she has to change her attitude and she has to show more respect to senior colleagues, because that's how it works in a team, you show deference and respect to people who have greater knowledge and experience than you.

Manager: Mr Boehme, with respect, how do you know I have not already done that? And how do you think she will know or not about this discussion? She won't! I won't be talking about it with her and I'm certainly not going to tell you about how I engage with her on a one-to-one basis!

But what I am determined about is that we are going to meet together as a team and I am going to put new stamp on the way we do things around here, because all this is concerning me!

Mr Boehme: What is your concern then? I mean, what is the problem as far as you can see?

Manager: A reasonable question. I have made some observations about the fact that there is a sort of non-communication between you and her. That's what it looks like from a distance. It seems like there is some tension and some difficulty and this is not helping the team.

Mr Boehme: No.

Manager: And it's not helping the Business. Further, it's not helping me and it's not helping you.

Mr Boehme: No. But you don't seem to be interested in finding out what the reasons for that might be and attempting to solve the problem.

Manager: If you expect me to keep talking about Mrs Grabert here today, then I'm not. In terms of having you talk to me about her, and about your difficulties with her, I would prefer to save that for a team meeting when we can have all this said in the open. We will deal with things in the open. I neither want to talk to her about you or to you about her, that's just a standard that I have and that's the way I want to play it. We'll deal with these things in the open and I'll address these things in the open and you can say your piece in the open!

Mr Boehme: Right, but that's not the impression that Mrs Grabert has been giving to other members of the team, so it seems that there's one rule for me and another rule for Mrs Grabert. The impression that is commonly held among the team is that you are showing extreme favouritism towards Mrs Grabert and that you are discussing other team member's performance with her. Therefore, these criticisms that you are levelling against me do not come as a complete surprise because I imagine she has insinuated ...

Manager: And you're prepared to say what you are saying now at the meeting? You're prepared to say what you've just said in the ...

Mr Boehme: I don't think it's a good idea to have a discussion of that nature in a team meeting. No, I think you need to have a quiet word with her and ask her to modify her behaviour and show more respect to her colleagues.

Manager: Whether I do or not you will not find out about that but, I hope that whatever you say about any other member of the team in this room, you'd be prepared to say to their face?

Mr Boehme: I would.

Manager: In which case, I shall hope and expect that you'll do that with her and if you don't do it in a team meeting you'll do it and have it out with her and sort it out between you, sooner rather than later.

Mr Boehme: With respect, I have attempted to sort this situation out with Mrs Grabert. I have attempted to work in a relationship. When a new member of the department joins us it has always been customary that the senior members of the team guide them in the initial stages. Do you not think that is good?

Manager: Oh, yes, yes, yes ...

Mr Boehme: I attempted to do that with Mrs Grabert but all of my attempts to offer her help and support were met with a rudeness and an arrogance on her part. She made it perfectly clear that she did not respect or value my position and that she wanted me to refrain from interfering in her business. So, in the face of that provocation, I have decided that it is best for me to have no contact with her whatsoever. She has made that very clear and I am powerless to change that. I am asking you, as a team leader, to prompt her because that attitude is not helping.

Manager: Thank you. I will obviously deal with this in the way in which I see fit and you will discover in the course of the next few days what I decide to do to address this particular situation. However, that aside, we've gone on far too long about that particular topic.

What I want to do now is turn to something else which is, actually, of more importance and, indeed, in a way, could be a way of resolving these particular issues so that we can put them behind us where they belong.

The fact of the matter is, as you know, we've got this OSS Project. We're on a tight time schedule for it, six months. You seem to have heard something about it, which is good, so you'll know the importance and significance of this to the Business. You'll know and understand that this particular project is one that you're particularly well suited to be involved in. Your past experience, your knowledge of the industry, the wealth of contacts you have and your strategic understanding about the interplay between the various customers that we have is invaluable. You understand more than anybody the differentials in prices that are charged to customers and the way in which some harmonisation of those prices could bring us a lot of business benefit.

Your understanding of that is one that we need to harness. This is not least because of your leadership in the extremely well executed DP project which, I think quite honestly, others around deeply applaud. There's no doubt you've done a very fine job there and I can only stand back in admiration of what you've done. Therefore, I want to see you engaged in this OSS Project in the same way. Further, I think it's going to help us enormously as a team.

Obviously, I shall be leading it, but you will be very much my right hand person and I shall be expecting you to have a full and active part to play in it. You understand now why I wanted to raise the issue of motivation because it seems to me that if there is anything wrong we need to sort it out - we need to sort it now so that we can get moving on this OSS Project forthwith.

Now, the OSS, you've heard about it. What part would you like to play?

Mr Boehme: Well, where to begin. I'm sorry, but firstly, you say you're delighted with the DP project which I delivered faultlessly and on time ...

Manager: Yep.

Mr Boehme: ... and yet you've opened this meeting, this discussion by criticising my commitment to the team and in questioning it, on the basis that I don't spend enough time in the office. How do

you think I managed to deliver that project on time and my sales figures have not suffered ... how can you then feel you were justified in bringing my commitment into question?

Manager: I can.

