

ARE YOUR PEOPLE LEADING YOU?

I have come across many business leaders in my time who, instead of leading their employees have inadvertently handed over the leadership reins to their people. Instead of the leader grasping a vision for the future, owning this vision, communicating it and leading their people into the future, they succumb to being a follower of their employees.

They would rarely admit it but it plays out in reality.

- The leader suggests to a staff member that in order to save time they should change the way they do things. The staff member starts to sulk and, not wanting to offend, the leader yields to the employee.
- A team member TELLS the boss the conditions of their employment. The leader knows it's not in the best interest of the company but fear of losing the person they give in
- A foreman runs his own show in the workshop. He takes breaks when he wants to, goes at his own pace, disregards the performance measures placed upon him as he knows his manager won't sack him. He is the 'best' in the industry.

Fear is the underlying issue for management who continually yield to their staff. Fear of hurting the person; fear of not being mates like you've always been; fear of conflict; fear of being seen less than you want to be; fear of losing the employee.

If you allow your people to lead and do as they please you will go round in circles.

Leadership is about leading not following. Know where you are headed and lead your people there. If some don't like it, work *with them* to get them onboard. If they don't, let them go. Some employees I've come across are like kids who have always got their own way. If something isn't to their liking they sulk or sabotage. Point this out to them and if the behaviour persists help them leave. Better to lead fifty people working at 100% than one hundred working at 50%. Your life will be easier, your people happier and your business healthier.

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