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Leading with Personal Authority

In this newsletter we would like to pick up from discussions at our business luncheon on Personal Authority. Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who joined us at the meeting for sharing their thoughts on what Personal Authority meant to them and their respective organisations. We would like to use this space to share observations on Personal Authority vs. Role Authority.

Leaders in organisations need the authority invested in their roles in order to carry out their work. In traditional organisation structures leaders influence outcomes through their authority over direct reports. Matrix organisation structures make leadership more complex, as they create the need to influence horizontally through peers. Yet there is no role authority in horizontal relationships. When there is no role authority, leaders need to find other ways to influence peer relationships by accessing and developing personal authority.

Role authority is bestowed upon a leader and the extent of it depends on their position within the organisation's hierarchy. In contrast personal authority is the sense we have of our right to have an impact on others; and has a direct link to our emotional intelligence. This authority influences person-to-person rather than role-to-role. It is sometimes also described as 'personal power'.

Recent downsizing and restructuring has changed the nature of authority in organizations, so that roles are broader and have more scope for individual control and contribution. As a result, leaders need to manage themselves in their roles quite differently. In essence, they need to build their personal authority to fill larger shoes.

Personal authority helps leaders and managers find another avenue for dealing with issues where role authority is of no help. For example, the only leverage peers have to influence each other is the quality of their relationships. These need to be robust enough to withstand conflict and capable of engaging in straight conversations about politics, competing needs, differences and ambition. The capacity to build relationships in this fashion means that people are less likely to engage in email wars, exercises in public humiliation and other unhelpful

ways of trying to deal with deadlocks of authority. Leaders are able to influence followers and to some extent can influence managers, but influencing peers is much more difficult. To understand this it is useful to think of the family as a metaphor for understanding how organisational relationships function around authority.



"I just have a few minor fixes that will ruin everything you've come up with."

If we were to rank on a scale of easier to more difficult the capacity to influence family members, you would put children first, parents second and siblings last. The nature of authority in these relationships is different. Parents have authority over children, children can impact on parents (pester power), but siblings have competing interests or no shared interests at all; and often only unite when things are really bad. In the day to day life of getting things done it is usually each sibling for themselves.

It is the same in organisations. Management peers often have competing interests and objectives, have to compete for resources and are sometimes deliberately set up to compete. Yet, where they work for the same leader, either immediately or once removed and in matrix structures, they increasingly find they need to work together for the good of the organisation. This is especially true in times of major change where the organisation is responding to quite different external environments and needs people to 'work together'.

It is not enough to tell people they need to work together; systems, structures and policies need to

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Directors' Message

As 2007 comes to an end it is time to reflect on our most successful year in business so far and to thank all our clients, both new and long-term, for their great support and trust in our services.

Among the many things that made 2007 such a standout year for Juno Consulting is that we hired 3 full-time staff. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team, both staff and contractors for all their hard work and their commitment to Juno. We feel very lucky to have such an outstanding team of people around us. By way of a small thank you we took the team to Flinders Island which was wonderful and which we seemed to have all to ourselves!



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As all of you are aware from your own work, the days of standing still are not an option and for us the changes are going to continue in 2008.

Whilst we are planning to continue our highly successful community mentoring programs, some aspects of these programs will change. Instead of working with long-term unemployed clients the mentors will either work with clients sourced from community support groups or with medium-term unemployed clients.

We are also planning to launch a series of new, practical leadership development programs that are based on a combination of experiential and reflective learning. These programs will again push the envelope, just as the community mentoring program did when it was first launched by us in 1998.

So please stay tuned for exciting developments in 2008. Until then, have wonderful holidays and, on behalf of all the Juno team we offer our best wishes for 2008.

Lynn & Peter

A Well Rounded Leader

Based on the success of our first business luncheon discussing personal authority we have decided to continue the luncheon series and put the competencies of a well rounded leader on the agenda for next time.

There are a great many tools to access the effectiveness or characteristics of a leader, with focus ranging from emotional intelligence to personal attributes and bottom line outcomes. At our next luncheon we would like to explore how leaders learn and develop competencies that don't come naturally to them. In doing so they become more well-rounded and competent leaders.