Mr Boehme: I do not see how you can justify doing that. Further, the reason that I was able to deliver that project is precisely because of the amount of time that I spend with the various trade associations that are involved in our industry. You also began this meeting by criticising the increase in expenses that I claimed in order to fulfil my commitments to those said organisations which has benefited the Company hugely in the DP Project.

And I'll tell you one thing, if you want my commitment to the OSS Project, I will absolutely insist that Mrs Grabert does not play any part. I am not prepared, and I don't think that the team is capable of delivering the OSS Project within six months whilst carrying her - and that's effectively what we would be doing. So, that's an absolute precondition.

Manager: No such preconditions are acceptable or will be heeded. I will be the one who will decide who is going to be in the project team. I will be the one who will decide how we go ahead.

I am very happy to make you an offer of involvement. I really hope and believe that you can have a significant part to play, but I've got to make it very clear to you that we're going to do things my way and you're going to have to like that, or not, as the case may be. If not, there will be certain consequences that will flow from that.

I'm very determined that in my first few weeks in this job I am going to establish things how I want them to be done. I shall decide who is in the team and who isn't in the team. You won't. And I will determine when things are going to be done and when they're not. And, indeed, it will be me that says when and how much time you'll be spending with these associations.

I have flagged up my concerns. I've raised them as question marks. It's now over to you to begin resolving some of those questions. What I'm suggesting actually, as we're running out of time now, is that you take the weekend to think about this meeting. You need to think about your position in the Business. You need to think about your commitment. You need to think about the sort of things that I am saying. I believe, I hope, that we can work together. We just need to, if you like, establish a certain framework about our working relationship. Once we've got that sorted and you understand who the boss is then we can move forward in an amicable and in a productive way. But I can't have you coming in here telling me how to do my job. I really can't have that and I'm not prepared to tolerate it. Do you understand?!

Mr Boehme: I understand. And I am taking one positive thing out of this meeting: it has helped to crystallise a few things in my mind and you're absolutely right, it does leave me a lot of food for thought about what my position is within the Company.

Manager: Yes.

Mr Boehme: So, I am grateful that you've been as frank as you have been.

Manager: Now, our next meeting will be at five o'clock next Tuesday in this office, next Tuesday evening.

Mr Boehme: Next Tuesday, I don't think is going to be possible.

Manager: Well!

Mr Boehme: I'm giving a speech. I'm giving a speech at the Trade Conference in Hamburg. It has been in my diary for months.

Manager: I'll be in my office at five o'clock on Tuesday waiting for you. If you're not there, obviously it'll be further evidence, won't it, about your lack of commitment. So, five o'clock next Tuesday is where I shall expect you. If you're not there we'll deal with that matter, and the implications of that then.

Well, I think we'll draw this interview to a close. Hopefully got the message. You know where I'm coming from and you know the way in which I want to do things.

Mr Boehme: Yep. If I was to send you a letter of resignation, would you prefer that I post it through internal mail or would you like it delivered by hand? Quite frankly, you know, I feel my position here is now completely compromised.

Manager: You take the weekend to think about it.

Mr Boehme: I don't think that will be necessary but I do appreciate the fact that you've been so frank in the meeting. You have left no doubt in my mind whatsoever what my next step should be and for that I'm very grateful.

Manager: Okay.

END.

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION

TRANSCRIPT THREE

Manager: Peter, good to see you.

Mr Boehme: Yep, yep.

Manager: Good to see you. Thanks for coming along. How are you?

Mr Boehme: I'm not too bad, thank you.

Manager: Jolly good, jolly good. How are the family?

Mr Boehme: ... okay.

Manager: Mm.

Mr Boehme: To be honest, I'd rather not talk about it.

Manager: Yeh, I understand, I understand.

Mr Boehme: You've probably heard rumour and stuff. I don't discuss these matters ... I mean ...

Manager: No ... that's fine. No, no, please, but I do understand. If ever you want to talk to me or if there are any implications as far as work is concerned, then you know my door is always open.

Mr Boehme: Well thank you. I appreciate that.

Manager: I like to feel that if anybody in my team is struggling in any way shape or form that I'm there for them. So if you'd like to talk, that's fine, but if not, that's fine too.

Mr Boehme: Well thank you, thank you very much and I appreciate that and I will, if I feel the need, then I will certainly take you up on that very kind offer. So thank you.

Manager: Now, just as important for us, colleagues as we are, how are things at work? How are you? I mean, how's the job, fulfilment of the job and your general motivation?

Mr Boehme: Not bad. There are a few frustrations that I'm facing at the moment to be honest. You know, one in particular, the situation with Mrs Grabert. Really, it is beginning to wear me down and I think actually, it's reached the stage where I need you to step in there and do something about it.

Manager: Oh right, right. Well, what could I do?

Mr Boehme: Well, she's pretty young and she's pretty inexperienced, which I don't hold that against her. I mean, we've all been there before - everybody has to be new at some stage. The difference is that I think most people, like you and me, when we were in that situation, we recognised that we had limited experience; we recognised that we didn't have as much knowledge as other people. Therefore, we sought out people who could act as mentors and could give us help in those early days, and I think that's because we had a healthy degree in humility and a reasonable self-awareness. Unfortunately, with Mrs Grabert, and I'm sure you've probably noticed this as well, ...

Manager: It makes it such uncomfortable to talk about this, but go on ...

