

WORKSHOP - MODULE 4

People Management

Trust, performance, satisfaction - and adapting your leadership style

The Axelrod Tournament

Prisoner's Dilemma algorithm tournament pitting cooperative and non-cooperative strategies against each other looking for the ultimate winner.

- *1st tournament: 14 algorithms, 200 rounds. Winner: Tit-for-Tat*
- *2nd tournament: 62 algorithms (w/ access to 1st tournament results), variable no. of rounds. Winner: Tit-for-Tat*
- *3rd tournament: 62 algorithms, 1000 gens of “natural selection”. Winner: Tit-for-Tat (initially aggressive strategies)*
- *Only strategy for long-term sustainable group is cooperative – **nice, provokable, forgiving, non-envious, and clear.***

01

Trust

The foundation of every people-leader relationship.

Three pillars of trust

Empathy

COMPASSIONATE

Being able to put yourself in another's position - to see the situation through their eyes before you respond to it.

Authenticity

RELIABLE & REAL

Being honest and transparent.
Delivering on what you promise.
And being yourself - good days and bad.

Logic

PROVEN OVER TIME

Solid reasoning, sound judgement - demonstrated true on enough occasions that people trust it forward.

The give-and-take

Manager's give

- A chance to grow
- Resources: time, budget, knowledge
- Fair, consistent treatment
- Honest feedback, both ways

Members' give

- Their best work
- Contribution to team & company goals
- Ownership of outcomes
- Willingness to be coached

Devotion meets Authority

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Permissive Supportive, well-liked - but no accountability or structure. Standards drift.	Transformational Standards and care, together. Inspires teams to solve hard problems creatively.
Absent No direction, no commitment. The team self-organizes or stalls.	Authoritarian Compliance-driven. People do as they're told, hide mistakes, morale drops.

AUTHORITY →

Performance + Satisfaction

Every people management decision lives somewhere on this plane.

02

Performance

Empowerment . Goals . Delegation . Evaluation

SETTING GOALS

SMART

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Specific

Don't mistake activity for achievement. All stakeholders share one understanding of the objective.

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Measurable

If it's specific, there's a metric - even if it's only pass/fail.

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Achievable

Realistic given the resources at hand.

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Relevant

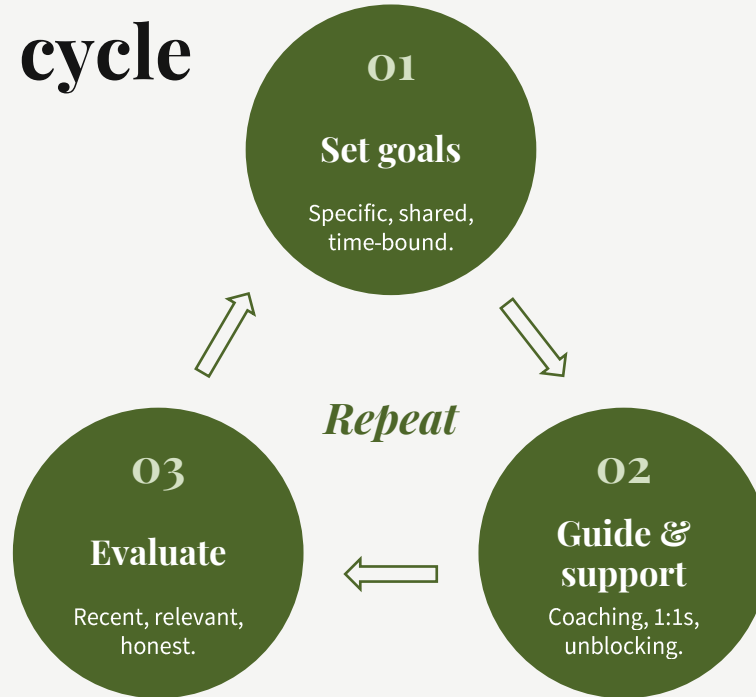
Tied to the role's purpose and the team's goals.

T

Time-bound

No deadline, no completion.

A continuous cycle



“

*If a man knows not to which port he sails,
no wind is favorable.*

- SENECA

Honestly about the cost

Setting and tracking goals is fickle, time-consuming, and difficult to maintain for teams larger than 10-12 people.

- *Plan for it: process, infrastructure, time, mindset.*
- *Build the rhythm into 1:1s rather than treating it as a once-a-quarter ritual*
- *Decouple development (skills, knowledge, etc.) and business goals (revenue, retention, profitability, etc.)*
- *Beyond a dozen direct reports, the system itself becomes the bottleneck*

Honestly about the risk

Goals can pull two ways. The mindset behind them decides which.

Goal-oriented

THE MACHIAVELLIAN TRAP

- Backstabbing, unhealthy competition
- Cheating to hit the bonus
- Short-term thinking
- Quarterly wins over team durability

Growth-oriented

SERVES THE INFINITE GAME

- OK to trade a quarter for long-term performance
- Mistakes seen as growth opportunities
- Breeds psychological safety
- Still welcomes challenges

QUESTION

Which tasks do you typically delegate?

**How do you decide
which ones to keep for yourself?**



Three principles

Accountability

Stays with the delegator.
Responsibility transfers;
accountability does not.

Enablement

Define the task: what, when,
who. Provide the resources:
time, budget, knowledge.

