Optimizing Team Performance and Engagement

An organization’s ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage.

-Jack Welch
Why Today’s Teams Require Different Leadership Skills

Success in today’s fast-paced businesses requires teams – standing teams that work together regularly and ad-hoc, short-term, cross-functional teams with a deliverable and a deadline – to deliver better results more quickly than ever before. Unfortunately, research tells us that most teams are underperforming, with their own members reporting that progress is derailing.

...Team leaders rely on authoritative approaches to direct the work of the team.

...Team members look to their leaders to tell them what to do and how to do it, based on historic patterns of leaders directing the work.

As a result:

...Team members don’t bring their most creative ideas to the work as they don’t have the confidence these ideas will be incorporated.

...Team members don’t stretch and grow their skills.

...Team leaders are pulled into minutia of the work, keeping them away from work they are capable of doing.

Modern teams need a different kind of leadership, with leaders who recognize that the way to deliver the best solutions is with more engaged team members, generated through principles and routines that enable members to bring their full potential to the solutions and learn in the process.
Outcomes of a Deliberate Approach to Apprenticeship

*Creates the urgency* your company needs in its teams

*Develops better and more innovative solutions* by leveraging each team member’s unique talents

*Creates* a deeper sense of *accountability* in team members

*Builds and deepens* trust-based relationships among colleagues

*Encourages collaboration* in learning and development

Makes the work a *better experience* for those involved

*Uses day-to-day work* as the *context for learning*, thereby making the process quicker and the learning immediately applicable

*Enables* leaders to *assess* the judgment of less experienced talent and therefore *focus* their teaching and delegated responsibility at the right levels

*Makes explicit – and teachable* – the often implicit thought process and approach of leaders

Ultimately makes the team more *effective and efficient*
A mindset shift is required to make this work.

**For Teachers**
- Telling what you know → Asking Questions
- Direction → Teaching and Developing

**For Learners**
- Coachee → Learner
- Completing an assignment → Owning the outcome
- Safety (one-to-one) → Stretch (visibility, perform)
Why Choose a Cohort of Leaders vs. Intact Teams?

If work is done in stable teams, where the work process is straightforward and routines exist for how the teams get the work done, bringing the entire team through the learning experience helps to make learning deliberate in what each team member does and in the way the team works. Having the team go through the learning experience together provides unique opportunities for coaching about how to activate the new skills and tools in context.

If the work in your organization isn’t done in stable teams, or if it is hard to convene intact work teams to attend learning experiences together, then the leader cohort approach would be most appropriate for you. This approach creates a network of leaders who understand and are practicing the approach at the same time, enabling peer coaching and support for one another as these practices play out in the context of your organization.
Our Philosophy: Making Apprenticeship Work

Developing Your Team is a framework that provides a formal structure to help you develop more productive teams AND accelerate the learning of team members while the do real work.

The four guiding principles are:

**Point of the Wedge**
The practice of pushing responsibility combined with support to less experienced talent in order to increase teaching, learning and development

**Socratic Method**
The use of questions and enquiry to teach rather than just give the answer or solve the issue.

**Problem Based Learning**
An instructional method that uses problems encountered in the course of work not just as tasks to be completed but also as the context for learning

**Own the Issue**
A heightened sense of accountability and motivation for team members in delivering quality.
Contact Leah Houde for more information.
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