We will look at some

of our research on this topic and provide some introductory thought around the key competencies of a well rounded leader and the typical gaps we observe when working with leaders from all levels and across many different industries.

A Well Rounded Leader

Juno Consulting will host a lunch for up to 20 business leaders to discuss and explore the competencies and behaviours of a well rounded leaders.

Venue: Vibe Savoy Hotel
630 Little Collins Street

Date: Friday, 29 February 2008

Cost: Free

Time: 12.30pm for a 12.45pm start Close: 2.00pm

To register call Paul Lacey on: 9866 7993 or 0408 543 320

Keeping the Skills in Town

Many regional communities are concerned about local skills shortages, trades in particular; and the impact on local business growth. Similarly, they are also concerned about the number of young people leaving home to fill jobs in our cities and the booming resource sector.

One such region voicing these concerns is the Maranoa region of South-West Queensland (in and around the town of Roma). In response Origin Energy launched a new community skills scholarship initiative. In 2007, six local people were offered scholarships as they undertake local apprenticeships, both school based apprentices and full-time apprentices.

The scholarships recipients receive competency based payments throughout their apprenticeships. On completing the apprenticeship and staying with the employer for a further 12 months the scholarship can add up to \$13,500.

In addition to the financial support the apprentice is also allocated a mentor for the duration of the apprenticeship. This is where Origin turned to our expertise to help design and deliver the mentoring program. Mentors come from Origin and other local businesses and organizations.

On volunteering, mentors go through a 2 day training program to prepare them for the work with their protégé. We also delivered a half-day training with the apprentices to prepare them for the mentoring. By spending time with both mentors and protégés we were able to recommend the optimal match of mentors with protégés to ensure that both would grow from the experience.

Mentors and apprentices started working together in June this year and meet once every 2-3 weeks. They establish goals together and discuss typical problems young apprentices face in the workplace - how to communicate with colleagues and the boss, how to negotiate, how to manage time and so on.

The scholarship recipients are also encouraged and supported to give back to their local community. Recently, one apprentice, Rob, volunteered to support the local Lions Club. Their chip van and cold room trailer needed some lights and electrical work. Rob volunteered part of his weekend to do the work at the "Lion's Den" - Roma Lion's club base.

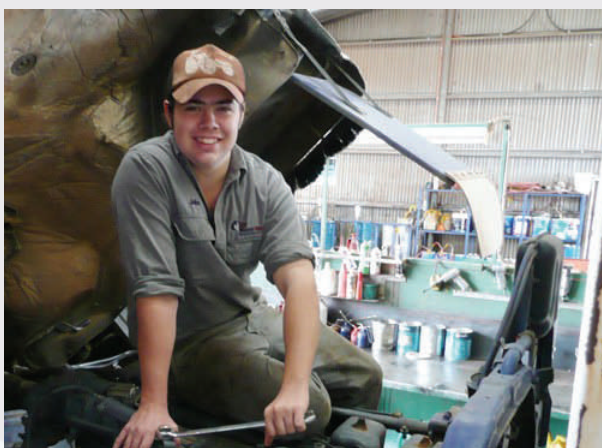
Rob's boss, Stephen Dore for Dore's Elect-Air Pty Ltd, donated the parts.

Vice President of the Roma Lions Club, Paul Hutchinson was delighted, "Great. Most helpful." he said. "The Lions Club relies heavily on the community for volunteers. When someone does something for us, it means they don't have to pay and the funds saved can be redistributed to help out the community."

Rob is now in the 3rd year of his apprenticeship. Having done a traineeship he had some exemptions and progressed quickly through his 1st and 2nd year.



From the left, Apprentice Robert Webb, Origin Energy's Paul Zealand and Peter Parker (Rob's mentor) and Stephen Dore (Rob's boss).



Apprentice Jake Simpson

Mentors have been encouraged to build relationships not just with the apprentice, but also with the business the apprentice works with, their parents, the TAFE and other support organisations. In this way a much larger part of the community is involved in the scholarship program and word has travelled quickly on how well apprentices have responded to being part of the program. Given the success of the program and Origin's local operations the program will be enlarge next year to cover a larger geographical area.

The scope of the mentoring relationship ranges from supporting the apprentice to learn how to budget and research the right tools to buy, to working on the professional and interpersonal skills that are such an important aspect of employment.

