

Aligning Your People

15-year-old girls have perfected the art of dual communication. They nod appropriately to their parents as key parental instructions are put forth. Then in a moment the 15-year-old girl turns toward her friends and dramatically performs the full eye roll communicating her true feelings and commitment to her parents.

Managers working to align their team around endeavors too often are oblivious to the lack of commitment within their team. Like the parents of the 15-year-old, they speak, see the head nod and walk away confident in their leadership impact only to be disappointed later with low productivity or less than optimal effectiveness or down right rebellion in getting work completed.

Aligning resources is a difficult set of behaviors because we too often think the head nod of our team means they are fully committed to our vision and path forward. Here are three ways in which leaders can work to better align their employees.

Create Clarity in Where We Are Heading

Leaders tend to be too frugal in their explanations for where the team is heading. They don't provide the rationale nor the structured communication and messaging to gain the full buy-in of their team. That one team meeting and single email follow-up aren't enough. Communicate, communicate, communicate and then communicate some more.

Encourage Open Dialogue

Leaders "present" information which too often closes the doors to any chance of effective dialogue and exchange of perspectives. Leaders choose to challenge rather than being receptive to the thoughts, opinions, ideas of their team.

You don't have to accept all the ideas but you do need to be open to engaging in dialogue and hearing the ideas so that you can draw your employees towards being committed and truly on-board.

Be Inspiring

Employees want and need to see passion, true passion. Many leaders may lack the natural inclination to being inspiring but this doesn't change the needs of your employees. Being reserved and matter-of-fact can be comforting and safe and low risk. But you need to encourage and incite your team to see the *future state of obtainability*, whether that's getting the current work completed by Friday or transforming the organization for the next season.

Action Plan

1. Think about the most inspiring leader you've had the privilege of working for. What behaviors did that leader exhibit?

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2. Pick one of your current projects or initiatives and review how you've structured the communication of the project/initiative to gain full buy-in by your employees.

What could you have done differently?

What can you do now?

3. Of the 3 areas listed, which one intrigues you the most? Write down your thoughts as to why AND what one step could you take to move forward in that area.

Visit [Bishop House's Leadwell Knowledge Base](#) for more resources on the topics that matter most to leaders

Bishop House Leadwell Knowledge Base

- New Leader**
Whether you just got promoted and don't know where to begin, or you have been in a leadership role for a while, these resources will provide you with valuable insight into the fundamentals of leadership.
- Managing Change**
Managing change can be challenging. Look here for ideas on how you can manage yourself through change and strategies for leading your team through change.
- Effective Communication**
Effective communication skills are essential to effective leadership. Click here to explore how to better communicate with employees, peers and others.
- Managing Up**
How to manage up when your boss has you down. Look here for strategies for dealing with your boss.
- Your Development**
Look here for ideas on how to develop as a leader and to continue to grow in your leadership knowledge.
- Managing Performance**
Explore content about being a coach to your employees, guiding them to success, managing poor performers, motivating good performers and more.
- Productivity**
Insights and tips on how to be more productive as a manager. Learn how to effectively and efficiently manage time, emails, meetings and other aspects of your role as a leader.
- Building My Team**
Resources for learning how to build a cohesive team as well as strategies for where to start when it is anything but.