Mr Boehme: Well I'm sure you'd agree, its one thing to be inexperienced, she is that for sure, but the problem is that she has an excessively high opinion of herself, bordering on arrogance, and what this means is that, rather than welcoming help from other people, senior colleagues like myself, instead, she actually is extremely resistant to anybody trying to help her. I tried to help her on numerous occasions and it's always been met with either indifference or, sometimes, with actually outright rudeness.

Manager: Oh dear.

Mr Boehme: I mean there was a very nasty incident by the water cooler the other day when she had done something which I had pointed out to her, an error she'd made before, and I had to draw attention to it again, because it had landed on my desk. It had caused a problem with her client and so I had to raise it with her again. Well, you'd think I'd just sort of physically attacked her. The venom with which she used on me was most upsetting. She was extremely rude to me, she quite really lost control, raised her voice, was extremely aggressive and did this in full view of other colleagues. And I think there was a client who was visiting Max, who was having a meeting, and would clearly have heard her raising her voice.

Now I'm sure you'd agree that sort of behaviour is unacceptable. Am I right?

Manager: This is difficult for me to hear quite honestly.

Mr Boehme: I can understand that.

Manager: It's difficult to hear and it troubles me greatly. It's obviously not the sort of relationship I want between us. I want a family type of ...

Mr Boehme: Absolutely, absolutely.

Manager: I want us to feel we connect as a group. I don't like this disharmony, this disagreement.

Mr. Boehme: No. Absolutely not, but what you need to do is you need to have a word with her at the earliest opportunity and just point out that her behaviour is unacceptable and that she has to change her attitude for the better of the team. She actually needs to do this for her own benefit as her career is not going to develop positively if she maintains this sort of behaviour. Moreover, clearly she isn't aware of it, so I think you need to draw her attention to it.

Manager: That's really interesting. Thank you so much for that advice and guidance and I will think on it. Clearly, we have got to do something about it, haven't we? And obviously, if we can work on that together ...

Mr Boehme: I think you need to have a word with her first though because, to be honest, and if this weren't the case I would hold my hands up, I have not done anything wrong. I am not at fault in this particular situation.

Manager: No, no. But ...

Mr Boehme: ... so there's nothing I can do to change her behaviour. She needs you to draw it to her attention and ask her to make sure that there's no repetition.

Something else, I don't accept the 'we' in this you know. 'She' needs to change her behaviour and I think that is best coming from you because she has no respect for me whatsoever. I think part of the reason for that is she believes I am marginalised; that I am being overlooked in the department now. I think she's been emboldened by the fact that you seem to spend a great deal of time with her so, I think, coming from you, it would actually be very beneficial because it will make it clear to her where she stands.

Manager: Thanks for sharing all that with me, Peter. That's useful and very helpful. It's good to have your advice because it's not always easy in a position of being a leader to know exactly what to do about such situations.

Peter, changing tack, it was remiss of me not to just describe why we're here today and what I wanted to ...

Mr Boehme: I promise I will leave this alone, but you've asked me what's important to me at the moment and how things are at work. I have told you that I am feeling a little bit demotivated because of Mrs Grabert and you have given me assurances we you will have a chat with her and sort this out at the earliest opportunity. If you don't, I will feel like you are not really appreciating quite how serious this is to me. Can you relate to that?

Manager: It really is a very difficult thing for me, Peter, what you're asking me to do; if I may, I just ...

Mr Boheme: So you're not going to have a word with her?

Manager: Can you give me a bit of time to think about it? This is very difficult for me. What you're asking is difficult and I want a bit of time to think about it. I want to talk to you about it some more as well, but Peter ...

Mr. Boehme: What would you like to discuss further about it though, because I think I have outlined the situation? As far as I can it's pretty simple and is very clear. It is about a junior colleague who is getting above herself. You are the team leader and the only person that can really actually say, "Mrs Grabert you've got to modify your behaviour1" That's all I'm asking!

Manager: I know.

Mr Boehme: So, I mean, could you sort of see your way to doing that within the next couple of days and just get this situation sorted because that would make a huge difference to me at the moment?

Manager: Can I give you an answer on that before we close the meeting?

Mr Boehme: Yes, absolutely.

Manager: I'll try to anyway.

But it was remiss of me not to mention what today's all about. I mean, we should have had this chat a few weeks ago, I'm sorry that we haven't. I want to say that ...

Mr Boheme: Good.

Manager: I want to say how pleased I am to have you on board in this team with your wealth of experience and all that you bring. It really is something that makes me feel good to have you around.

Mr Boehme: That's good. It feels good to be appreciated for that.

Manager: It's difficult for me to say this to you but, it's the first leadership role that I've had. I'm cast in this role as a leader and I want to build a team around me that can help support me.

Peter, I wanted to say how much I respect your skills and experience and I want to say how much I really appreciate what you did with the DP Project.

Mr Boheme: Thank you.

Manager: I wish I'd said that to start off with quite honestly. I am in admiration of you and all that you bring. You are a really good example. I ... what I ...

Mr Boehme: You were going to offer me the post of Deputy. Is that what you're alluding to because that was something else that I wanted to discuss and I'd be delighted to accept? Because ...

Manager: Actually, I wasn't going to raise that now. Again, be patient if you will.

