1 **The Leadership Point of View**

**Objectives**

The purpose of this class is to introduce students to the concept of a Leadership Point of View that they might develop regardless of their title or positional power. I don’t know of any formula for teaching people how to “see what needs to be done” other than repeated contact with difficult situations and earnest attempts to figure out what’s most important. “Understanding all the forces at play” offers opportunity for applying theoretical models as much as you wish. The “courage to act,” like seeing what needs to be done, is also a developmental challenge over the course of life.

**Case Recommendations**

Any case that challenges readers to pick out the important issues and spend less time on trivia serves the purpose of engaging the students with the LPV concept. Peter Browning and Continental Whitecap (HBS), Astral Records North America Ltd. (Darden, the OB inbox case, not the finance one) are two good alternatives to the one presented here.

**Case Teaching Note: Silver Star’s North American Flight Center (UVA-OB-0714)**

**Overview**

Dennis Ramirez, the manager of the North American flight facility at a major corporation is presented with a career opportunity and a long list of management problems. The director of flight operations position has opened and in two weeks a company executive capable of promoting Ramirez will be visiting the facility. But at present, the facility is a hive of ―people problems. The chief pilot’s micromanagement has caused widespread resentment, which has found an inflammatory voice in the office manager, bitter about not receiving the chief pilot position himself. An older pilot with a troubled personal life has poisoned morale and threatens flight safety. Another pilot, leapfrogged on the seniority list, is suing the company. The chief of maintenance has made himself redundant and disruptive, and another member of the maintenance staff takes his frequent grievances over his supervisor’s head. Finally, older employees are resisting and reacting negatively to the installation of a new computer system. This is a composite case composed from real situations raised by participants in the Darden School of Business’s executive education program on managing the corporate aviation function. Hence, all the situations in this case are real; they just didn’t happen all at once for the same manager; the names have been changed, some situations modified, and equipment identification altered to protect anonymity.

**Topical Areas**

This case addresses issues of jealousy, career management, superior–subordinate relationships, age discrimination, career exhaustion, gender discrimination, and interpersonal relationships. One can use this case to focus on what it takes to build effective working relationships, allowing students to explore issues including dealing with conflict, building trust, giving and receiving feedback, managing performance, and having difficult performance conversations. The case sets up a number of role-plays for students and allows significant practice in handling and conducting difficult conversations.

**Objectives**

* Learn techniques of self-awareness
* Practice having difficult conversations
* Practice problem identification (the LPV “see” part)
* Develop the ability to manage one’s own emotions
* Recognize and help manage emotions in others
* Explore what it takes to build successful work relationships
* Become mindful of the need to respect the goals of others
* Understand the skills needed to be an effective leader

**Timing**

This case can be successfully taught in one 90-minute class. The material fits well in a course module or in an executive program on developing leadership capability. It also nicely ties into a module on managing performance through relationships.

**Student Assignment**

**Reading** Silver Star’s North American Flight Center‖ (UVA-OB-0714).

Chapter 1 L3L 5e.

**Study questions (following the LPV)**

1. 1. What are the problems here?
2. 2. Where do they come from?
3. 3. If you were in Ramirez’s position, what would you do with each one? Why?

**Time Allocation Plan for 90-Minute Class**

20 min What are the problems here?

15 min Where do these problems come from?

45 min What would you do if you were in Ramirez’s position?

5 min What can you learn about using leadership skills to manage interpersonal relationships from this case?

**Analysis and Student Response**

1. ***1. What are the problems here?* (Step One in the LPV)**
3. The quickest way, perhaps, to organize this case is to use the want-got-gap problem identification model. In this approach, (One Model for Solving Problems, UVA-OB-0176) there are three key elements: stakeholder, what he/she wants, and what he/she has. Thus, one can only identify problems from someone’s point of view. GAPS between what “you” want and what “you’ve” got are the definition of a problem for “you.” I’m amazed still in 2010 at how many managers and executives are not clear on what a problem is. (You may also refer to Harold Leavitt’s book *Pathfinding* in which he discusses the role of leadership being first, finding and solving problems and second, perhaps *creating* problems in order to create urgency for change.)
4. You can lay this problem solving model out on the first chalkboard with *want* and *got* columns for each key player. There are lots of players in this situation, so as the problems increase; students get a view of the kind of people problems that a managerial position can produce. The list here does not even include other problems such as costs and finances, inventories, and so on that might also appear on Dennis’ list. The list of problems and how he responds to them will also give Ramirez good insight into his own career thinking regarding the offer from his boss to consider the larger responsibilities of director of flight operations for the company.

