

IL-NET

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Leadership: Shifting Your CL into High Gear

September 30, 2013
3:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M. EDT

Presenters:
Christy Dunaway
Bob Hand
Bill Henning
Lee Schulz

After this training, you will be able to...

- Describe the differences between management and leadership, overlap between the two, and implications for CIL operations.
- Describe critical success factors for effective CIL leadership.
- Identify strategies to elevate your current leadership abilities, including ways to improve listening skills when dealing with consumers, staff, and the community.
- Describe best practices for preparing staff members for increasingly higher levels of responsibility.

Describe the differences between management and leadership, overlap between the two, and implications for CIL operations

Christy Dunaway
Bill Henning

Wikipedia defines Management as...

- The act of coordinating the efforts of people to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources efficiently and effectively. Management comprises planning, organizing, staffing, leading or directing, and controlling an organization (a group of one or more people or entities) or effort for the purpose of accomplishing a goal.

Wikipedia defines Leadership as...

- “A process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task,” although there are also other in-depth definitions of leadership. Leadership is “organizing a group of people to achieve a common goal.”
- Notice the similarities. Both mention coordinating or organizing people to accomplish or achieve a desired goal. That’s why sometimes it is difficult to manage when you should be leading or leading when you should be managing.

Expectations of CIL Directors

- Board members, community members, funding sources and staff expect you to be a leader in advocacy efforts which takes significant time and skill. You are often serving as a role model, a person that the staff can look up to.
- When you are managing, that means being responsible for staffing the CIL, handling or being aware of disciplinary matters, ensuring that program staff are performing the tasks assigned, as well as having responsibility for all of the daily activities of the CIL—getting the bills paid, bringing in the money for programs, etc.

Create a procedural step between you and the staff if possible

- In Mississippi the Assistant Director serves as the Director of Personnel, enforcing personnel policies, handling disciplinary actions and staff issues, etc.
- This keeps the Director, the “leader,” one step removed from it. This makes it much easier for the staff to work beside the “leader” on advocacy issues.
- The Director is still ultimately responsible for personnel and other day to day management issues, but staff interact mostly with the person they see as the “leader.”

Assistance from Board Members

- Board members should be actively involved in determining the Director's role—management or leadership? It's very difficult to do both. If you have to be both manager and leader, ensure absolute fairness in all decisions.
- Our entire philosophy is based on equality of all people. Make sure personnel policies are clear, concise and followed in every circumstance.

There are Differences between Management and Leadership but they are Inextricably Linked

- Running service and advocacy programs means that you must give attention, directly and via delegation, to critical structural elements of your organization.
- Fundamentally, as a manager, you have to build a strong work environment and provide the tools for staff to do the job.

There are Differences but Inextricably Linked, cont'd.

- A quick sampling, hardly inclusive, includes strong personnel policies, staff/consumer feedback systems, sufficient communication and office equipment (especially computers), and an adequate compensation package broadly considered.

There are Differences but Inextricably Linked, cont'd. 2

- Being a leader in disability rights & services means being on your organization's frontline, knowing your services & your consumers' needs. If you can lead with emotion, that's fine, you may live & ingest the cause and pull people along.
- But even if flair isn't your style, you have to be present to show as best befits you that you know & absolutely own the cause.

There are Differences but Inextricably Linked, cont'd. 3

- Cannot separate mission from practice—a manager separated from the work with the community can hardly be a leader for the community. To not be engaged with services & advocacy is to remove context to your work.

Communication is Fundamental

- For both management and leadership, communication is fundamental and using it, as needed, to build the linkage, especially with staff, if not so much consumers, is vital.

Questions??

Describe critical success factors for effective CIL leadership

Bob Hand
Lee Schulz

Critical IL Leadership = Effective CIL Operations

- Know the IL system—very complicated in terms of funding, philosophy, and regulations. Executive director must keep updated on current developments in these areas.

Maintain Community Contacts

- Constantly develop and maintain community contacts—we never know when knowing the right person will help our cause.

Develop a Sustainability Plan

- Develop a sustainability plan for all positions so significant knowledge isn't lost every time there is a turnover in staff.

Track Finances and Funding

- Track your center's finances and diversity funding—most serious crises occur because of financial issues.

Develop Better Ways to Provide Advocacy, Services and Funding

- Be innovative and fearless in developing better ways to provide advocacy, services and funding, “Running a business is like riding a bicycle; you either move forward or you fall down.”