Mr Boehme: Is that something that you are considering at the moment though, because obviously there's a lot of discussion going on within the team at the moment; you know, who is going to assume the role of Deputy and I hope you don't mind me being so upfront about it but I feel that if we're having a discussion it is very ...

Manager: I'm glad you've mentioned the role of the Deputy and your hopes about what I can do to sort out your problems with Mrs. Grabert. These are key things for me to think about and to talk about more with you. Obviously, I shall also have to talk about the latter issue with HR too. But look, I will come back to that ...

Mr Boehme: ... because the thing is, I think they are very closely connected. The problem with Mrs Grabert lies in the fact that my role, my position, is unclear. Since you've come in, and please don't think for a second that I harbour any resentment over the fact that I was overlooked, I don't have any problem with that whatsoever, but I think the message that it sent to Mrs Grabert is that I have been overlooked and that I have no authority. You've spoken about how highly you value my contribution, so if you were to actually express that in a tangible way by giving me the role of Deputy ...

Manager: Mmm ... yeh.

Mr Boheme: ... I think that would solve the problem of Mrs Grabert.

Manager: Actually, that's a really good point you've raised there. I like that, I like that enormously. I think that actually could work quite well for me and it can work well for you. It could enhance our collaboration, our partnership: you having the Deputy role means you could support me more openly. Yes. Yes, I can see how it would enhance your esteem in her eyes and it might help your relationship with her. I can see a lot of sense in that. I think I'd like to go along with that. I think I'm rather tempted by that as a solution.

Mr Boehme: Excellent.

Manager: I like that idea.

Now, you've mentioned that having the Deputy position and resolving your difficulties with Mrs Grabert are interlinked. There is something else that's interlinked for me as well and for us.

Mr Boheme: Mmm?

Manager: Have you heard about the OSS Project?

Mr Boheme: Oh yes, absolutely.

Manager: Of course you have, of course you have.

Mr Boheme: I mean, in fact, I was advocating that we adopt the OSS 18 months ago.

Manager: You probably know more about it than I do. Therefore, I believe you've got a tremendously important role to play. You understand conceptually what it's all about?

Mr Boheme: Absolutely, absolutely.

Manager: We've been given this rather wonderful and privileged opportunity to be involved in it. Obviously, I want to share that around the team and I don't want to have the glory, if you like, reflected on me. I'm much keener that it's shared around the team. Now look, what do you think? It seems to me a rather wonderful opportunity for the three of us ...

Mr Boehme: Mmm ... are you including Mrs Grabert in that?

Manager: I'd like to.

Mr Boheme: No, that's not a good idea. I think you and I could work on this; in fact, on a day-to-day basis you can leave the majority of it to me because I do have a lot of understanding of it. Where I'd probably come on this is that ...

Manager: I think I want to work together on it.

Mr Boheme: Fine, fine.

Manager: I think I'd like to do that - I think I want to be involved in the thick of it you know.

Mr Boehme: May I suggest, though, that it is not wise to involve Mrs. Grabert in it. I'll tell you why: a very simple reason: because of her lack of experience there would be a large element of coaching required ...

Manager: Oh well that's fine, that's fine, I can do that, no problem. I do that already. I'm doing that already. I do like the sort of opportunity for togetherness, the opportunity for all of us to be involved. There's nothing like all working on something together, so putting past tensions behind us, you know.

Mr Boheme: Well now that you have appointed me to Deputy, I'm hoping that will, in some way, solve the problem of Mrs Grabert. I think in addition, you said that you would have a word with her. If you can see your way clear to making a commitment to do that then, yes, by all means, let's bring her into the OSS.

Manager: Yes, but I do need to check that it's okay for me to have a Deputy but, I'm going to root for you, I'm rooting for you.

Mr Boheme: I thought you'd just said that you're ready to make a commitment, that ...

Manager: I'm committed to that as an idea. You and I working together is going to be smashing. I'm committed to that as an idea and I'm going to champion that. You know, step at a time Peter, step at a time, it's important that we take things a step at a time and we work on this together.

Mr Boheme: I thought that ... sorry ... I just got the impression that you seemed to have altered your position somewhat from a few moments ago.

Manager: No, no, no ... we, we, no ...

Mr Boheme: You made a commitment, a clear commitment that you were going to appoint me as your Deputy and now you're saying that you would champion me but you seem to be suggesting that ...

Manager: That's a commitment, that's a commitment. But bear with me, bear with me. Don't underestimate my desire for this to happen, please. I'm 95% sure we can sort that Deputy position out, so let's not be concerned about that. I'm sure, by next Monday or Tuesday we can have that signed, sealed and delivered.

On the Mrs Grabert front, leave it to me for the coaching, but we do need to integrate her. Obviously, you will have a more superior position than her in terms of the hierarchy but I'm very keen on building a linkage between all members, a togetherness. One of the things I wanted to achieve in this session was to actually get things moving forward in a more collaborative sort of way. I think we are achieving that.

Now, going back to you as a person, are you sure you're alright?

Mr. Boheme: Absolutely.

Manager: Are you sure? Everything's fine is it with you?

Mr Boehme: Well ...

Manager: Everything's fine?

