

The background features a large, semi-transparent blue seal of the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI). The seal is circular and contains a central shield with a sword at the top, a scale of justice at the bottom left, and crossed arrows at the bottom right. The text "DEFENSE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE" is written along the top inner edge, and "KNOWLEDGE - EQUALITY - READINESS" is written along the bottom inner edge. The entire scene is set against a dark blue background with a grid pattern.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP

Introduction

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.”

~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

Overview

- Define Senior Leadership
- Identify Types of Senior Leadership Styles
- How Senior Leadership is measured on the DEOCS
- Discuss Favorable Indicators and Outcomes of Senior Leadership
- Discuss Unfavorable Indicators and Outcomes of Senior Leadership
- Strategies to Increase Effective Senior Leadership
- Summary

Define Senior Leadership

The perception that the organization's senior leader demonstrates concern for the well-being of his or her organization's military members or employees and provides clear communication of the organization's goals, direction, and vision

DEOCS 4.1 Factor Description

Senior Leadership Styles

Leadership styles can be described as:

- Authoritarian or Autocratic
- Participative or Democratic
- Delegative or Free Reign

Senior Leadership Styles

Authoritarian or Autocratic

An authoritarian leadership style is exemplified when a leader dictates policies and procedures, decides what goals are to be achieved, and directs and controls all activities without any meaningful participation by the subordinates. Such a leader has full control of the team, leaving low autonomy within the group.

Senior Leadership Styles

Participative or Democratic

In participative leadership, the leader turns to the team for input, ideas and observations instead of making all decision on his or her own. That's not to say the leader doesn't have the ultimate decision making task; this is to say that the leader understands the team may have skills and ideas that could benefit the decision making process.

Senior Leadership Styles

Delegative or Free Reign

Free-rein leadership, also called Laissez-Faire, is a type of leadership style in which leaders are hands-off and allow group members to make the decisions. Managers set objectives and employees are free to do whatever is appropriate to accomplish those objectives.

How Senior Leadership is measured on the DEOCS

The following items are used to assess Senior Leadership on the DEOCS using a 7-point response scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

1. My senior leader puts processes in place to facilitate the sharing of information throughout the organization.
2. My senior leader clarifies our organization's goals and priorities.
3. My senior leader communicates a clear vision for the future.
4. My senior leader listens to the concerns of the organization's military members and employees.

Favorable Indicators and Outcomes

FAVORABLE INDICATORS

- Efforts within an organization to increase diversity of employees have been linked with increased perceptions of leadership effectiveness
- Leaders who demonstrate competency across a wide variety of skill sets, such as problem solving or task-related effectiveness, are more likely to be seen as effective leaders by followers
- Leaders who are goal oriented are more likely to demonstrate effective leadership skills when the goals are focused on the betterment of the organization and personnel



FAVORABLE OUTCOMES

When leaders are perceived to be more effective by their followers, organizations witness increases in:

- Unit performance
- Team performance
- Job satisfaction of employees
- Job satisfaction in teams
- Team situational awareness
- Organizational learning and performance

Unfavorable Indicators and Outcomes

UNFAVORABLE INDICATORS

- When leaders act in ways which contradict or are misaligned with the organizations mission and vision, these leader's actions can have negative impacts on employee and organizational performance
- Leaders who demonstrate toxic behaviors such as micro-managing, being mean-spirited or aggressive, rigidity, and poor decision-making are less likely to be viewed as effective and can contribute to toxic organizational climates



UNFAVORABLE OUTCOMES

Ineffective or toxic leaders can have lasting negative consequences, such as:

- Decreased information sharing and communication throughout an organization
- Decreased member motivation, morale and well-being
- Decreased retention
- Confusion on individuals' roles, goals, and priorities
- Decreased unit cohesion
- Decreased creativity and unit performance
- Units more likely to waste time on unproductive tasks

Strategies for Effective Leadership

Establish clarity and transparency in lines of communication

- Develop effective communication methods that encourage open discussion
 - Talk less listen more
 - Demonstrate that you not only hear what the team member is saying, but that you understand the concern behind their words.
 - When team members come to you with concerns or recommendations, ask questions to gain a thorough understanding of the situation

Strategies (Cont.)

Establish clarity and transparency in lines of communication (cont.)

- Ensure leaders' expectations and objectives are clearly understood
- Engage in the conversation with team members by using active listening skills to clarify, verify, and summarize what you have heard
- To clarify, ask for more information
- To verify, state what you understand and ask the team member to confirm if your understanding is right or wrong
- Ask members to paraphrase your intent to see if they understand

Strategies (Cont.)

Make it well known that you are available for individual meetings

- When team members come to you with problems or suggestions, give them your undivided attention; stop what you are doing, look them in the eye, listen, and ask questions
- Don't leave team members with the impression that they are not important by not acknowledging them
- Provide an organizational chart/chain of command list detailing senior leader's contact information, policies, vision, priorities, etc.

Provide feedback and performance appraisal frequently

- Communicate task-related information (e.g., explaining policy or procedural changes) as well as career-related information (e.g., additional developmental opportunities and career advice)

Strategies (Cont.)

- Provide feedback regularly especially after significant events (training, deployments, etc.) as a way to develop team processes
- Establish **SMART** clear and specific goals for individuals and units
 - **Specific:** A goal should be clear, easily understood, and should state the specific end
 - **Measurable:** Goals should be measured by quantity and quality
 - **Attainable:** Goals should be realistic and within the employee's capabilities
 - **Relevant:** Goals should be tied to organizational goals so that the employee knows the goals are worthy
 - **Timely:** Deadlines and timetables help the employee meet both milestones and final outcomes by preventing delay of activity toward the goal

Reference: Goal Setting Guidelines, Austin Community College, Retrieved from:
<http://www.austincc.edu>, November 2007

Strategies (Cont.)

Communicate a clear vision

- Project yourself to be consistent with the organizational values
 - Live and follow the values you expect your members to follow; Don't be a hypocrite.
- Develop a strong knowledge base to communicate from a credible and educated position
 - Don't assume you know more than others based on your position. Ask questions to ensure you in fact are informed.
- Discuss core values at regularly scheduled meetings
- Post the mission/vision statement in a visible or high-traffic area to serve as a daily reminder to leaders and personnel

Strategies (Cont.)

Demonstrate loyalty, respect, and compassion toward personnel

- Develop a personal, but professional, relationship with your personnel and key leaders
- Listen to the members' concerns; implement the suggested changes when possible
- Establish strong collaborative relationships

Strategies (Cont.)

Demonstrate loyalty, respect, and compassion toward personnel

- Address individual members, do not just focus on group-level issues
- Demonstrate true concern for members' well-being
- Be flexible on issues concerning family and personal matters
- Make personal connections with individuals (remember details about their lives, families and interests)

Summary

Senior leadership is one of the most important issues facing today's military services and organizations. The effective identification, development and deployment of senior strategic leaders are central to addressing this crisis. In addition to focusing on the skills or competencies important to leadership success, it also is important to understand the situations that must be addressed or the roles strategic leaders must assume.