

voice

The extent to which a leader expresses and strives towards mission and values

'Voice' is the extent to which leaders share their vision, inspire others, set high expectations, communicate persuasively and promote the organisation positively. Leaders who 'voice' are prepared to risk popularity to speak up for what is right for their organisation. 'Voice' leadership is exerting power *through* the group, rather than power *over* a group, to achieve collective goals.

Leaders who exhibit 'voice' characteristics help create, and influence, a group's identity and values. This allows the group to work collectively, helping them perform at levels beyond the transactions and tasks of their daily roles. 'Voice' is particularly important for leading organisations through change, by linking changes to the organisation's purpose and values, and developing and communicating a clear vision for the future. 'Voice' differentiates *leaders* from *managers*.

suggested actions

Developing a management style which inspires others and promotes the organisations mission and values may require you to:

Learn from others

- Look for courses on Executive Disposition, Communication, Presentation Skills and Strategic Planning.

Adapt your behaviour and environment

- Create and rehearse an 'elevator pitch' – a brief summary of who you are and why you exist as an organisation.
- Communicate your vision, mission and values frequently.
- Tell stories about actions that reflect your mission and values to build a sense of identity as well as demonstrating your shared values with the group.
- Make work meaningful by helping others to understand the link between their work and the organisation's purpose and values.
- Demonstrate integrity. Make sure your employees can see that you are genuinely championing your group's 'cause', and are acting for them, rather than yourself. If they see one thing and hear another, your credibility is jeopardised and your vision is at risk.
- Refer to your mission and values when communicating the reason for changes and choices.
- Tailor your message to your audience. Ensure that your audience can relate to what you are presenting to them. The more you are seen to represent the core values and unique characteristics of your group, the more influence you will have.
- Use "we" and "us" rather than "I" and "you" while presenting your ideas clearly and concisely.
- Set high expectations for your group as a whole, and individual team members (Big Hairy Audacious Goals). Help set the team up for success, and give feedback about their progress.

people working with leaders high on 'voice' say

"You are very enthusiastic in representing the organisation in a positive way"

"You are good at communicating a vision and engaging people in working towards it"

"You believe in the organisation, its values and its future directions and incite enthusiasm in others"

"You're an excellent presenter; you capture the attention of everyone in the room with your enthusiasm and engaging manner"

"You can see the big picture and you bring people along for the journey in an inspiring and encouraging way"

people working with leaders lower on 'voice' say

"Provide clarity about future directions, roles and responsibilities"

"Be clearer about giving direction and communicating what is wanted"

"You need to be clearer in expressing your thoughts and ideas so that you are more authoritative"

"You could use your influence in the strategic planning process to demand more discipline from key people"

useful resources

- Chapman, J. (2016). *You Can Lead: Your complete guide to managing people and teams*. Sydney: ES-PRESS.
- Collins, J. (2001). *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Ellsworth, R. (2002). *Leading with Purpose*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Gebelein, S. H. (2010). *Successful Manager's Handbook: Develop Yourself Coach Others*. Minnesota: Previsor Inc.
- George, W. (2003). *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Haslam, S., Reicher, S. and Platow, M. (2011). *The New Psychology of Leadership: Identity, Influence and Power*. East Sussex: Psychology Press.
- Judd, S., Robinson, A., & Errington. (2012). *Driven by Purpose: Charities that make the difference*. Greenwich, Australia: HammondPress.
- Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading Change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Kaplan, R. S., & Norton, D. P. (2008). *The Execution Premium: Linking Strategy to Operations for Competitive Advantage*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Rumelt, R. (2011). *Good Strategy Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why it Matters*. New York: Crown Business.
- Turner, S. (2010). *The Little Black Book of Management: Essential Tools for Getting Results Now*. McGraw Hill Professional.
- Zenger, J., & Folkman, J. (2002). *The Extraordinary Leader: Turning Good Managers into Great Leaders*. McGraw Hill Professional.
- <http://hbr.org/2009/01/to-lead-create-a-shared-vision/ar/1> - Kouzes & Posner (2009).
- <http://www.colinjames.com.au/events.html> - Presentation Skills.
- <http://www.bps.org.uk/events/e-learning/e-learning> - The British Psychological Society e-Learning materials: Communicating complex ideas, Effective Communication, Leadership skills.