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| --- | --- |
| **WANTS** | **GOTS** |
| **Dennis Ramirez** | |
| Impress his boss, Caldwell  Ron Baylor to take care of his flights  Ron to be less obtrusive  Shep to take root as office manager  Happy passengers  Resolve Reinwalter suit  Reenergize Bill Johnson  Know what I should do with my future | Uncertainty  Might be criticized Ron calling asking about Jell-O®  Ron seems to be micro-managing  Shep rivaling with Ron, badmouthing him  Passengers noticing surly crews  Unclear  Johnson seems ready to retire  Offered the FO job; do I want it? |
| **Ron Baylor** | |
| To look good to the boss | Thinks he’s doing okay |
| **Nora Wingate** | |
| Teamwork | Ron one-upping her; Johnson a bad apple |
| **Marjorie McAllister** | |
| Leave me alone to do my job | Ron is meddling in her catering orders |
| **Shep Jenkins** | |
| Be chief pilot All employees to use the new computers | Ron got the job Old guard not using the computers |
| **Stu Sayles** | |
| Take care of his dad | ??? |
| Get respect at work | Not promoted |
| **Helmut Reinwalter** | |
| Be respected for seniority | Junior guy transferred first and gets seniority |
| **Randy Johnson** | |
| Respect | Relieved of duties |
| **Sam Coombs** | |
| Be supervised by a male | Nora Wingate |
|  |  |

***2. Where do these problems come from?*  (Step Two in the LPV)**

There are a number of approaches to analyzing the issues in this case. Much of the analysis comes down to career management. Ramirez faces a promotion opportunity and Jenkins, Johnson, and Reinwalter have encountered career issues that are affecting the unit. Ramirez will need to use this situation to assess the fit between his skills and preferences and the demands of the new DO job that Caldwell is offering. If Ramirez is challenged and not enjoying the problems in this job, he likely won’t like or succeed at managing those in the next job. Instructors can use this as an opportunity to explore with students their own attitude toward the problems here.

One can use the Driver/Brousseau model of career concepts (Linear, Steady State Experts, Spiral, and Transitories) to explore how people can make the decision about the next ―promotion. Virtually all of my students have seen Steady State experts ruined by promotion into linear management positions, so although society promotes the linear model, this may or may not be the best thing for Ramirez to take.

Likewise, those in the unit who are grousing about not being promoted may be unhappy because they only have one model of success in their heads. Conversations that help them see the differences in the four career concepts and that all are legitimate and valuable can perhaps help Jenkins and Johnson see that being promoted is not the only definition of success. I have also developed a “quick and dirty” tool to give a rough estimate of the four Career Concepts (contact me for further information and a copy).

The manager/student then will need to bring all his or her interpersonal skills and training to bear. Skills in conflict management and using the principles of language of leadership (see, for example, Ten Tips for Communicating Effectively, UVA-OB-0684, by James G. Clawson, Charlottesville, Va.: Darden Business Publishing, 1999) will be useful here.

Another analytic focus comes from a consideration of the target of influence: visible behavior, conscious thought process, or underlying values and beliefs. These will be introduced in a subsequent chapter. *Level Three Leadership* introduces these three levels and informs students about how to think about influencing each. Level One or Level Two leadership will not likely get Ramirez past all the dangers that face him (e.g., telling Coombs to respect his boss and not go to more senior men likely won’t work). You can use this discussion to give a foreshadowing of concepts to come.

Students, therefore, should assess each of the flight center’s problems with the desires of all the participants in mind. What, Ramirez might ask himself, do both parties want in this situation? Could there be desired outcomes on each side, possibly unarticulated, which are not mutually exclusive? How can he bring about a win–win outcome here?

***3. What would you do with each one? Why?***

This is the “courage to act” portion of the LPV. The class should briefly discuss the assumptions that have been made and the actions that have been ruled out. The class can arrive at the solutions that seem to, wherever possible, create a win–win situation, satisfying the participants and bettering the organization as a whole. As the first study question suggests, it will be important for Ramirez to prioritize. He faces a number of problems, but some may be particularly pressing, especially given the prospect of Richard Caldwell’s visit in two weeks’ time. With that in mind, we have prioritized Ramirez’s recommended actions into the following strategy:

1. 1. *Meet with Ron Baylor.* Baylor is Ramirez’s first priority because his micromanagement of the other staffers has put him at the center of the organization’s discontent: the pilots, Nora Wingate, Marjorie McAllister and especially Shep Jenkins have shown overt hostility toward him. Ramirez needs to deduce what it is that motivates Baylor to be officious. If it is indeed true that ―his actions reflected the love he felt for the flight center and the stake he had in its success, ‖ then Ramirez needs to make him understand that the organization about which he feels so strongly would be better served by a chief pilot who did his own job and let others to do theirs. In spite of the controversy surrounding him, Baylor’s enthusiasm and dedication makes him a highly valuable employee, and so Ramirez should avoid threatening him with removal. Rather, he might propose a time frame in which Baylor could work to become a better delegator.
3. 2. *Meet with Shep Jenkins.* Jenkins is another high priority because his resentment at not receiving the chief pilot job has led him to poison the atmosphere at the flight center, affecting the morale of everyone around him. Other employees are aware of this problem, but Jenkins himself may not be. Ramirez should impress upon him the importance of setting a positive example for the office staff, give him a chance to mend his ways, and be prepared to move him if the situation does not improve.

