

Regional Business Managers – Are You Managing or Leading Your Team?

Phil Yates of Customised Training Solutions Ltd reviews leadership and management in today's changing environment.

THE ROLE of the First Line Sales Manager is one of the most important within the pharmaceutical industry.

First Line Managers are responsible and accountable for a team of highly skilled medical sales professionals and directly influence their ability to succeed. The management style adopted by the Manager will

determine both the quality of the relationships enjoyed within the team and with people as individuals.

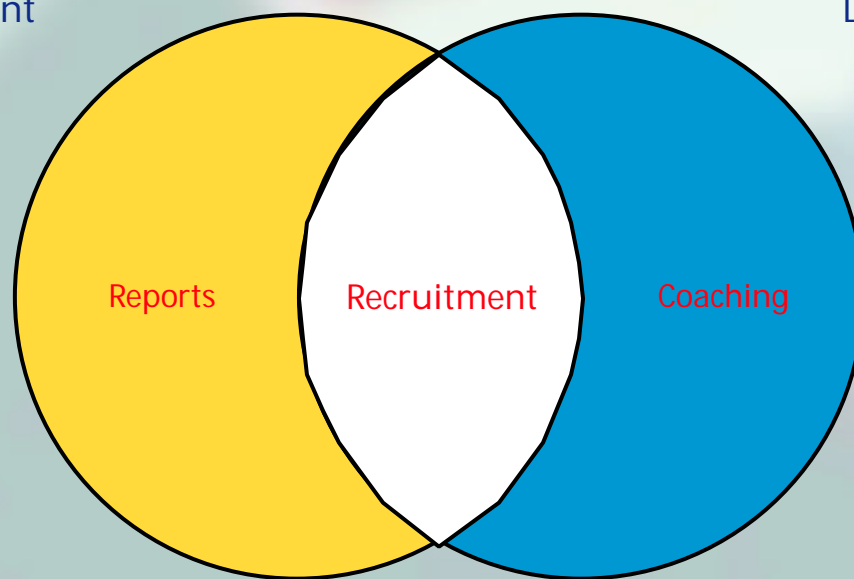
Management style will also affect the atmosphere and culture within the team. The approach taken to management will consequently determine the results achieved.

So should you manage or lead your team?

Management might be regarded as concern with process whilst *leadership* is concern for people. The diagram shows how different job functions can be allocated between these. To be successful you need to develop and apply both approaches as and when appropriate.

Management

Leadership



Expenses
Planning
Data analysis

Objective-setting
Performance management
Team meetings

Delegation
Counselling
Recognition

When comparing *leading* to *managing* others, the notion of managing is seen as doing something *to* others, whereas leading is seen as doing things *with* others. Managing tends to have a sense of unequal responsibility, of directing and being responsible for others. Leading, on the other hand, is not only about doing things with others but bringing people together.

If your style, therefore, is strongly management-orientated, your team may become stifled by process and wholly dependent on your direction. This may inhibit the ability of your people to develop themselves and their

business in your absence and will inevitably result in you unnecessarily dedicating far too much of your time to them.

Conversely a strong leadership approach may lead to chaos if your team is not ready for such empowerment. A balance is therefore required, whereby you establish your vision of success with your team and then work with them productively and synergistically to deliver agreed results.

Things are changing! In the past, first line sales managers wielded power through planning, organising, directing and controlling. Nowadays, as teams

grow larger and the manager's span of control is extended, much of that power is inevitably delegated and you are helping those within your team to solve their own specific problems rather than solving them yourself. You should therefore be striving to *lead* your team whilst also *managing* the underlying processes. In a nutshell – the job is to create the environment and then manage the processes within it. Most of the time your job is a balancing act – keeping the vision and the processes together. The diagram shows what happens when the balance swings too much in one direction.

L E A D E R S H I P	Strong	SURVIVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Too little-control ▪ Right focus ▪ Fewer systems 	THRIVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Balanced control ▪ Both processes and people supported ▪ Flexibility of manager's style according to individuals' needs
	Weak	DIE QUICKLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Out of control ▪ No focus ▪ Few processes or systems ▪ No big picture 	DIE SLOWLY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Over-control ▪ Aiming for perfection ▪ Little delegation or empowerment
		Weak	Strong
	M A N A G E M E N T		

We know that (Skill + Knowledge + Activity) X Motivation leads to results so how do you maximise these factors?

Skills and knowledge are continually enhanced through coaching and counselling; arguably the most important and impactful skills to develop as a RBM/RSM. How then do you stimulate the intrinsic motivation of your team-members to want to achieve results? It does not take charisma, instead you energise people through appealing to their personal values. This will make the task more meaningful and the effort people exert is directly related to the meaning the task has for them.

It takes time, effort and excellent listening skills to determine what the motivators are for an individual or group – never assume that you know – you will almost certainly be wrong. You must deliver the same message differently to different people or teams and then give people as much room and support as possible to achieve their desired results

Once your team appreciate and under-

stand what is expected of them and they are clear about how they will achieve their objectives, it is the daily communication between them and yourself that will inspire them towards the vision. You can help to sustain their mood and excitement at a high level by walking the talk, offering feedback, getting to know people personally, encouraging, praising and rewarding all successes, including all of the little things. Whether managing or leading your team, there are six key qualities that distinguish good First Line Managers from excellent ones:

- Enthusiasm
- Courage
- Self-confidence/belief
- Integrity
- Interest in people
- Sense of humour

Most important of these is to do what you say you will do and be sincere!

The First Line Sales Manager holds one of the toughest jobs in any commercial organisation. They are the point at which the directives of the corporate strategists meet the tactical implementers who must make it work to generate profit. This creates tensions and challenges and the need for exceptional management and leadership qualities. We wish you good managing (or should that be leading?) ■

Further reading:

- The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership:*
John C Maxwell
- Management Team Leadership:*
Graham Little
- Leadership Without Easy Answers:*
Ronald Heifetz and Richard Neustadt