Our role is to coach the mentors individually and to ensure that relationships continue to be goal focussed. Locally, the mentors meet as a group every 6 weeks to discuss their protégés progress and offer each other advice and support. The group meetings are facilitated by the Origin program co-ordinator, we teleconference in only if needed. In between meetings, we provide coaching over the telephone. Juno Consulting feels very privileged to be a part of this exciting and necessary initiative.

Leading with Personal Authority

be changed that reward co-operative and collaborative behaviors. What also needs to happen so that people can work together is that they develop good working relationships. This is where personal authority comes in. So let's have a look at a fictionalised story...

The Story

James is a Risk Manager at a large lending institution. He has been charged with the responsibility for lowering the risk potential within a particular product range and client group. While he has to meet these targets, he has no direct contact with the group approving lending and interfacing with the clients. The person with control over that is a peer of James, Fred, who reports to a different manager.

James doesn't like Fred, and the feeling is mutual. They have a history. The risk targets are James' to meet but he needs Fred to enforce them. After some months of Fred's team not responding to the new strategy, James initiated a meeting with Fred. The meeting went very badly; as James realized he was not getting the support he needed, he called Fred 'pathetic' and stormed out. He continued to bad mouth Fred to his direct reports and undermine their relationships with Fred's direct reports with whom they have to work. James was feeling angry, frustrated and powerless.

The Real Issue

James could be the Risk, Quality or the Diversity Manager. These roles in organisations are specialist roles designed to increase the organisation's capacity in that particular area. They usually have few if any direct reports. The authority that people in these roles have is limited to their expertise and knowledge. They have no line authority and therefore little direct influence over outcomes. And yet, they are measured by the outcomes other's achieve.

James knows he has little authority, because he feels powerless, and his powerlessness is exacerbated by his not having any other strategies at his disposal. The only power or authority over which James has some control is the authority of his personal relationship with Fred, which is damaged. James and Fred do not have the same manager, so there is little leverage there. He could try working through his manager to the next level up, but his influence is less there than directly with Fred, which is where he needs to focus.

The Intervention

James needed to develop his self knowledge in order to understand what was happening and how to proceed. To do this he needs to 'hold up a mirror to his leadership practice', look beyond the role and the outcomes to what it is about him that is contributing to the problem he is having.

As consultants and coaches, we hold this mirror. In working with James, we helped him understand his powerlessness in organisational terms and identify the only real source of authority left to him – his relationship with Fred. We then began to work with his feelings towards Fred and how in feeling powerless he had begun to behave poorly – only further undermining himself. We talked with James about his relationship with Fred and what it was about Fred that made him so angry towards him. What emerged was that he and Fred used to be good mates, in fact Fred used to work in the same area as James and James could not understand what happened. He was blaming Fred for not doing his job, he was calling him names and deliberately telling his own staff to be difficult with Fred's staff.

The Resolution

The main source of authority for roles like these is personal authority, which is the knowledge that we have about ourselves, our EQ, that enables us to engage with others directly from person-to-person as opposed from role-to-role. This requires having straight conversations and using clear language to describe our needs and wants, the impact of people's behavior on our capacity to achieve outcomes and to negotiate a way of working together that will get our needs met.

Having recognized that his behavior was making the situation worse, James tried again to talk with Fred, but did it differently. This time he talked with Fred about what had happened between them, he apologized for his poor behavior. He asked Fred what had happened and listened as Fred shared his side of the story which helped James understand more about what had happened between them. James described the impact of Fred's behavior on his outcomes and asked him for what he needed.

It became clear that their needs were driven by their respective KPI's, which were incompatible. James was charged with eliminating a risky group of customers and Fred was charged with increasing revenue, which would be difficult if he lost a whole customer group. They agreed that this contradiction would need to be resolved with by their respective General Managers.

Summary

Following this meeting we met with James to review what had happened. James demeanor and attitude towards Fred and his team were palpably different. He had made progress, agreed on a process of negotiation and felt positive about achieving his outcomes. He had used his self knowledge to take responsibility for his part in a difficult situation and exercised the only authority available to him – personal authority – to influence a peer in order to achieve his outcomes.