

Today we are talking about what style of leader you might be, or what's a great style of leadership, and what styles don't work well. The reason why we're discussing that is because the May event is our public version of what we do 3 times a year with our Mastermind Groups, our Coaching Clients, all of that stuff. We have what we call our Next-Level Leadership Live Retreats. We do those here in Nashville as well. We're actually going to be taking some of those around the country. We are planning one of those retreats is going to be in Hawaii. We just discussed that at the last event. We're pretty excited about that. We're also looking to do one in Tahoe, and some other fun places.

The make up, our demographic in there, is half leaders, half entrepreneurs, folks that are absolutely all about taking their leadership to the next level. As we did our retreat here last week, something that was fantastic was we did some fun exercises with them. Everybody in the group is a leader. One of the things I wanted to do was help them to see what styles work, and what styles don't. We had a little thing where we broke everybody up into teams, and then just, as I do my air-quotes, randomly assigned specific leaders. Now, of course, this was all picked well in advance, and set up. We chose specific people that it would be difficult to be in the leadership roles that we gave them, and some that it would be very easy for.

The 3 types of leaderships that we set up: One was a democratic style. Tap the collective intelligence; see what kind of information your team has. I'm not going to tell you the stuff that we did because who knows; I may do that with you someday. The concept of the leadership style was: You've got these people around this table. Get their input. Find out what they have. If they've got anything to put in on it, great. Grab that information, then make the decision, and go forward. At anytime, as a leader you can make the decision to move forward with the process, with the project that we were working on, but make sure that you get people's input. If nobody has anything to say, move on, but start there, and then make your decision.

The second leadership style we had was a dictator, somebody who even if people gave input, they were supposed to follow what the dictator said. Now again, the people in these teams had no clue. These are folks that all get together 4 times a year total. We spend time together in our Mastermind Calls. We do a lot of stuff. We know each other. This is something where everybody knows the other people. They've been experiencing them for a while. Now, we've taken some of them and said, "You don't get to be this way. You've got to be this over here." It's completely shocking the table, but still, "You have to be this style. You can not pull out of the style that we've assigned to you." The dictator one was if people gave input that's fine. You don't take it. You tell them, "Well, do this. Do this. Override, do this, no plan. This is what we're doing. We're doing this, this, this." You have to be a total dictator in this process.

The third style was the absent team leader. This was the person that just really didn't have any direction that really didn't give much input in the process. They were not allowed to give direction. They were only supposed to go, "Well, I mean I don't know." It's just got to be clueless about the process. I have to tell you, our event space full of all of these leaders, our team was dying laughing, walking around and watching these processes, and listening to these conversations, and listening to how people were responding to each other. Looking at the people that we knew were pushing to be dictators that weren't dictators, that we were making them be that, and how difficult and painful it

was.

For our absent leader who just sat there, and every time I came around looked at me with this look in his eyes of, I'm going to kill you when this is all done. It was phenomenal. It was hilarious. We worked on this part for only about 20 minutes, period, that was it. When all was done I went through all of the teams, and asked how it went. Again, these are people that know each other, and like each other, and respect each other a lot. It was very difficult for them to say, "Our leader was a dork. Our leader was a jerk. Hey, this didn't work out at all." You could see frustration on certain people. You could see certain areas where people just didn't even listen to their leader. We went table, by table, by table.

Here's what I want you to understand: After we revealed, "Hey guys, this was actually set up," which was hilarious because then everybody was like, "You guys suck." This was so painful. I'm like, "Well, now we can get the truth. Now we want to hear. What did you think? What did you experience?" We went through all of these leaders. This was a competition, by the way. They were actually doing something, and whoever did it the best won. You put a room full of leaders in place; they're all going to be ready for competition. They all love challenge. They're goal was complete the challenge, win. Do whatever it takes to win.

When we revealed that this actually had nothing to do with the challenge itself, that it had to do with leadership styles and learning leadership styles, it was phenomenal to see how everybody responded. When we went through the dictator tables we went through those leaders. We had multiple people leading folks as a dictator. The thing that we found out from their teams was a couple of things. One thing is that we discovered that the frustration of people who had great information, the frustration of people who actually the thing that we were doing were experts in this area that could make this thing happen, that could cause this thing to win, were shut down because the leader would not take their information, would not take their input. We had some people that were so frustrated because they didn't get to give that input. Even if they gave the input, it was completely ignored.

The person leading the process did not care about the other people's input. They allowed it. They didn't stop them from saying stuff. When it was their time, they made the decision on what was going to happen. Instead of taxing the collective intelligence, instead of getting great input, these were people who appeared insecure. These are people who appeared egotistical, prideful, unmoving. The kind of folks that many of you who have worked for. My question is, how many of you are like this person? Do you find yourself not getting information from your team members? Do you find yourself having to be the one with all of the answers? That is a very, very painful place to be when you're the team member because you have talent.