The office transition to the new computer system could provide an ideal opportunity for Jenkins to adopt a new management style. If Ramirez can emphasize the central role of this transition in ensuring the success of the flight center itself, Jenkins may no longer feel he was denied a key position in the organization when he was made office manager instead of chief pilot. With Ramirez’s coaching, Jenkins may be able to translate his healed ego into a more charismatic, less petulant leadership style. The eventual goal is for Jenkins to convince his staff to take similar ownership of the office’s new computer system and its role in their communal success.

1. 3. *Address Stu Sayles’s attitude problems*, which are affecting morale among flight crews. Though past counseling efforts improved Sayles’s attitude only briefly, it seems clear that some form of away-from-the-cockpit counseling or self-improvement course is needed here, since his major difficulties are originating away from the workplace too. It is not Ramirez’s job to be a counselor, but perhaps he can help arrange better counseling or an EQ course for Sayles; at any rate it *is* his job to let the veteran pilot know that his focus in the workplace must be his work.
2. 4. *Take on the Helmut Reinwalter affair.* What, exactly, Ramirez ought to do cannot be clear until after he talks to April Jelinek, but as flight center manager, he should be contemplating what it might take to forestall Reinwalter’s impending suit. Given that the source of the problem seems to be Ron Baylor’s reversal of the seniority of Reinwalter and Bernhard Pietzsche, Ramirez should of course consider the option of re-reversing it, and project some possible consequences (would Pietzsche sue in turn?). He also should find out from Baylor why the leapfrogging took place to begin with, just in case Baylor’s explanation might offer any possible solutions to the problem.
4. 5. *Talk to Randy Johnson.* Johnson is eligible for retirement, though he has not set a date. Perhaps Ramirez should encourage him to do so, as his on-the-job performance indicates that in spirit he has retired already.

To give the last phase of Johnson’s career the sense of purpose that he feels it has lost since the arrival of Nora Wingate and the maintenance supervisor position, Ramirez might encourage Johnson to act as a kind of ―mentor‖ for Wingate, schooling her on the tasks he once handled. Of course, the fact that Wingate has been in her current position for three years now might render this idea unworkable. Short of a reorganization to give Johnson all his old duties back, which does not seem desirable, the focus of Ramirez’s efforts probably ought to be shepherding Johnson into retirement as soon as possible.

1. 6. *Meet with Sam Coombs.* This problem comes lower on the priority list because of the likely frivolity of Coombs’s as-yet-unknown grievance. But Ramirez should meet with Coombs—who has skirted around accepted communication channels to appeal to him—in part to impress on Coombs the importance of respecting those channels in the future. Other than employing active listening in hearing Coombs’s complaint, Ramirez will not know what exactly to do until he hears the complaint itself.
2. 7. Finally, during the course of the next two weeks, Ramirez needs to think carefully about whether or not to accept Richard Caldwell’s offer of the director of flight operations position. The decision process will involve a good deal of self-assessment, as Ramirez asks himself what his own definition of success really is whether the extra workload and personality issues of the headquarters job will be offset by the satisfaction of greater pay, prestige, and perceived promotability.

This case lends itself well to role-plays, and students can learn a good deal if they act out Ramirez’s meetings with his coworkers. To the best of their ability, participants should bring alive the personalities suggested in the case, lending color—and special challenges—to the resolution of each interpersonal problem. If you would like additional guidance on managing role-plays, please see the chapter on role-playing in *Teaching Management* by James G. Clawson and Mark E. Haskins (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

**Principles of Level Three Leadership Influence**

1. Clarify what you want.

2. Observe the VABEs (values, attitudes, beliefs, and expectations) of others.

3. Confirm the VABES of others.

4. Establish a probationary time frame.

5. Coach to the best of your skills using effective language, listening, and invitations.

6. Learn what you need to become a better coach.

7. Assess progress and continue or move on.

**Chalkboard Plan**

**Board 1** Problems: (you may not wish to analyze all of these … the key ones are in bold) I use the 1) who, 2) want, 3) got gap model of problem identification)

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| 1. **LPV “SEE”** Dennis Ramirez Ron Baylor Sam Coombs Shep Jenkins Randy Johnson April Jelinek   W/G W/G W/G W/G W/G W/G  Marjorie McAllister Bernhard Pietzsche Helmut Reinwalter Stu Sayles Nora Wingate  W/G W/G W/G W/G W/G |

