

## GETTING “UNSTUCK” AND MOVING TOWARD POSITIVE CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP: A RADICAL APPROACH

By Susan Eisner, MPH, CASAC, Trainer and Visionary Leadership Coach

A series of at least six biweekly, 3-hour cutting-edge leadership and team building seminars has been designed for leadership teams. The topics are:

1. Effective Leadership Qualities and Values
2. Expectations Within the Leadership Team
3. Unconscious “Rules” About Leadership
4. Issues of Leaders’ Self-Esteem that Impact Leadership
5. Personality Traits and Styles that Impact Leadership
6. Giving and Receiving Feedback as Leaders

The group sessions provide the leadership team a never before had opportunity to increase cohesiveness, productivity and personal growth for its members and the group as a whole. These meetings will be unlike others conducted elsewhere, and will go to a deeper, more profound level of learning by helping members move past “stuck points” to more personal and professional success. These sessions also work well in combination with individual coaching, as areas for further individual exploration will emerge in participants as the group sessions progress.

Using a combination traditional and non-traditional approach, the group and individual sessions allow participants to explore within themselves and with each other issues of leadership in their positions as department heads and managers. Participants will do an in-depth exploration of leadership issues and experience improved bonding of members and more effective communication. Traditional discussion methods will be combined with powerful, innovative experiential techniques. These will allow members to more quickly get to the root of problems and concerns within the leadership group and within themselves, and discover strategies for improvement.

Descriptions of the Group Topics are:

- Effective Leadership Qualities and Values
  - Identifying leadership qualities and values that promote positive function of leaders
  - Identifying what blocks leaders from exhibiting these and how leaders keep themselves “small”, including unconscious negative beliefs about one’s ability to achieve these
  - Unblocking these blocks and allowing leaders to incorporate these into themselves and the team
  - Example: Effective leadership traits and behaviors include honesty, good communication skills, and empowerment of those who report to these leaders.
- Expectations Within the Leadership Team:
  - What the Vice President expects from his managers
  - What the managers expect from the Vice President
  - What the managers expect from each other
  - Example: The VP expects managers to work independently, the managers expect each other to do what they each agree to work on in projects, and the managers expect the VP to support them in difficult situations and to train them to fix errors they may make

- Unconscious "Rules" About Leadership
  - Identifying unspoken "rules" within the leadership team that negatively govern how it functions
  - Where do these rules arise from and who creates them?
  - Replacing negative rules with positive ones to facilitate group trust and cohesiveness
  - Example: An unproductive rule may be, "Don't be direct and honest when expressing yourself to the VP or to a particular manager."
  
- Issues of Leaders' Self-Esteem that Impact Leadership
  - Definition of self-esteem, and traits, behaviors and attitudes that indicate healthy self-esteem
  - Positive and negative "labels" we give ourselves and others in the team
  - How leaders' negative labels of self and others, how their negative behaviors and attitudes, and how their low self-esteem impacts the team
  - How leaders' underlying issues of failure and success affect the team
  - Replacing negative labels, behaviors and attitudes with positive ones
  - Example: A manager who labels herself as "insecure" may not take needed risks in her position, or may not empower those who report to her to work independently from her.
  
- Personality Traits and Styles that Impact Leadership
  - Identifying traits that negatively affect team members such as a need to be in control, passivity, victimhood, blaming others, defensiveness, etc. and positive traits such as collaboration, taking responsibility, assertiveness, etc.
  - Identifying blocks that prevent leaders from exhibiting the positive traits
  - Unblocking these blocks and allowing leaders to incorporate healthier traits
  - Example: A leader may inappropriately blame others for a problem and create defensiveness in them vs. taking responsibility for their part of and contribution to the problem.
  
- Giving and Receiving Feedback as Leaders
  - Functional and dysfunctional methods of giving feedback
  - How leaders experience receiving feedback
  - What may block leaders from effectively giving and receive feedback
  - Strategies to improve giving and receiving feedback
  - Example: Feedback can be given in an aggressive or condescending way, or directly and assertively. When people receive feedback, they may feel angry, scared of losing their job, or open to constructive criticism.