

Self- Differentiated Leadership

Leadership that adequately attends to three tasks:

- 1. Staying connected to the system** – staying in touch with the people and culture of the organization; taking in information
As a Participant -- Sharing yourself – feelings and ideas. Use of communication/listening skills (paraphrasing, active listening, referencing another’s ideas, saying what you like about an idea as well as what concerns you), non verbal attention (eye contact, posture, showing active interest, etc.)
As a Team Leader -- Action to invite participation in listening to each other, gathering information about the task or the group, mutual assessment/diagnosis; sensing the climate of the group and enabling the team to do the same, etc.
As an Organizational Leader -- - Establishing structures/process/climate that: a. Enables communication and shared assessments of organizational life including channeling, testing, use of OD consultants, regular management retreats, etc and b. Enables the organization to listen to the trends and forces in its external context
- 2. Setting Direction** – taking non-reactive, reflective, data based, well thought out positions about direction
As a Participant -- Own sense of being “grounded”, “centered”; taking clearly defined positions that are not reactive; sharing your own wishes regarding the task and team relationship maintenance in appropriate ways, etc.
As a Team Leader -- Action to help the team define the task, get organized and act on it; responding to the team’s climate, etc
As an Organizational Leader -- Action planning; leader being open about her/his vision regarding direction and organizational culture; moving issues to a decision, alignment of values/intention/action
- 3. Dealing with Resistance and Sabotage** – the essential issue is not getting distracted from the direction by the resistance while also not “cutting off” from those resisting
As a Participant -- Managing your own tendency to be a cynic, go “passive”, etc.; managing your own anxiety about pleasing or taking care of others; not colluding with attempts to pull the team away from its task; dealing with your own desire to withdraw, quit, fantasize about “going back to how it use to be”
As a Team Leader -- Acknowledging the other’s position; stating your own position and your desire to move forward, even with your own doubts; invite others to join you in moving ahead; as appropriate “test” options with the team; etc.
As an Organizational Leader -- Establishing norms of “no threats”, dealing directly with concerns, “no surprises”; as appropriate, directly confronting destructive behavior, etc.