For me, I'm constantly taxed the collective intelligence of my team, always. "What do you think about this? What's your input on this? Hey, this is your area, tell me? Let me push back on this. How about this? Did you think about that?" I get the 30,000 ft. view a lot that I help the teams with because they're so much on the front line. I'm always looking for their input in so many things I've done, a hundred times before. Yet, getting their input is not just about getting to the answer. Instead, it's helping them to come up with the answer. So many times, I'm pushing my team members to get the answer even though I already know it. Even though I already know I've done this a thousand times. I've got this. I've done this. I've experienced this before. I've looked at all the good ways, the bad ways. I've been through this, so what? If all I do is tell them what to do, how much does it grow them?

It does not grow them at all. Instead, I want them to come up with it. For all of you that are listening that have been through any of our events, you know that I push you to come up with the answer. I want you come up with it. As you come up with it there's buy-in, there's ownership. When there's a dictatorship that does not exist. People start throwing their ideas out and very quickly see you don't care about their ideas. You don't care if they've got better information than you do. You don't care about that, so they stop giving information. On top of that, what they do is they slow down their productivity.

It was great to watch the teams and point out afterwards how well was the product- ... Where was the productivity when we started the contest? Where was it at the end? You could literally see that the people jumped in to go ballistic, and kept pushing, and kept trying, and, and, "Oh, you're really not going to listen? All right, fine. Let's just do it your way. We'll just wait for you to give direction on this thing. Apparently, my input doesn't matter. I'll just sit here and wait for you to guide me." What a terrible way to lead a team. Definitely not leading a team to success.

Looking at another dictator in the room, very high I personality style, could not, was struggling in being the dictator because just a sweetheart of a person. Was trying, trying, trying. The team actually overran that leader. It was awesome to watch. This person was struggling. Just a great leader, and has a fantastic business. She does an incredible time leading her team. In trying to be this dictator person, which is so not her personality style, the other team members overrode her. Why, because they had to give their input. They wanted to give their input. They wanted to actually win the competition because they thought that that's what it was about. They could not understand why this person was being so harsh. Why was she trying to be such a dictator? Why was she trying to tell them everything they were supposed to do? For them, they just overran that leader. It wasn't about leadership, it was about dictating.

As we looked over the dictatorships, and we looked over those teams, and what we discovered is something very important. While they worked hard, to an extent, during the competition and still wanting to win the competition, even at the end some of them were going, "We were going to do whatever we were going to do anyways. We were just pushing because we wanted to win. We wanted to win." When I went through and asked all of those team members, "How long are you going to stay on this team?" They'd answer, "Oh, well not long at all. There's no way. This isn't the kind of leadership that I would want." After we pointed out this is what we set up. This is the kind of leader that you had. They're like, "Yeah, no. This wouldn't last long at all." We all wanted to win the competition. Once that was over it was just like, "Whatever." Interesting process of looking at this dictatorship.

Then we took a look at the absent leader. When you have somebody who is not giving input, and we looked over those teams, the interesting part of this was at the end of the day, the team that won, that was an absent leader team. They actually completed the contest better than anybody else. Here was an interesting thing; they were very frustrated in the process. As we went around the absent leader team members, what we discovered is people were so frustrated that their leader was not giving input, and knowing that this was somebody who had information. They were all just like, "Well, whatever." We had total, different make-ups of personality styles on the teams. Those that were more D, or I, personality styles were like, "This person isn't doing anything. I'm just going to make it happen," which is great, but losing respect in the process.

When you go down to the S, C personality styles, what we discovered is a person going, "Why will you not lead us? You're supposed to lead us." The team that won, we actually got to the end. I pointed out that this was their leader. One of the high C personality styles went, "Yeah, I totally forgot that he was actually our leader because he wasn't doing anything." For that person that was the absent leader, completely frustrated by not being able to give input. Of course, we chose that because that was not his style. His style is to give input. Focus on the things that happen when you have team members that aren't being led. The frustration was very high. Even higher than the teams that had dictators. Let me say that again, the team members with the absent leader, the frustration level, from what I could discern after having talked to everybody, was the frustration level was even higher with those team members than it was with the team members that had dictatorships. Powerful for you to understand.

If you're somebody who is not leading your team, if you're somebody who is just letting things happen, if you're somebody who is not engaged, then guess what's happening? You are creating a culture of fear. You are creating a culture of confusion. You are creating a culture of people who don't have respect for you as a leader, who don't know what to do in their job. Therefore, they either just do whatever they're going to do, which by the way, is going to create a new culture inside of your business, or they throw their hands up, "Forget it. This person doesn't care, so, so what?" Obviously, at the end of the day, being an absent leader does not work. It is not a long-term plan for leadership. In fact, asking all of the team members that were under that style of leadership, when I said, "How long are you going to stay on this team?" "Not going to happen." Even those folks that had the high loyalty factor in their personality style, "Not going to happen." "Why?" "Because there's nobody to follow. There's nobody leading." Those people aren't going to stick with that team either.