A Values Base

- Establish a strong belief within the entire organization (staff and Board) of consumer control and direction. This is our unique footprint.

Board Strengths

- Seek Board members with skill sets that complement your weaker skills.
 - For example, if you have limited accounting skills, get well-versed Board members on your Finance Committee.
 - If you're new to the area, you may want Board members with strong community or political connections.

Critical Factors

- Try to develop a reserve or income stream that is unencumbered by contracts. This allows you to fill contract holes and to take risks in developing new services or contracts.
- Network with other non-profits in your community especially those that are disability related as it allows for collaboration and increases your visibility and intrinsic worth to the community.
- Do what you do well—make sure the services you offer are top shelf and beware of over committing.

Questions??

Identify strategies to elevate your current leadership abilities, including ways to improve listening skills when dealing with consumers, staff, and the community

**Bill Henning
Lee Schulz**

Elevate Your Current Leadership Abilities

- Listen and observe what consumers, board, and staff have to offer and maintain this as a personal priority
- Provide concrete avenues for growth such as trainings
- Allow people to fill different roles and responsibilities in their jobs
- Don't shirk from risks as you help someone emerge (and maybe have Plan B ready if a risk doesn't succeed)

Elevate Your Current Leadership Abilities, cont'd.

- Share leadership; let a variety of people lead public and internal meetings and events
- Acknowledge individuals' successes
- Know that giving power to others builds organizational strength

Leadership means...

- Getting done what needs to be done and admitting when it can't be done or identifying the obstacles to completion.
- Constantly reading and learning about all influences on your organization.
- Creating a culture that allows for people to make mistakes so they can take calculated risks that lead to learning and growth.

Listening is Key

- Regular listening sessions with consumers and the community are essential to informing strategic planning on a regular basis.
- Listening to what line staff are hearing brings input from another level that can fill in gaps.
- Involving consumers in an Advocacy Committee can help identify community issues to work on.
- Listening to vendors who purchase services keeps you on target, e.g. if contracts aren't renewed, you can evaluate why.

Questions??

Describe best practices for preparing staff members for increasingly higher levels of responsibility

Bob Hand
Christy Dunaway

Prepare Your Staff

- Set aside a couple of hours each month to review leadership and management issues with mid-management and potential management staff
- Review actual issues that you addressed in the past and have the staff determine how they would have handled them before telling them what you did

Prepare Your Staff, cont'd.

- When these staff approach you with issues, ask them to always prepare potential solutions themselves
- Provide staff with management and leadership materials, online or hard copies
- When possible, send them to meetings where other executive directors will be addressing management issues

Prepare Staff to Step Up

- In the independent living field, we focus primarily on an individual's personal experiences with disabilities and their ability to provide the four core services to our consumers.
- This often means we are hiring individuals based on experience, not education. That's great until it comes time to develop and write a grant, a speech or an article. Appropriate vocabulary is imperative, but we do not always get that without a college (or higher) education. To ensure that one person is not left with all of the responsibility of writing and/or representing the CIL, other staff must be expected to step up.

Succession Planning & Developing Your Staff

- Directors and Board should always be planning for the ultimate retirement, dismissal or resignation of the top administrative staff.
- Take staff with you to meetings. If you are meeting with potential funders for a specific program, take the program staff with you to listen and learn.
- Always look to fill vacant positions from within the organization.
- Have a strategic plan in place for the future of the agency and have the staff provide total input.

Seek Out Opportunities for Staff Development

- Expect staff to perform tasks—it shows your confidence in their abilities.
- Create an atmosphere that allows staff to shine whenever possible, but to also be comfortable in telling you when they are NOT comfortable with a task or they need help with it.

Seek Out Opportunities for Staff Development, cont'd.

- Search for adult education opportunities offered from local community colleges & universities—Millsaps College in Jackson is offering an adult learning class this fall on speaking in front of large groups & making presentations with confidence. Two staff are participating for a total of \$600. Well Worth It! And it's one night a week for 7 weeks—not too invasive.
- Join your local or state non-profit center for educational opportunities, often free. (Grant writing, Board development, finding funding in tough economic times, etc.)

Questions??

Contact

- Christy Dunaway - lifefms@aol.com
- Bob Hand - bhand@ricv.org
- Bill Henning - bhenning@bostoncil.org
- Lee Schulz - lschulz@independencefirst.org

Wrap Up and Evaluation

- Your feedback is important to us. Please click the link below to complete your evaluation of today's program:

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