Mr Boheme: Well, to be perfectly frank with you, I have had a feeling that I'm being taken for granted. My commitment, as I think anybody would agree, has never been in doubt, but I feel that I'm being taken a little bit for granted. It's a little bit like, "Boheme, he's a good chap, good solid team player, always contributes, always everything on time," but it's just like ...

Manager: Yeh ...

Mr Boehme: "... he doesn't have any need to deserve any ... sort of career." So, I do feel a little bit like that, but now you've helped. You've actually helped! This Deputy thing ...

Manager: We'll sort that, we'll sort that.

Mr Boheme: ... as I have been feeling taken for granted so it is important.

Manager: We will sort that ... we will sort that.

Mr Boheme: And the only other thing is this Mrs Grabert thing.

Manager: You know, there might be a way of being able to address that which is subtle. I'm looking for some subtlety here, I'm looking for a way we can deal with her that doesn't rock the boat too much. I'm wondering if you could think of something that won't make matters worse? There must be a way that you, and perhaps me, through changing our stance in some way, perhaps by working together with OSS, could begin to resolve it. If you're in that Deputy position that, in itself, is going to ...

Mr Boheme: Well, I think that will help. I do see the two issues being related and I think the very fact that I'm more senior is going to send very clear signals to her that I have to be treated with respect. I think that will help.

Manager: I don't want you to be to domineering, you know ...

Mr Boheme: No, that's not a good start.

Manager: Shall we get things moving next week as we've got a six month time frame? We need to begin to formulate a plan and work out who does what and when. I will take care of whatever tasks we get Mrs Grabert to do. I'm just so grateful and pleased that we'll work together and that you're committed and going to be get stuck in on it.

Mr Boheme: Absolutely. I don't think there's ever been any question about my commitment.

Manager: I've got to go in a minute. Is there anything else I can do?

Mr Boheme: I don't think so at the moment. So what are you talking about in the sort of short term in terms of the OSS? What sort of time scale were you talking about?

Manager: Mmm, I suppose we just need to sit down together next week with that. Just have a meeting and think about how we're going to map it out over the course of the next ...

Mr Boheme: Tell you what, can we make it the following week, because, I think it'll give us more time to formulate our ideas? I am actually going away to an Association meeting which is over two nights ...

Manager: Err, right. I tell you what then, I'll e-mail you my papers that I've got on it.

Mr Boheme: Right.

Manager: While you're away read them. If you could do some sort of annotation on them and then e-mail them back to me so that we can begin to think about things.

Mr Boheme: Absolutely ...

Manager: ... then obviously I can respond and we can track ideas like that.

Mr Boheme: And I will share with you a lot of preliminary work on this I did in the DP Project, which is going to be very useful to the OSS.

Manager: That's wonderful. Look, I've got to dive off. Bear with me and we can pick this up ...

Mr Boheme: Mmm ...

Manager: So we'll share e-mails. Brilliant! Great to see you.

Mr Boheme: And you too. Thanks very much indeed.

Manager: Oh no, that's nothing, nothing.

END

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION

TRANSCRIPT FOUR

Manager: Have a seat.

Mr Boehme: Thank you.

Manager: Ah, good to see you, how's life?

Mr Boehme: Ah, pretty good, pretty good.

Manager: Great, great. Everything okay at work?

Mr Boehme: Yeh, more or less, more or less. I'm glad we've finally had a chance to have this meeting because there are one or two things that I feel we need to discuss.

Manager: Same here, same here. Apologies that we couldn't get it in earlier. You know, I think it wasn't for want of trying, but you know, one thing or another.

Mr Boehme: Yeh.

Manager: Great to be here to have this opportunity ... and how's things at home?

Mr Boehme: Not great to be honest.

Manager: Oh dear, sorry to hear that.

Mr Boehme: Mmmm.

Manager: Anything that I can do?

Mr Boehme: No, no. It's just life you know.

Manager: Yeh, yeh. The kids are fine?

Mr Boehme: The kids are fine but Marian and I are divorced now, but ...

Manager: Oh, I hadn't realised, hadn't realised. That must have been a difficult time for you?

Mr Boehme: It's not been the easiest of times.

Manager: I know, I know ... I know.

Mr Boehme: It could be much worse.

Manager: I know, I know.

Mr Boehme: It could probably have been much worse. What do they say about the causes of stress? I think bereavement, divorce and moving houses are the top three. I just got divorced and I've just moved house, so got the top two ...

Manager: Hey, I've been there myself, you know, I know what it's like.

Mr Boehme: You've been divorced?

Manager: Yeh, yeh, so if there's anything I can do, the door's open. It would be good to support you.

Actually, I think that's interesting and helps my understanding of you. I think that openness between us is a healthy thing and I'd like to encourage more of that as we move forward together.

Right! What do you want to get out of this meeting today?

Mr Boehme: Unfortunately, there's a bit of an issue going on with Mrs Grabert which I wanted to bring to your attention and I really wanted you to actually resolve ... to see your way clear to doing that because I think you would be in the best position to do that.

Manager: Do you mind if I just take one or two notes as we go through things? Is that okay?

Mr Boehme: Yep, absolutely.

Manager: Great, okay.

Mr Boehme: That's the important thing at the moment.

Manager: May I tell you what's on my agenda?

