connect

The extent to which a leader involves, recognises and develops others

'Connect' is the extent to which leaders empathise with and support staff. It involves consulting with employees, listening to suggestions, considering employee needs, coaching and mentoring, providing development opportunities, recognising achievements, making positive comments regarding employee capabilities, and diplomatic management of underperformance.

Leaders who 'connect' provide individualised support and coaching that not only improves the productivity and performance of team members, but fosters trust in and commitment to the leader.

suggested actions

Developing your skills in involving, recognising and developing others may require you to:

Learn from others

- Seek feedback about your personal style - What is helpful? What is not?
- Spend some time identifying and understanding your personality traits. You may seek the help of a counsellor or coach or use some valid and reliable tools including the MBTI and OPQ.
- Find a mentor who is good at exhibiting 'Connect' and who you can learn from. Spend time observing someone you respect or admire for their interpersonal skills.
- Attend training in specific interpersonal skills such as performance review discussions or coaching others. Having a few tools and guidelines can help you develop these behaviours more effectively.
- Courses that may be useful include Emotional Intelligence, Customer Service and Negotiation Skills.

Adapt your behaviour and environment

- Practice recognition by finding one thing about your colleague/staff you can thank or praise them for each day. Recognise achievements in your team meetings. Create organisational approaches to recognise and reward the contributions of people in different groups and roles.
- Listen to others, and practice expressing empathy - check in with people to ensure that you have heard both the facts and how they are feeling.
- Spend time talking, rather than emailing, with your direct reports. Schedule regular one-to-one conversations, so you can proactively coach others for success, not just manage poor performance.
- Empower your direct reports to assume more responsibility, and give them the autonomy to make decisions that affect their work.
- Establish formal and informal processes to ensure people have sufficient contact with each other and an understanding of each other's perspectives.
- Ensure there is a policy in place in your organisation for conflict resolution. This will help to provide a procedure and framework to use when a conflict occurs.

people working with leaders high on 'connect' say

"You are compassionate and genuinely interested in others"
"You listen to people's point of view until you understand it"
"You're open to new ideas and plans and will make the time to engage in discussions"
"Your ability to facilitate difficult conversations to achieve progress on blockages / blind spots"
"I find you to be exceptionally good at relating to people authentically, treating them as unique
   individuals and developing their strengths. This creates a very positive work environment"
"You demonstrate a collaborative, inclusive working style - you seek input and feedback from
   people based on the relevance of their skills/knowledge to a particular project, rather than their
   seniority or position"

people working with leaders lower on 'connect' say

"Spend more time coaching and mentoring your team"
"You could be more consultative in your work processes"
"Be actively involved in poor/under performance of staff"
"Continue to be open to feedback and aware of your own impact"
"Sometimes you tend to dominate discussions and not listen to other's views"
"Focus more on acknowledging the strength of knowledge and skills of others"

useful resources

- Chapman, J. (2016). *You Can Lead: Your complete guide to managing people and teams*. Sydney: ES-PRESS.
- Greenleaf, R. (1977/2002). *Servant Leadership: A Journey in the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness (25th anniversary ed)*. New York: Paulist Press.
- Goffee, R. & Jones, G. (2006). *Why Should Anyone Be Led by You? What it Takes to be an Authentic Leader.* Boston, Mass: Harvard Business School.
- Harvard Business School (2006). *Retaining Your Best People*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Kaye, B. & Jordan-Evans. S. (2008). *Love 'Em or Lose 'Em: Getting Good People to Stay (4th ed.)* San Franscisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler.
- Maxwell, J. (2010). *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect: What the Most Effective People Do Differently*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.
- Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R. & Switzler, A. (2002). *Crucial Conversations. Tools for Talking When Stakes are High.* New York: McGraw-Hill
- Peterson, D. & Hicks, M. (1996). *The Leader as Coach. Strategies for Coaching and Developing Others*. Minnesota: Personnel Decisions Intl.
- Schluter, M and Lee, D. (2009). *The Relational Manager*. Oxford: Lion Hudson.
- Wiseman, L. (2010). *Multipliers*. New York: HarperBusiness.
- http://www.ssa.vic.gov.au/images/stories/product_files/518_PeopleMatters2009_feedback.pdf - Giving Feedback
- http://www.bps.org.uk/events/e-learning/e-learning - The British Psychological Society e-Learning materials: Conducting performance appraisals, and Coaching skills.