



THE LEADERSHIP LINEUP

UNCHANGING LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES TO KEEP YOU AND THE MINISTRY YOU LEAD IN PEAK POSITION

Reading the lineup is key to maximizing one's surfing opportunity. Having solid objects on land to line up and hold one's position is essential in light of the shifting nature of the ocean. Similarly, leaders within Christian Surfers need solid, unchanging principles to hold them in position so they can maximize their ministry opportunities. The Leadership Lineup features unchanging leadership principles to keep you, and the ministry you lead, in peak position.

LINEUP #15: When It All Goes South!

When It All Goes South!

by Alan Vink

It began so well. You have a sharp new leader who becomes your 'right hand man' (or woman as is often the case!) You dream together, pray together, build the team together and do ministry together. Finally someone trustworthy, who doesn't drop everything when the waves are good! It was only a small thing that misunderstanding, an expectation they were collecting the equipment and you felt dumb when things looked so random and you reacted a bit harshly. Thin end of the wedge between you. You started mistrusting, checking up on them, doubting them. They had become withdrawn, present but less enthusiastic, doubting you really noticed, really cared. But there's meetings to run, surfers to disciple and a big surf camp at the end of the month. One week out your right hand man/woman tells you they are leaving the team and you feel betrayed, disappointed and annoyed and let them know it. You're surprised when they explode at you about your poor leadership and say others on the team feel the same. You justify your actions and rally the team against the 'problem' leader and recommend they do leave. It's all gone 'south' but deep down you are second guessing yourself and don't know where it went wrong? Could you have done it differently? CSNZ Board Chairman Alan Vink shares some insights that may help you...

Team Ministry is in, no question about it, and when a team is running at peak performance, ministry becomes pure joy. When a group of people have 'joined' themselves together, for a common purpose and experience a depth of community whilst at the same time accomplish the task(s) required of them, WOW! The results are that God is honoured, the local church/mission is blessed and the Kingdom of God is extended. Who wouldn't want to be part of a team like that? But sadly, as we all know, that is not always the case. Teams can be dysfunctional and broken, with team members rowing in different directions. So when this occurs what should be a pastor/leader's response? Here are a few practical thoughts and ideas:

- 1) **Slow the Train Down:** In Christian ministry, the end must never justify the means. In other words, if a team is struggling relationally, let alone dysfunctional, then attention must be given to the team players and what has happened. The task or vision now needs to be put on hold, if at all possible - certainly the pressure for task accomplishment needs to come off. (cf CS Foundations Training "Maintaining a Leadership Team")
- 2) **The Pastor/Leader as Peacemaker:** This is interesting. Many pastors I meet are expressing a growing interest in learning more about peacemaking, conflict resolution and reconciliation. This undoubtedly is as a response to the incredible amount of pain, brokenness, wounded interpersonal relationships in our world, and sadly, in the church as well. Peacemaking is now a new skill set that we need, modelled after the life of Jesus Himself. "Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called Children of God" (Matt 5:9).
- 3) **The Rebuilding of Trust:** "Trust lies at heart of the functioning, cohesive team. Without it, teamwork is all but impossible." (1) Trust in fact, is one cornerstone to all happy relationships. Trust in a team context is about openness, transparency and vulnerability. As 'soft' as this sounds, it requires team members to make themselves vulnerable to one another, and be confident that their respective vulnerabilities will not be used against them. When a team has 'broken down', people will have been hurt resulting in trust being destroyed. Rebuilding it is essential, yet extremely difficult. In fact, sometimes trust just can't be rebuilt and then it may be best to bring the team to an

end, and to start again. Once again it becomes an incredibly important pastoral task to help people to move on, without on-going hurt, let alone bitterness and resentment.

4) **Finally:** "Love [still] covers a multitude of sins." May there be generous portions of the love of God shared amongst our congregations especially those who gather together to do ministry (or mission) as a team.

So if the team is broken: slow down, engage a peacemaker, rebuild trust, double the dose of love!

Alan Vink is a pastor, lecturer and former CSI Pacific Regional Coordinator. He is currently the Chairman of the Board of Trustees for CSNZ and lives next to the long lefthanders of Raglan!

(1) Lencioni, Patrick; The Five Dysfunctions of a Team. Jossey-Bass 2002.

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