

Karen Mathews & Associates Newsletter

Intentional Leadership – Taking Action

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Intentional Leadership: Taking Action (Read time: 4 minutes)



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Greetings!

Taking action is the most important thing that can be done to reaching goals. You can have a well-defined plan, great vision, important mission and inspiration that floats a battleship, but if you don't take action to implement it, nothing happens.

Quote: "Even if you're on the right track, you'll still get run over if you just sit there." Will Rogers

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Deliberate strategic action – that is what makes people truly successful. Doing "it," whatever it is, when you don't want to, are afraid to, are unsure or don't believe you can do it. So even attempts at taking action, taking tentative steps are better than sitting still just thinking about it. As leaders some times we get caught up in analysis paralysis. We wonder – do we have enough information? Is this the right action to take? Really this inaction stems from indecision and/or fear.

I recall some years ago one of my Supervisors told me that he would always trust my decisions because people have a 50-50 chance of being right. Imagine that, we have a one in two chance of getting it right! Even if you make an incorrect decision to take on a particular action, it is better than not doing anything. You will learn soon enough if the direction is correct or not. You can then do a course correction – that assumes that you're paying attention – and make a new decision to take a different action. It's important to notice the kinds of results that you're getting from the actions. Just doing, doing, doing for the sake of it is a waste.

Have you ever seen anyone running full steam ahead looking really busy and they were not getting anything of consequence or import accomplished? I'm not speaking of that kind of action. I am referring to being deliberate and strategic making decisions and directing actions that have meaning and will bring your team closer to your objectives. So be deliberate: use tactics as an important

resource and ensure they align with your strategic plan. You can ask yourself – will these actions accomplish an outcome that moves us toward our goals? If we didn't do this, would it matter?

I know there are times that we are so overwhelmed with the number of tasks and people coming at us with demands of our time and energies that we're lucky to have 5 minutes to think. When we don't take the few minutes to ask ourselves these kinds of questions we can unintentionally take our teams sideways, wasting time and money on efforts that don't contribute to our organizations. It's not enough to not do damage. If we're going to be competitive and innovative, we must leverage all of our resources to the optimum. That includes our decisions and actions.

How can we be more strategic and really leverage our decisions and actions to move us closer to our objectives? First, be clear about what your objectives are. Do you have an area of your business that needs shoring up? That might be a good place to focus your attention and your resources. Depending on the size of your organization, you may have a bunch of initiatives already in place. If so, this is the perfect opportunity to evaluate their efficacy. The area that I find is really lacking, regardless of the kind or size of organization, is a lack of evaluation of business systems and other high human touch processes.

It seems that once a new system is implemented no one looks at it after some period of time to find out if it is working, how well it's working or if there is some tweaking needed. Only when there is some breakdown is there any attention given to it. Why not do an evaluation of your existing systems to see if they can be optimized? This way you can get more value from what you already have, spend less time creating a whole new initiative with having to overcome a huge resistance with employees. Of course, band aid approaches definitely do not work. You must be ready and willing to hear the real truth. Ask the people who really know – the stakeholders. Remember, there are always more than two choices. You just need to be willing to consider them.

Do you want better results from your team? To get a different result you need to make a new choice for your organization. Karen Mathews & Associates gets results that are:

- Fast
- Measurable
- Repeatable
- Guaranteed

Why wait? Call or email us now at 408-454-0135 or info@karenmathews.com for a complimentary consultation and learn how we can help your team move through obstacles and excel.

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