Now, when we got under the democratic style of leadership ... by the way, table under democratic style of leadership came in second place. What we discovered is the happiest team, the calmest team, and the team that worked best together. Everything that came from that process was positive. Every comment was positive. You're sitting there thinking, they came in second. Hold on to that thought there friend. You're going to find out something very interesting. Every single person on the team was like, "This is great. We didn't have any problems. We enjoyed the process. We liked it." Everything worked out well. Why? Because everybody felt like they were a part of the process. Everybody felt that if they had an opinion on something...

Don't miss this. This is not leadership by consensus, everybody agree on an idea or a direction, and we'll go with it. That was not what it was. Do not confuse this. This is not leadership by consensus. This was let me hear, let me hear what your ideas are, and I'll make a decision on what direction we go in. That is treating people with dignity. That is treating people with respect. That's allowing them to give you information that you may not have. You may not know what to do. By doing that you treat people with dignity. They feel a part of the process. When you lead me that way, I have buying. Why? Because I believe you believe in me. I believe you want to hear what I have to say. Even if you don't go with it, even if you don't take my advice, you still are trying to hear from me. Therefore, I feel more loyal to you in this process. I have ownership of the project.

Here's what we discovered. Of all the styles, this was the style where the team was ex ... "Let's go do another thing. Let's go forward. Let's keep going." They felt great together. The dictatorships, the absentees, guess where they all were? "Yeah, we're pretty much done with this. We don't even want to be this team." Even though one of the teams, the absentee leader team won the process, they weren't going to stay together as a team anyways. They wouldn't continue to follow that leader. The

only leadership style where people were like, "Yeah, we are long term," was the democratic style, not leadership by consensus, but the style that taxed the collective intelligence, and made a decision and went forward with it. They also came in second place. "Oh, but it's second place. They didn't win." You're completely missing out.

The concept wasn't to win the competition. That was the smoke and mirrors. They still came through, and did really good. That was the only style where people wanted to continue going forward as a team. The only style. At the end of the day, you've got to ask yourself the question: Do I want the short-term competition win? Do I want to win in the very short-term, or do I want to be really, really close to that, and have a long-term team, have a long-term process? A team that as we continued to work together, we can become the number 1 team. We can discover how to, "All right. What did they do, that we did not do? How did we get there, and continue to go and beat everybody out in the long term?"

That's your goal, leader. You're not going to win every single thing every single time right now. Your goal is not to just win competitions. As a leader, it's your job to make your team successful, not the other way around. As you make them successful, you get buy-in, you get ownership, you get loyalty, you get respect. The best part of it is you get people who want to continue to follow you anywhere, "Where are we going? Set us a vision, and let's go. Set us a direction, and let's go." Winning the competition isn't the actual process. It's how well can you do? How many of these competitions can you show up at, and do incredibly well, if not win? Everybody else will fall away over time. Every other style will fall away over time.

The other thing that was so great that we all discovered in this process is when under pressure, there's only one style that worked really well at keeping the team together. That was the style that taxed the collective intelligence, and made decisions going forward. The other styles did not work under pressure. It caused great frustration. It caused separation in the team. It caused dysfunction. If you want to have dysfunction while you are under pressure, be a dictator, be absent, be one of those styles of leadership. If you want a team that operates really well even under pressure, then be somebody who cares about what your team has to give as far as input.

Am I saying that you always have to do this? Oh my gosh no. There are times when the ox is in the ditch, where I've turned to the team, and said, "Guys, you know how much I always grab your opinion. I want to know what you think. Do you have something that I'm not thinking about? Right now we're doing this. I'm sorry, I've done this a hundred times, and we've got to solve this problem. Right now, this one time, we're going this direction. Let's go, I'll explain it afterwards." That has happened. That probably happens, I don't know, maybe once a year, maybe twice, where I go, "I don't have time to get everybody's input on this, or get some people's input. This is the direction we're going in, so let's go."

By the way, when I say everybody's imp-... I'm not saying you go through every single person on your whole, entire team. Take the people that are involved in the process, get some input. If they don't have any great input, move on. That is okay. Understand, there are times, like I say, probably a couple times a year where I've got to turn to the team, and say, "Hey guys, right now I need you to go this direction. Ready, go." Because I have led them the way that I have led them for so long, it's not even a question. It's not even a thought. Nobody sits there, and goes, "Oh my gosh, he just won't listen to me. Oh my gosh, he just won't take my ideas." Nobody does that. Instead, they go, "Okay, let's go,"

because I have treated them with dignity and respect the rest of the time. That's not even saying that's not treating them with dignity and respect. That is, that's leadership. Sometimes, "Follow me." Most of the time my job is to pull you along. Most of the time my job is to make you successful. There are some times, "Hey, follow me this direction." When you have that loyalty and respect from your team, they have no problem following you in the process.

My question to you is, what style of leader are you? What style of leader have you been? What style of leader are you being? What style of leader do you want to be? The answer to that question is, how long do you want a solid team to be working of you? If you're looking long-term like I always do, then be somebody who cares. Be somebody who taxes the collective intelligence, and move forward. That will work for you every, single, time. At the end of the day, winning the competition isn't the most important thing. We will have more competitions. If we pull up in second place, that's fine. Sticking together as a solid team, we will start cranking out some number 1's, that I can promise you.