**Board 2 (Analysis/Understanding all the forces at play)**

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| 1. **LPV 2: Understand/Analysis:** EQ? | Assumptions of the Key Players |  |

**Board 3 (Courage to Act)**

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| 1. Action: What you **do** if you were in Ramirez’ position? |





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**Caselet Analysis**

*George Hendrickson had just been asked to be the new CEO of the Rocky Mountain Box Company. He was the first person who was not a member of the founding family to be in charge of the company. Competition was fierce in the industry and margins were small, often just pennies a box. George and his colleagues, former peers and now employees, knew the cardboard box business inside and out. Yet many competitors were developing all kinds of new container options, including plastics, plastic coatings, linings, enclosures, odd shapes and sizes, and so on. George had a strong loyalty to his company, to its employees, and he wanted to ensure their future.*

*Research the paperboard container business on the Internet and then be prepared to offer advice to George.*

The short caselet here is designed simply to get students to begin learning how to gather information about an industry and then to use that information to begin to lay out a plan for how to compete in it. Given the information they gather, do they “see” what is necessary to compete in that industry (extreme attention to cost control)? Do they have a plan for analyzing all of the forces at play? Do they have a plan for action?

A simple analysis would include the following:

Box Industry tends to be very large, individual units change hands, cost is critical.

An analysis would include competitors, paper costs, shipping costs, packaging trends like anti-plastic green movements, etc.

The founder of this business might shrink from even trying given the economies of scale required or he might plan to build a unit that had extreme cost controls/advantages and then sell it to a larger company. Overall, since this is an established industry, the barriers to entry would be large and daunting.

A simple web search on “paperboard box industry” produces pages of information on this industry.

**LECTURE OUTLINE CHAPTER 1: The Leadership Point of View**

This is a fairly short and simple chapter; however the concepts introduced here have profound effect on a person’s ability to lead. First the concept of the Leadership Point of View (LPV) is central to the book’s other themes. Second, the notion of living inside-out vs. outside-in and to what proportion is central to the capacity of people to lead. I find this discussion with all my audiences to be very powerful.

1. **Leadership is about managing energy, first in yourself and then in those around you.**
   1. When you walk into an organization, you can feel/tell the energy level and consequently the quality of leadership.
   2. Psychological mirroring: people in a room will migrate toward the strongest personality, for better or for worse: are you a net energy contributor or taker?

*Instructor’s Notes:*

1. **Point of View is a state of mind—not necessarily related to title or position.**
   1. What’s a follower’s point of view?
   2. What’s a bureaucratic point of view?
   3. What’s a leadership point of view?

*Instructor’s Notes:*

1. **Leadership Point of View**
   1. Do you SEE what needs to be done?
   2. Do you UNDERSTAND ALL of the forces at play, not just your favorite ones?
   3. Do you have the COURAGE to act to make things better?

*Instructor’s Notes:*

1. **Seeing what needs to be done.**
   1. No recipe for doing this.
   2. A frame of mind
   3. Depends on your training

*Instructor’s Notes:*

1. **Understanding all of the forces at play not just your favorite ones?**
   1. Political
   2. Financial
   3. Marketing
   4. Organizational
   5. Communications
   6. Economics
   7. Labor Issues
   8. Public Relations, etc.

*Instructor’s Notes:*

1. **Courage to Act to make things better**
   1. Living inside-out versus outside-in? Locus of Control?
   2. Clarity of vision—where do you want to go/be?
   3. How hard are you willing to work to make it happen? Gandhi spent his whole life.
   4. How much of your life do you live inside-out? Why or why not?

*Instructor’s Notes:*

**Exam Items**

The correct answer is italicized.

1. Leadership is about managing …
   1. People.
   2. *Energy*
   3. The system.
   4. Yourself.
2. Only people with organizational title and perspective can have the leadership point of view.
   1. False.
3. “That’s not my job.” is a statement one might expect from someone with …
   1. The Leadership Point of View
   2. A Follower’s Point of View
   3. *A Bureaucratic Point of View*
   4. An Administrative Point of View
4. List the three elements to the Leadership Point of View:
   1. Can you SEE what needs to be done?
   2. Do you UNDERSTAND ALL of the forces at play?
   3. Do you have the COURAGE TO ACT to make things better?
5. You cannot change the world unless you …
   1. Change the leaders
   2. Change the system
   3. *Change yourself*
   4. Change people’s religions.
6. A major reason for the lack of leadership in the world is …
   1. *The fear of rejection.*
   2. Too few born leaders.
   3. Not enough opportunity.
   4. Too many poor people.
7. True leaders always know that they are doing the right thing.
   1. False.
8. People who live exclusively inside-out are usually known as …
   1. Great leaders
   2. Pillars of society.
   3. Boring.
   4. *Narcissistic.*
9. A major reason for a lack of leadership is bad genes.
   1. False (lack of strategic thinking)