Chapter 1: The Leader's Initiative

Leadership is a core component of every industry in our modern society. Leaders are all around us, in almost every setting. A leader's purpose lies in guiding others. Given its immense value, there is extensive literature and philosophy on leadership. Many leadership theories have been philosophized and enacted, including, but not limited to, transformational, transactional, process, situational, management, laissez-faire, democratic, and authentic leadership. Depending on the setting, circumstances, objectives, personnel, and the leader's personality traits, specific leadership approaches may be more appealing and appropriate.

Regardless of the chosen method, the leader's presence and decisions ultimately shape organizational conduct and results, ultimately determining success or failure. That is why the leader's initiative is the first component that we will discuss. Moreover, each successive chapter will discuss specific leadership initiatives that winning leaders use to foster a successful organization, so it is important first to understand the nature of initiative-taking and how it aligns with the core concepts of leadership.

During the data collection phase of my research study, I observed that all participants demonstrated a humble persona. The sample discussed how their leadership presence was the primary factor for their organizational success. One of the participants stated, "Every aspect of the program, whatever you can think of, I'm involved because my name is on it. We lose—it is all me. We do not do something right in the community—it is on me." Continuous support for leadership initiatives was consistently mentioned throughout numerous responses. The participants embodied their leadership roles and took responsibility for creating the initiative to guide their followers towards achieving predetermined team objectives.

The leader's initiative is crucial for organizational success. The way the leader guides and enables team member productivity ultimately determines organizational output. This is why, when goals are not being met and ideal production is consistently not achieved, the leader is typically changed. When a college or professional sports team continues to fail, the head coach is usually fired. This is especially true for organizations with substantial earnings that rely on a team's success. In college football, the first Monday after the regular season, head coaches who have had immense negative criticism are likely to lose their jobs due to consistent failure. This day is known as "Black Monday" because of the mass layoffs.

Terminating the leader occurs in organizations across all industries where ideal production is not being met. The question is, why? Why does the leader get fired, and not the followers? The leader isn't the one on the floor doing the work. The leader isn't the one who's doing the direct work that enables the organization's output.

The answer lies in the leader's initiative, or lack of it.

While the leader isn't doing the work directly, their input, guidance, and leadership structure have a direct impact on overall productivity and corresponding outcomes. When objectives are not being met, it's the leader's due diligence to take the initiative to identify why failure is occurring and provide a how-to method for achieving essential organizational objectives. They must work with fellow leaders to determine why the organization is not achieving its goals, whether that's due to personnel issues, a teaching ailment, a lack of guidance, or a poor hire—identifying the "why" is an essential initial step for leaders to address the evident problems.

Once the "why" is identified, the leader must again take the initiative to implement the "how." The "how" is designed to fix the issue identified by the "why" and is a direct assertion from the leader. The "how" provides team members with productivity feedback, enhancements, adjustments, mentorship, further development, continuous training, and adequate preparation—or, if necessary, termination so that they can improve the hiring process and attract more qualified individuals, as we will discuss in Chapter 3. These are all initiatives and responsibilities of the leader. That is why the lack of ideal production falls under the leader's accountability.

Conversely, when production is met and ideal objectives are not only attained but surpassed, the leader is praised. Team member jobs are secured, output is achieved, and organizational growth occurs. When an organization experiences growth and increased output, the leader's perceived value increases accordingly. This is a primary reason why CEOs of thriving corporations earn immense salaries and bonuses, and also why college football and basketball coaches who achieve significant winning records receive multi-million-dollar salaries. Their leadership initiatives enable a prosperous outcome, organizational growth, and an increase in the organization's value, which in turn drives monetary earnings. Shareholders of corporations want to continue seeing their equity grow in value, and an institution aims to continue generating substantial revenue. When a leader achieves organizational success, they become valuable, and in today's world, that value is monetarily praised. In a capitalistic society, worker compensation aligns with their value to the workplace and industry. The more expertise a lawyer, doctor, professor, or even contractor has, the more value they contain, hence they are entitled to higher compensation than their amateur counterparts.

However, issues will inevitably arise when working with others. When more people are present in a given setting, the probability of any occurrence or circumstance arising tends to increase. The likelihood of a car accident increases in traffic. The probability of crime increases in densely populated cities. The possibility of meeting someone you're attracted to increases at social events.

As a result, the leader must be prepared to identify the "why" when nonideal outcomes occur and administer the "how" to address and prevent their recurrence. This encompasses the nature of a leadership role, and the leader's value is reflected in their ability to take the right initiatives to enable a productive organization. As a leader, understand that your initiative is your responsibility and demonstrates your leadership abilities and value. Simply put, organizational leaders are selected to administer the right initiatives in various settings and under numerous circumstances. Be strategic and wise when asserting it; your followers and overseers are constantly depending on you!

Chapter Summary

- The leader's presence and initiative ultimately enable organizational conduct.
- The method by which the leader guides and enables team member productivity essentially determines organizational output.
- When objectives are not being met, it's the due diligence of the leader to take initiative to identify the "why" and create the "how."
- When organizational growth and output occur, the leader's value increases.
- When more people are present in a given setting, the probability of everything tends to increase.
- In a capitalistic society, worker compensation aligns with their value to the workplace and industry.
- Organizational leaders are selected to administer the right initiatives in various settings and under numerous circumstances.