



Moments of Leadership Truth (Framework)

You can't NOT communicate

Purpose

The aim of the *Moments of Leadership Truth* framework is to raise managers' awareness of the powerful impact that their words and behaviours (*including their silence and inaction*) have on the widespread patterning of interactions through which organizational culture, day-to-day practices, and performance outcomes emerge.

When to Use It

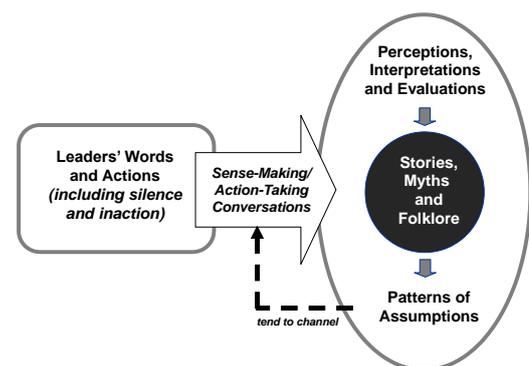
This framework, and the principles that underpin it, is central to a view of everyday leadership capability and performance that recognises the importance of leaders' everyday interactions with members of their team and other individuals. As such, it should be integral to strategies and programmes aimed at developing leadership capability. And it should also be used as an ongoing reminder to practising managers of the power that their everyday behaviours exert on other people's practices – whether intentionally or otherwise. And whether with positive or negative effect!

What It Is

Moments of Leadership Truth illustrates the way in which a leader's words and actions serve as cultural symbols for other people. And it suggests examples of everyday behaviours that are likely to have a significant effect on the ways in which people decide what things are 'really like' and how they should behave.

Whenever a manager interacts with one or more members of their team – whether directly or indirectly - this provides a '*moment of leadership truth*'. That is, it signifies how they view current events, what is important, what they stand for, what sort of behaviour is appropriate, and so on; *whether or not this accurately reflects the manager's conscious intent*. The ways in which people perceive and interpret these interactions, in their everyday conversations with others, tend to shape the characteristic behaviours that emerge over time within particular organizational contexts. *This process occurs whether managers actively engage with it or not*. So, silence and inaction have an equally potent effect. The framework reminds managers that they need to recognize their position as role models whenever and wherever they interact with members of their team (*or decide not to*).

The framework recognizes that people interact continuously with others across the organization – both formally and, *more particularly*, informally - to make sense of what is going on and to decide how best to act. In this way, they share their perceptions and interpretations of organizational life; and, over time, many of these stories enter the organization's mythology and folklore. Through this ongoing process of perceiving, interpreting, evaluating and acting, patterns of assumptions emerge and become taken for granted. That is to say, the tendency is for thoughts, feelings and actions to be channelled, imperceptibly, in line with the currently established patterns of perception and interpretation. So, this process is mutually reinforcing. It is for this reason that cultural change is often so difficult to achieve deliberately. Although the potential always exists for emerging patterns of thought and action to change spontaneously, through these same local interactions, and for more widespread changes to follow in its wake.



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Managers' behaviours, *as perceived and interpreted by others*, provide a powerful input to this ongoing sense-making-cum-action-taking process, *whether they intend them to or not*. Managers therefore need to 'think culturally' as they go about their day-to-day activities. This means:

- trying to detect the existing patterns of assumptions that are channelling the ways in which staff perceive, interpret and act in response to their day-to-day words and behaviours;
- using these insights and inferences to anticipate how people might respond to specific actions that they might wish to take, and to inform the ways in which they set about the task;
- using everyday conversations and interactions, to help people (including themselves!) to make better in ways that they perceive to be organizationally beneficial.

How We Can Help

If you would like to explore this topic more fully, and understand how the *Moments of Leadership Truth* framework and related approach to leadership performance can help you better address your business agenda, please email info@chrisrogers.com or use the GET IN TOUCH link on the Company's website: www.chrisrogers.com.