



SILVER ROSE
CHANGE YOUR FOCUS; ENGAGE YOUR TEAM

Whaaaaat? Ask my TEAM for input?

In my last blog we discussed the 2nd of the four key actions to lead your team effectively:

1. You know and completely understand what the team destination/goal is,
2. **You clearly communicate that destination to your team,**
3. You solicit their input for how to get there, and
4. You are a walking, breathing scoreboard!

Today let's tackle #3 – **Solicit your team's input for how to get to the destination/goal.**

If you follow my work at all, you know how little I think of Command & Control as a delegation tool (except in cases where safety is threatened). In fact, it's not a tool at all; it's a method of trying to control the uncontrollable—other people's actions.



Command and control is unquestionably faster at the front end for the “commander” but too often causes lots of time-consuming “clean up” at the back end for the entire team. Haven't you ever wondered, “**Why is it we never have time to do it right in the first place but we ALWAYS have time to fix it?**” Tasks or projects that get done incorrectly are the inevitable result of not soliciting input from your team on how to get to your destination/goal.

Motivation occurs when the entire team wrestles with the question, “*Who do we need to be and how do we need to behave to reach our destination/goal?*” If the leader is the only one looking for answers to this question, then it will always be up to him/her to achieve the milestones to get there. If, instead, the entire team is pondering this question and coming up with

Let's take the focus off your team for the moment and place it on you so you can fully grasp the problem with command-and-control.

When your boss or a customer shares with you a result s/he'd like you to produce, what is the first thing you begin doing?

When I pose this question in my programs, the answer I most often get is, “I start thinking about how I'm going to do it.” If the requestor then starts telling you precisely *how* he wants you to do it, are you listening fully? No! At best, you're hearing only half of what he's saying because you and your mind are busy planning how you're going to give him what he wants. This is why command-and-control doesn't work. You could be the Yo-Yo Ma of giving good directions and it won't matter if they don't hear what you're saying!

On the other hand, if you share a result you'd like them to produce and then you solicit their input by asking, “How do you think we should approach this,” they will reveal to you what's in their heads. You will be privy to their plans for achieving what you've asked for and you can work with them to fine tune those plans.

The \$100,000 question then becomes: what is the likelihood that the plans they came up with, and that you helped tweak, will be done as agreed? That's right. The chances are well north of 95% because *the plans were their idea in the first place!* THAT is the strongest argument for **soliciting your team's input for how to get to the destination/goal.**

If your team continually needs specific instructions from you on what to do in their areas of responsibility, then your leadership needs work. The first step is to stop using command-and-control. It's not effective.

Employee Engagement is all about having opportunities every day to use your creativity. Input for how to do things is just another opportunity for creativity. Figure out where you want your team to go and then solicit from them the plans to get there. You'll be amazed by their energy and motivation to get it done!

Silver Rose is an Employee Engagement Thought Leader who works with organizations to implement practical, proven and timesaving strategies for: (1) improving employee engagement, (2) increasing profitability, and (3) freeing leadership from the need to micro-manage.