

Karen Mathews & Associates Newsletter

Intentional Leadership -- Sharing Power

August 2007

In This Issue

[Collaboration - share power and achieve excellence\(Read Time: 5 minutes\)](#)

[REMINDER for Trust Building with Stakeholders in Mind-a skill building workshop](#)

[Exercise - What perspective do you have?\(Read time: 4 minutes\)](#)



Karen Mathews and Associates can help.

Is your business ready for better results? Contact Karen Mathews & Associates to find out how we can help take your leadership and

Thank you for taking a few minutes to consider these ideas on intentional leadership and sharing power. Most people I know are challenged when having to include others in the decision making process. In the articles below we consider the impact of a leader's decision making as it relates to using collaboration as a way to share power and maximize the results for all concerned.

• **[Collaboration - share power and achieve excellence \(Read Time: 5 minutes\)](#)**

For those of us in leadership positions with and without titles we know what we know and are confident in most of our decisions. It is usually the vehicle of our success and reward. Collaboration is a means to expand our effectiveness and ability to make smarter decisions in less time. Doesn't collaboration mean taking away our ability to be the ultimate decision maker? Doesn't it take longer to do? How can we possibly give up our means of influencing the outcomes that we want for our organization?

When you think about it, we learn from others - our parents, mentors, teachers, co-workers, etc. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us in what works with leading and managing resources. Although we consider ourselves in America to be independent thinkers and achievers, we could have never achieved the position we have alone, without support from others. We are by nature collaborative.

It doesn't mean we don't want to have our way but we feel better when others we respect agree with us or point out some flaw that we didn't think of. Just because someone has the ultimate authority in their respective discipline doesn't mean they have the greatest insight into the challenges they face. In fact, the best leaders surround themselves with smart people asking for and listening to their perspectives. Consider the office of the President of the U.S. has a cabinet, whose sole function is to advise the President on their respective topics..

Sometimes our own inner sense of direction is affected by our conscious or unconscious personal bias and agendas.

This is when using collaboration has the most value. When we allow others to support us and the organization with their perspective and recommendations the results are better. I

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suggest that the most effective method is to keep in mind how much impact the decision has on the organization.

It is inappropriate to pull a team together or research with all of your mentors to make small mundane decisions. It might be useful to select some criteria to determine when it is the best use of your resources to seek collaboration. On the other hand, it is counterproductive to give lip service to collaboration since it will undermine trust and credibility of the willingness to be open to others' input. Ultimately, we will be just fooling ourselves.

Getting some distance to obtain a new perspective on important topics is both refreshing and beneficial to our organizations. Often times as leaders, we hold the notion that we must carry everything ourselves. This approach is draining and stressful. The challenge is to detach emotionally to the outcome. Oftentimes, great leadership is accompanied by great egos. When we detach from an issue, we get a different perspective. If you were to only do this one thing, detaching, your ability to get a new perspective and have a fuller solution is improved.

Do you want a new perspective and get a better handle on your choices? Call Karen Mathews & Associates at 408-988-2361 or info@karenmathews.com for a free consultation on how we can help you break free from what's been holding your organization back.

Collaboration is really by definition power sharing and therein may be the sticking point. How can we share power and be in control? Control is about ego and attachment. The best leaders in the U.S. that brought about the most significant change in their respective organizations are those whose names are relatively unknown. Their impact was on and for the benefit of the business not themselves. These leaders took wavering businesses to sustainable profits that transcended their retirement. Other famous leaders, such as Lee Iacoca, helped the organization in the moment but it was dependent upon him and thus about him. The results - the recovery of Chrysler was not sustainable.

We know that our passion is what drives us. You might be asking how can you have passion without an attachment to it? That is the dichotomy. We are passionate about our mission, service, customer, or vision that we are holding for others. The idea that we know best at every choice point or have all the best solutions is a set up for the Emperor's New Suit. This is really the razor's edge - holding passion and being detached.

When we act as a steward of the organization and its culture,

our decisions cannot be about us. They must be about what's best for the business. When we intentionally act from alignment with our values and mission as a leader then we know that the easiest path to excellence is leveraging the brain trust through collaboration.

[See www.karenmathews.com](http://www.karenmathews.com)

- **REMINDER for Trust Building with Stakeholders in Mind- a skill building workshop**

Second in the Trust in the Workplace series

When: Tuesday August 21 7:30 - 10:00 am.
A continental breakfast will be served.

Where: Silicon Valley Capital Club, 50 West San Fernando, 17th floor, San Jose

Cost: \$75 per workshop.

REGISTER NOW-ONLY A FEW SEATS LEFT!

Contact us at 408-988-2361 or email info@karenmathews.com
The deadline to register is Monday, August 20.

The third workshop in this series, "Trust Building for Leaders," is scheduled September 21 at the same location. The first workshop is "Trust Building for Teams." We are available to present any of these workshops to your group or organization. Contact us for further information.

To register email Karen: karen@karenmathews.com or phone 408-988-2361

- **Exercise - What perspective do you have?(Read time: 4 minutes)**

To enrich your understanding of the previous article this is an invitation to explore your own experience of how you use your perspective to make decisions within your organizations. You will want to do this when you can have quiet and privacy. Also, for your own use I recommend having pen and paper ready to note your insights.

Remember a time when you made a decision that was fairly important to your organization. Go to that moment as much as possible, see what you see and hear what you hear. Notice how much you were attached to the decision that you arrived at. Rate it on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being least and 10 being most. Now that you have your attachment rating, recall how effective and beneficial your decision was to the organization. You can rate that, too, on the scale of 1 to 10.

Notice if there is any correlation with the level of attachment and benefit. This may or may not give you a correlation. Hopefully it will get you to think about how engaged your ego is in your decision making process and thus how objective or subjective you are.

I would love to hear about your results from this process. Please write me at karen@karenmathews.com with your insights and learning.

Look for our September newsletter.

[For more information about Karen Mathews & Associates, contact \[info@karenmathews.com\]\(mailto:info@karenmathews.com\)](#)