

PROGRAMMING TO WIN



by John Silliman Dodge

The Difference between Management and Leadership

Let's talk about what it takes to be a successful leader/manager in the twenty-first century. Notice I didn't say *successful PD*. Mechanically, you already know your job, or you do if you've been in the chair a while. You don't need me for tips on rotating music, managing research, scheduling promos. You know the three P's: personality, promotion and production, so you're good to go there. Let's turn the discussion up and talk about what separates the good stations from the great ones: leadership.

Many books, articles, blogs, words have been spent on the difference between management and leadership. These terms are often used interchangeably but they're as different as the two sides of your brain. And like your brain, you won't succeed if you operate primarily from one side or the other. You need science *and* art, logic *and* emotion, management *and* leadership. Let's compare and contrast.

Leaders ask, Which is the best way for us to go? Managers ask, How is the best way to get there? Leadership is a role, management is a job. Management is responsible for outcomes, results. It's a function, while leadership is a relationship. Leadership focuses on the people doing the work, while management focuses on the work that people do.

Leadership has nothing to do with the org chart. There are leaders at every level in your company. Observe, you'll see. There's nothing in your title *Program Director* that automatically makes you the leader. Leadership is only achieved if there is voluntary, enthusiastic "followership." To create that, you need to supply a constant and consistent vision of where we're going, why, and how great everything is going to be once we get there. Leaders build teams, they inspire. Their most important function is to rally the troops. Pump up the volume. Shake the pom-poms. Point the way.

As Stephen Covey put it in his gazillion-selling book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, "Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall". Another brilliant business mind, Warren Bennis says, "The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why."

Important point: Let's not confuse leadership with charisma. Charisma without a plan is just seduction. But without enthusiastic vision and motivation, the best plan just sits there on the page. So it's not an either/or deal. We need to exercise both leadership *and* management, and we need the speed, the skill, and the sensitivity to know what's required at any given moment.

A manager might say, "Corporate wants 16 units an hour now, so I guess we have to make that happen." Leaders say, "Look, we have no business if we continue to

lose customers. Why are they leaving, even paying for alternatives? Could it be that what we give away for free isn't attractive enough anymore? And are seven unit stopsets unfair to our clients?"

A manager might say, "They just gave me control over the whole cluster. I'm the Big Dog now, hoo-hah!" A leader might say, "Thanks, I really appreciate this vote of confidence. But how do we keep product quality high, customer satisfaction high, ratings and rates high while taking vital attention away from product management?"

A manager measures and quantifies; so much increase in AQH, a two-book decline in cume. Management is a science, while leadership is an art. Back to the brain analogy. Your left brain is logical, rational, that's your manager. Your right brain is creative, emotional, symbolic, imaginative, that's your leader. Like the brain, the organization is best run by the whole person, fully engaged, firing on both sides as required.

Here's a list of questions with no right or wrong answers, designed to help you better determine your style and see where you sit along the leader/manager continuum:

Do you listen more than you talk?

Do you ask questions more often than you give orders?

Do you regularly praise people in front of their peers?

Do you know your business inside and out and understand the work that you direct others to do?

Do you spend part of every week thinking/planning for the future?

Do you lead from the rear? In other words, do you see leadership as a support function? Are you the Boss or are you the Servant?

Do you take the blame when things go wrong and give away credit when things go right?

Are you empathetic? Can you stand in others' shoes and see through their eyes? Do you have so-called "emotional intelligence?" Can you read the room?

Do you rule by influence or by command? Do you inspire fear or trust? Do you stir peoples' passions? Do you have followers or subordinates?

Do you know how to take people beyond their self-interest and raise their level of motivation and commitment?

Do you coach and motivate your talent? Do you make time for every one of your reports? Do you even consider them "reports?"

Do you need to control every step of the process? Are you more comfortable dictating or collaborating?

Do you purposefully hire people who know more than you do?

Do you recognize dysfunctional group dynamics? (OK, trick question. *Every* family is a dysfunctional family, even professional ones.)

Do you run an open shop and make transparent decisions?

Do you consider professional development opportunities for each of your people?

Are you keenly interested in what makes people tick? In their personal lives and interests? Do you believe it's possible to keep one's personal and professional lives separate?

Do you tend to leave your people alone until there's a problem?

Do you think people work for money?

Do you enjoy mentoring, coaching, teaching?

There is no magic formula that says we should be leaders 60% and managers 40% of the time, but my observation is that too many of our stations are over-managed and under-led. And like an out-of-balance individual, we need to get back into alignment if we want to thrive. We need to plan *and* inspire. We need to motivate *and* to problem solve. Mostly we need to recognize the difference and be facile and flexible enough to turn on a dime and act according to what's needed at the moment. Leadership or management? Yes, more of the best qualities of both, thank you.

John Silliman Dodge has a 25-year career that integrates music, media, and management. He has been a Program Director for radio stations and networks from coast to coast. Today, he's an in-demand talent trainer, actively consulting and touring the country conducting performance workshops on the art and science of creative on-air communications. John is also a drivetime classical announcer for Sirius Satellite Radio in New York and the PD for KBPS-FM in Portland, Oregon.