

Jonathan E. Small's Management Philosophy

"Everyone can be great because everyone can serve."

Martin Luther King, Jr. (American Civil Rights Activist)

My management philosophy covers tenets of my overall leadership style that I would self-describe as situational servant leadership and which seems to fit the objectively defined democratic (participative) leadership style.

VALUES

"If you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything."

Alexander Hamilton (American Founding Father)

The first and foremost tenet that forms the foundation of my management philosophy is that one's own VALUES and those of the organization are the guide to any decision that needs to be made.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #1: VALUES

Filter every decision through organizational values and principles.

PERSPECTIVE

"A desk is a dangerous place from which to view the world."

John Le Carre (novelist)

Another important idea to keep in mind when approaching leadership is gaining a holistic PERSPECTIVE of the part of the organization that you one is leading. The idea here is to take time and reflect on the day-to-day occurrences of the workplace and on your direct reports' attitudes, thoughts, and doings.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #2: PERSPECTIVE

Sit on the balcony occasionally and take inventory of the organization.

SERVICE

"Only a life lived in the service of others is worth living."

Albert Einstein (scientist, genius)

Making sure and showing that you, as a leader, are willing and able to do the work of those whom you lead is extremely important. To get into the world of your direct reports shows that you are willing to understand what they are doing and that you appreciate it.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #3: SERVICE

Work hard and pitch in with what colleagues are doing; model hard work.

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ADAPT

“It is not the strongest or most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change.”

Charles Darwin (scientist, philosopher)

In order to manage an organization, a leader must be able to take change in stride. A leader must be willing to acknowledge when change is needed and be the one who navigates it and/or be able to see when it is required and lead it. Either way, a leader must be malleable and adaptive.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #4: ADAPT

Roll with the proverbial punches; be flexible with the process of change.

FOCUS

“You will never reach your destination if you stop and throw stones at every dog that barks.”

Winston Churchill (famous political leader)

Staying on the path that you are directing (under guidance from your organization) is extremely important. Though many people, rogues and well-meaning members of the organization alike, will try to get you off on detours, you must stay the course that you have planned.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #5: FOCUS

Keep your eye on the mainstage and not on the inevitable sideshows; major in the majors.

HARMONY

“He who lives in harmony with himself lives in harmony with the universe.”

Marcus Aurelius (Roman emperor and philosopher)

Striving to maintain positive working relationships is an important part of being a manager. To allow rifts in relationships to linger is to let doubt and distrust win the day. Work to build bridges and put out fires and do not let the sun go down on anger when working in and among people in an organization. Model patience and goodwill. Be a moral example in terms of relational conduct to those who you lead.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #6: HARMONY

Maintain positive rapport and solid relationships with colleagues and those you lead.

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RECONCILE

“You will never truly know yourself or the strength of your relationships until both have been tested by adversity.”

J.K. Rowlings (novelist)

Relating to harmony, reconciliation is an important piece of the managerial puzzle. Though harmony is something that one attempts to maintain via general means, reconciliation is something that must be proactively sought out in the case of a rift in a relationship. Leading of any kind brings trials and in relational trials, approach them with a mindset of working through the problem and coming to an understanding. Be empathetic, not stubborn.

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY TENET #7: RECONCILE

Do not let the embers of a conflict simmer; keep short accounts with colleagues.