Mr Boehme: Yep.

Manager: Unless there's anything else you want to add? I mean, feel free, feel free?

Mr Boehme: Well, I think career development.

Manager: Okay, that's a good one.

Mr Boehme: Yeh.

Manager: I like that. Good, okay, right! A couple of things for me as well and, by the way, I want to see this as part of an ongoing thread of meetings from now onwards!

Mr Boehme: Let's hope that the next one won't be four months from today!

Manager: No, it won't! What we will do, either at the end of this meeting, or in a day or two, we'll get a string of meetings in our diary, at mutually convenient times. I would suggest, at this phase, probably every other week, something like that, which will give us a thread of contact and involvement. This is on top of whatever meetings we have as a team, which I think we need to begin to get into our diaries. So, that needs to happen, and I am conscious that it hasn't happened and it's going to happen, which will be good.

Mr Boehme: Okay, good.

Manager: What I would like to do now is to give you a little bit of feedback about things that I have noticed about you. I wanted you to give me a bit of feedback to me about how I have come across, because I'm keen to get that sort of feedback from the team as well. And I also want to talk about a project that's landed on my desk recently and I think we could all usefully benefit from being involved in. I want to begin to talk about that as well if I may. Is that okay?

Mr Boehme: Yep, yep.

Manager: Great, great. Okay, now, because we don't know each other, we don't know how we like to work, and I suppose it's really healthy to establish some sort of ground rules. You know, about what's appropriate and isn't appropriate in meetings like this, to make everybody feel safe, make everybody feel valued, and to make everybody feel comfortable. Can you think of any sort of ground-rules that we ought to have between us in meetings like this, just on a one-to-one basis?

Mr Boehme: I'm not sure if I quite understand what you mean.

Manager: Can I give you an example?

Mr Boehme: Yeh, please.

Manager: There's one or two things about confidentiality, for example. I want you to feel that what you mention in this room are confidential - they don't go any further, they're between you and me!

Mr Boehme: Right, yeh, yeh.

Manager: Absolutely, that's an important one. I won't go out the room and talk about them with anybody else.

Mr Boehme: Right.

Manager: And who knows, there may be one or two things that I'll say to you, and ask that we just keep it between ourselves, for the time being. It would be good to have that level of relationship.

Mr Boehme: Absolutely. I appreciate that.

Manager: There's another thing, and I'll let you know if it crosses over the boundary, and that's the issue about you and me talking about Mrs. Grabert.

Mr Boehme: Right ...

Manager: You know, there can be an ethical issue there for me. I don't want you to feel uncomfortable about talking about things that trouble you but, at the same time, you'll understand that (just because of that ground rule of confidentiality, that we've just have agreed is a good principle to work by) there are some things that I can't talk to you about. That's something that we can take as a sort of bedrock. Would that be okay? ...

Mr Boehme: Yeh.

Manager: So please feel free to talk about your feelings, providing it doesn't get into anything which is too personal about another team member. Probably you wouldn't dream of touching on anything that is too awkward. It is best if you just talk about your feelings about the relationship and how it's affecting you, then it might give me a sense of perspective about things. So tell me, how is the team for you, what's going on and how are you feeling?

Mr Boehme: Well, I'm feeling very frustrated, in terms of the relationship with Mrs Grabert. There's a very unfortunate combination of youth, inexperience and arrogance in her. I am sure you have probably noticed this as well. She is very, very hostile to attempts to offer her counselling, advice and assistance.

Whenever any new member of the team comes on board, I've always seen it as part of my role to offer my experience and to offer them advice, and to help them, and so I saw no reason not to behave any differently with Mrs Grabert.

Manager: Good for you.

Mr Boehme: BUT, the problem is, as I say, she seems to be very, very hostile to it and she seems to perceive it as if I'm meddling, and she's made this clear to me in no uncertain terms. She sees me not as being a more experienced colleague but as being someone who is determined to meddle in her affairs. She seems to only want to go to you whenever she needs to query something or ask for advice. I can't help having noticed that you seem to be encouraging that relationship and you seem to think that's fine for her to be bothering you all the time with things that I could be helping with.

This culminated recently with an incident, close to the water cooler, where I was drawing to her attention an error she made in preparing a presentation for a client. I had already pointed the error out previously and I had to point it out again, which I did as tactfully as I could and she reacted very angrily to that, and she raised her voice, very aggressively and was really disrespectful to me in front of these clients visiting Max's office, so I think it was a very serious incident. I think it unacceptable behaviour from any colleague and in particular a junior colleague. Therefore, unfortunately, our relationship has now reached what I would call a crisis and, as things stand, at the moment, I am not prepared to put up with it and I will not work with her until she accepts that her behaviour was unacceptable and modifies her behaviour towards me in the future.

If I could deal with it myself, I would, but, as I said, my relationship with her has reached a crisis - we are at an impasse. So really, what I'm asking you is to do is to help resolve this.

Manager: Right, okay.

Mr Boehme: ... and if you could have a word with her and explain that this is unacceptable.

Manager: I'm going to come at this from a bit of a tangent actually, so bear with me. I think that's important. Thanks for telling me how it feels and what your experience of the situation is. I think there is a situation there that needs to be resolved. You're absolutely correct. And probably this difficulty does take precedence over some of these other things that we've got on our agenda to talk about because if we don't get this sorted first, these other things can't happen or won't function effectively. You know, I think all this has relevance with the question I was going to ask you about how am I doing as a leader ...

