

# INCREASING EMPOWERMENT, DEVELOPING REPORTS' CAPABILITY

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## **V.P. of Technology at a mid-size financial institution...**

Committed to delivering high quality service to internal clients  
Seamless technology operations critical to line management  
Unplanned crises and outages could provoke a regulatory “event”

## **Facing Leadership Challenges...**

Rapid team growth and increased number of less experienced junior employees  
Employees demonstrated wide variety of capabilities and degrees of commitment to their work  
Leader’s style not enabling the employee performance he desired

- frustrated when employees did not consistently meet expectations
- his frustration showed up in ways that intimidated and created fear in others
- employee fear of making a wrong move kept them from making any decisions

## **Initial goals to improve team performance, reduce leader’s frustration, and increase employee commitment to work...**

Gain commitment to a shared picture of “good” performance  
Constructively confront gaps between actual performance and expected performance  
Jointly negotiate approaches to work in a way that creates shared commitment to actions  
Coach direct reports to demonstrate leadership skills – “step up”, coach others, offer their view on courses of action

# ACTIONS

## **Get insight into leadership style and impact**

Collect intensive feedback on leader's strengths, weaknesses, and style  
Test feedback against leader's intended effect

## **Agree goals and observable outcomes**

Reduction in frustrations and employees' feeling intimidation or fear  
Reports increasingly use own judgment when faced with crisis and/or decisions  
Shift from hero manager (jumping in to solve reports' problems) to coach (building their capability to solve)

## **Identify key behaviors to develop**

Inquiry and listening – to others' interests, priorities, quality criteria  
Identify expectations in work “quality,” allow employees to use their judgment and decide how to achieve  
Use interactions with reports to develop their capability, help reports see the broader impact of their actions  
Treat emotions as data, and decide how to handle constructively

## **Share insights and development plans with key stakeholders**

Negotiate new mutual expectations

## **Engage in coaching conversations focused on relevant, timely work situations**

Plan how to apply new behaviors to situations, and debrief after action taken  
Surface internal barriers to change, test assumptions that block desired behaviors

## **Improved team performance through “thinking together” in open dialogue.**

Reports sharing ideas, testing approaches, and seeking counsel, rather than feeling fear and intimidation

## **Increased employees’ ability to identify and manage crisis.**

Employees operating in “self-directed” way with confidence in own choices

Some turn-over of employees who were unable to operate in “self-directed” way

## **Leader influencing at a broader level, creating new opportunities for value.**

Less focused on details of execution or “doing” reports’ roles

More focused on coaching employees

## **Increased leader and employee satisfaction.**

Leader’s actions and style aligned with values

Employees’ capabilities were developed and utilized, even in time of crisis