

INSIDE SUPPLY MANAGEMENT®

personal connections *Work. Life. Balance.*

By Pat Heydlauff

Clarity and a Mission

It takes a leader to move safely through today's economic minefields, while giving your followers a clear mission to lead them into the future.

Being assaulted 24/7 with dampening and constantly changing economic news, double-digit unemployment figures and constant budget revisions are today's business reality. Your approach to the daily management of your thinking and time, as you maneuver through the current economic maze filled with financial landmines, will determine how focused, productive and successful you will be.

Difficult economic times require hard decisions that reduce expenses while making profits and maintaining capital. Those leaders who understand how to maintain clarity and boost employee morale will be the survivors to forge a strong mission for the future and ensure their company thrives when the economy turns around.

To bridge turbulent times, supply executives need to have a plan that includes a long-term view with measurable results, covering everything from being prudent to increasing employee efficiencies. Here are some easy-to-implement leadership principles that provide transparency and improve focus on your mission.

Eliminate negative thinking.

Adopt a can-do attitude by deleting your negative thoughts to make room for new, positive energy thinking to enter your mind, so you

can be more efficient, effective and productive. The consequences of negative thinking are a less productive, less reliable you. Grab a notepad and write down all the negative "can't" and "won't" thoughts that come racing into your head. Jot down any thought that stands in the way of creating stability in the workplace and seeking growth opportunities. Once completed, shred the page(s) and tell yourself to allow only positive thoughts that will help you find new ways to create stability, overcome negative economic consequences and make smart choices. Repeat as often as needed until you see a measureable difference in you.

Improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Make a huge impact by eliminating energy drainers, such as stacks of files and magazines, boxes stashed on the floor and anything else considered clutter in the workplace. To be efficient and effective, 80 percent of the top of your desk should be visible. Then, get organized so you and your employees can find anything that is needed at a moment's notice. Clutter is a distraction that prevents employees from maximizing their productivity and the company's profitability. As a leader, when you make a personal commitment to your employees' success by giving them tangible ways to improve their

job performance, they will be more productive.

Shift energy — Modify your department's communication model. Be all-inclusive and share your mission with your employees. Use compassionate language in communicating your mission; include the why, what and how. Replace the old 19th-century Newtonian pyramid organizational chart with one where everyone in the department is connected, productive and within the playing field. Employees do their best work when they feel relevant and are making a difference in the outcome, while believing their company is making smart choices, being responsible and creating job stability.

Fix the urgent by making smart choices, then focus on the long-term view so you will be ready for growth and opportunity when the timing is right. It takes a leader to move safely through today's economic minefields. Followers need a leader with clarity, a can-do attitude and a mission to lead them into creating the future. Leadership is all about living through today's difficult times with great limpidity and focus while creating tomorrow's opportunities. Leaders need to lead. **ISM**

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