Mr Boehme: Yeh ...

Manager: ... because there could be some implications there for me and the way I am leading the team in this situation. There could be something that I'm doing that I could do differently. So that is interesting and you are sowing some seeds about that.

Tell me, so I can see more clearly where you're coming from, what do you see as the ingredients of good team working? If you were to look at teams that you've worked in that have functioned well in the past, what is it you notice about a team that functions healthily?

Mr Boehme: Okay. Mutual respect.

Manager: So there's mutual respect.

Mr Boehme: Mm.

Manager: Yeh?

Mr Boehme: Open communication.

Manager: Open communication!

Mr Boehme: And clear understanding of each person's position and role with the team.

Manager: Oh, okay. So there's not a lot of ambiguity about role and position ... yeh?

Mr Boehme: To me, they are the three key elements of good team work.

Manager: So, mutual respect, open communication and clear understanding about roles and position ... right, okay, okay.

Mr Boehme: Mmm ... do you agree with that?

Manager: I think they sound a very good basis for our discussion - the discussion between us is about what a healthy team looks like. Clearly we need to define our terms and understand what each of these means because they might mean slightly different things to each of us and, of course, all of these things are reciprocal. We want to see each of them within the team and we want to see each member in the team displaying those behaviours or attempting to resolve issues by using them. So, we all have some responsibility in that.

So, what do you see as your responsibilities towards, or what behaviours from you would demonstrate mutual respect, to each and every other member of the team - how would that manifest itself if I were to observe you exhibiting mutual respect for others?

Mr Boehme: Well, I think being polite in the first instance ...

Manager: Right.

Mr Boehme: So that no matter what pressure you are under and no matter what the deadline is they were up against, when we ask for assistance or have a request to make of another member of the team, then we do it in a polite way. We don't raise our voices or become belligerent or aggressive in tone.

Manager: No matter what the pressure?

Mr Boehme: No matter what the pressure.

Manager: No matter what the pressure, you would hope to demonstrate that sort of behaviour?

Mr Boehme: Absolutely!

Manager: Right, okay, okay. I think that sounds laudable and very healthy.

Moving on to your next criterion of healthy team working, openness of communication, what sort of standards, what sort of behaviours, what sort of things would we witness, say, if you were demonstrating in an openness of communication?

Mr Boehme: I think I would be honest and up front.

Manager: Honest and up-front?

Mr Boehme: So that, if there is an issue, if there's a problem, I would mention it up front and make that the topic of discussion, rather than disguising it and instead having a conversation about something completely different, with an attitude ...

Manager: I like that, and then thirdly, you mentioned the importance of clear understanding about role and position. How would you seek to crystallise those things so there was less ambiguity about your roles and responsibilities and those of others within the team? What sort of process would you engage in to get a clearer understanding?

Mr Boehme: Right, well, I think that one's abilities and experience should be reflected - in an ideal world you would imagine that would just happen without the need for titles, etc. etc. but we don't live in a real world and I think sometimes titles can just clarify things, can't they?

Manager: Well, I think titles can, but I'm more interested in this word respect that you previously mentioned - respect that develops and arises out of the ability and experience that one has, and respect is something that develops through time with other team members. Obviously, it can sometimes come through formal position of authority, but respect can also be generated in other ways.

So, I think these three qualities are a great starting point for developing the team. We need a set of standards, of values, to subscribe to as a team. These can govern how we begin to interrelate with each other from now onwards as a team. So, what I'd like to propose is that I have a similar sort of discussion with other colleagues and ask them a similar set of questions, and try and distil something from it.

I think I'd like to call a team meeting very shortly by which time I shall have come up with some sort of synthesis about the values we might all agree are good benchmarks against which all of us, all of us, can measure our behaviour. That's Mrs Grabert, Mrs Feyr, me and you! And all of us can then be reasonably challenged, and even challenge ourselves, against the benchmarks that we're all going to agree and subscribe to.

Mr Boehme: Yes ... I think that's a good idea.

Manager: I like that way of moving forward, and I think you've created some thinking there for me which is going to help; and I hope and believe it will help as far as Mrs Grabert's relationship with you is concerned.

Mr Boehme: I agree there has been a lack of clarity in the people's roles and positions which has contributed to the situation.

There is one other thing that I would like to mention as well; it has been noted, and this is not just my own personal experience, and my own personal opinion - there is a feeling that Mrs Grabert is something of a favourite of yours.

Manager: That's interesting.

Mr Boehme: There's particularly a strong relationship there, and it's been noted not just by me personally ...

Manager: Okay, thanks for that feedback. Are there any other bits of feedback about my leadership or anything else that is worthwhile me knowing and understanding?

Mr Boehme: Well, I've enjoyed the influence you've brought into the department and I appreciate the fact that, to a large extent you let me get on with what I'm doing. However, it has been very hard to get a hold of you and to actually get your attention, whereas Mrs Grabert seems to have had no such difficulty and that does open up the impression, to certain people, that your door is always open for her, whilst for others ...

Manager: That's helpful. I mean, I will take note of that. Similarly, do you mind if I raise one or two things with you?

Mr Boehme: No.

Manager: You have given me something to think about there. I'm not necessarily going to seek to defend it or to explain it at the moment. It is interesting to have that feedback. Similarly, can I put one or two things on the table in front of you? I'm not expecting an answer today so you've no need to defend them at all; you've no need to explain them for the moment.

Firstly, I now know that you've gone through a difficult period personally and I thank you for sharing that with me and I think that does actually explain quite a lot. However, looking on from a distance, I think, crikey, you are not the chap that has been described to me by your previous boss. For example, the old vigour for which you were once renowned is not as strong and I think, if there are personal issues, that could help explain it.

So, you've had that personal difficulty, there are difficulties in the office with Mrs Grabert and you seem to be involved quite heavily in the professional association work. Now, I happen to think that activity is actually very helpful. Nevertheless, it does seem to me that you're engaged in it a lot at the moment and probably increasing the amount of involvement. Is that linked in any way with these other two issues - the fact that you are so heavily involved with them, is that in any way shape or form a reflection of how you're feeling here in this business?

Mr Boehme: A little bit. I do feel that I've been slightly taken for granted here and, whilst I don't have an issue with the fact that I was not promoted internally to your position, I think generally I do feel as if my contribution has been taken for granted a bit. I think I've contributed so much over such a long period of time, I do feel I've been taken for granted now. I would like to think my sales figures speak for themselves.

Manager: Oh, they're good, they're good.

Mr Boehme: But I'm seeking new challenges all the time and, to be honest, some of the more interesting, fresher challenges have come from my involvement with the Trade Associations.

Manager: I can see that.

Mr Boehme: But, I think there is real tangible benefit to the Company from my involvement in that activity.

Manager: It would be too easy to ignore that. There must be real tangible benefits for it provides you with a super perspective on a global scale.

Oh, and an apology is due as well, because I don't think I've applauded yet, or indeed strongly enough, the rather refreshing stance you took to the DP Project. I mean, that was delivered in a timely way; it was a challenge where you grasped the baton and you really delivered something that was super.

Mr Boehme: Well, thank you very much, thank you.

Manager: And it's interesting to hear about the way in which you relish challenge in areas that interest you. Are you game for the further challenge?

Mr Boehme: Always.

Manager: You are?

Mr Boehme: Yeh!

Manager: Great, because, as I was saying, there is something around the corner for us and it could help galvanise things around here. Have you heard any whispers at all about the OSS Project?

Mr Boehme: I have.

Manager: Well there's something that we could get our teeth into; in a meaningful sort of way and I would like to rest assured that we can work together on this using your global perspective.. This could then bring forth success for us as a team, individually as well to the Business. So, can I count on you then to get stuck in on this? If so, I will call a meeting next week which specifically looks at OSS so we can get the ball rolling, would that be okay with you?

Mr Boehme: Absolutely.

Manager: Brilliant. Okay, it looks to me as if it is a really exciting project because I think it will resolve some of the frustrations we have had from customers about the way prices are really fragmented globally. Have you sensed some of that frustration?

Mr Boehme: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. I mean, I've discussed this with colleagues through the Association, in various parts of the world, and, as you say, I have a global perspective on it. Therefore, I think it's overdue for I was actually chatting about the need for an OSS type initiative over a year ago, so I'm glad to see that it's actually about to be implemented.

Manager: We're coming to the end of this session is there anything you want to put on the agenda for our meeting next week, over and above the OSS? I'm thinking of the schedule for the meetings that we have got ahead. We probably haven't covered the career development stuff which we can pick up in our next meeting. Is there anything else you want to put on the agenda?

Mr Boehme: Err ... no ... I don't think I need ... the two issues that remain are the same as they were.

Manager: Okay.

Mr Boehme: The situation regarding Mrs Grabert and also some clarity perhaps on what you're going to do about the Deputy position. That was what I was meaning about career and development.

Manager: Right. That's an interesting notion. Right, now I see what you meant.

Mr Boehme: It is customary that there is a number two and er ...

Manager: I think that looking in other departments that's the case so I'm very happy that we continue to have some dialogue about that, particularly in light of what we've talked about today. Okay, we'll keep talking about that, thinking of your career development and thinking about team dynamics and what's right for the team. This does pick up your crystallisation of roles, responsibilities and positions point, doesn't it?

Mr Boehme: Yep.

Manager: And I think there are things that we can do. Whether that's the right answer, you and I need to debate that a bit further. Let's not kick it out of court straight away - let's think about it and debate it. But I do want to underline the fact that in some way, shape or form your experience, your talents, all of that, needs acknowledging.

Mr Boehme: Well thank you, it's good to hear.

Manager: Hey, I've enjoyed this meeting. Thanks very much for coming along. So we'll get something in our diary for next week - a team meeting and another one-to-one with you and me very shortly. Does that sound okay?

Mr Boehme: That sounds very good.

Manager: Okay, if anything else comes to mind, pop your head around the door and we can add that to the agenda.

Mr Boehme: Good.

Manager: Good to see you.

Mr Boehme: And you too. Lovely.

Manager: Okay.

Mr Boehme: Thank you, see you soon.

Manager: See you soon.

END.