Challenge

Just outside the comfort zone -
the sweet spot for growth, not
failure.

Tip: Delegate the tasks you're tempted to keep - the interesting ones. That's where the most growth value lives for someone else.

How to give feedback

- **Consistent & persistent**

Between cycles, not only during evaluation meetings. No surprises.
- **Recent & relevant**

Tied to the period being evaluated, not last year's grievances.
- **Authentic, logical, empathetic**

Same three trust pillars - applied to feedback. Radical Candor > Sandwich.
- **See & Be Heard**

Adapt the style to the person. Some want straight talk; others need time to prepare. Same message, delivered so it lands.
- **Devotion balanced with authority**

Neither a cheerleader (care without challenge) nor a critic (challenge without care).

Claims vs Behaviors

Claims

ABOUT THE PERSON

- Assumption
- Subjective
- Evaluation needed
- Debatable
- Aims towards a conclusion

Behaviors

ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED

- Fact
- Objective
- No evaluation needed
- Specific
- Aims towards an action

- QUESTION

Claim or behavior?

- 1 Yavor doesn't care about the client's needs.
- 2 Ivo wrote to the client 8 times in three months and they still haven't replied.
- 3 Niki isn't motivated to continue working after finishing a project.
- 4 Petya is afraid to ask the client to sign the change request.
- 5 Mario said: "I'm pissed with the way the client is treating us."



The mindset behind feedback



Mistake culture & Growth mindset

Mistakes are tuition. The job of the leader is to make it safe enough to make them - and useful enough to learn from them.



Neuroplasticity

Behavioral patterns either become stronger or change – no third option. Feedback is never neutral.

03

Satisfaction

Motivation . Career paths . Expectations

Get the floor right first

Before any motivator lands, the basics have to be sound: fair financial terms, physical safety, and psychological safety. Maslow's hierarchy is still in play - you can't reach autonomy and mastery if rent and dignity are at stake.

Fair compensation

Physical safety

Psychological safety

Caveat: what follows applies to intellectual and creative work. For predominantly manual, lower-cognitive-load work, direct financial incentive remains the strongest motivator - 'mastery' is a hard sell to a strawberry picker.

QUESTION

**When have you felt
most motivated at work?**



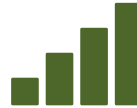
Three key motivators



Autonomy

Choice over the 4 T's:

- Task
- Time
- Technique
- Team



Mastery

Opportunity to keep improving -
on the individual contributor
track or the people-leader track.



Purpose

Contribution to something larger
than the task itself - team,
customer, craft, society.

Four career types

Spiral

Periodic moves into related fields - roughly every 7-10 years.

Linear

Steady upward movement up a hierarchy - the management ladder.

Steady

Specialty career, one area, start to finish - a lifelong craft.

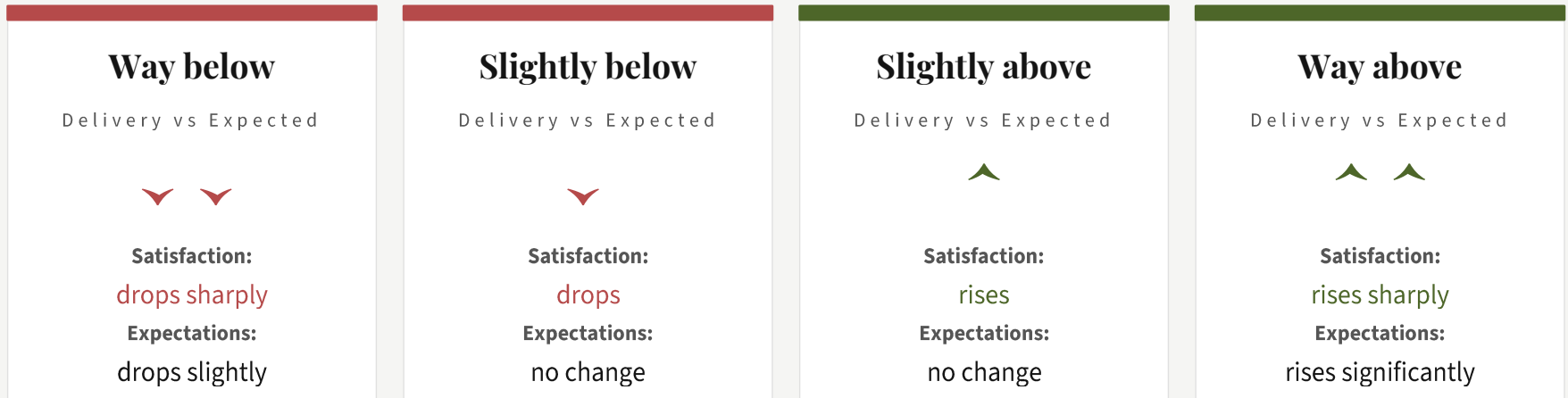
Transitory

Frequent role switches - rarely settling, rarely deepening.

Understanding which type fits each member of your team is how you meet their needs instead of projecting your own. Which one is yours...?

Aspirational long, realistic short

How delivery moves satisfaction and expectations



Satisfaction is fleeting and manageable. Expectations are sticky and slow to move.

04

Situational Leadership

Reading the stage - and adapting your style.

EMPLOYEE CYCLE - REPEATS EVERY TWO YEARS OR SO

Four stages on the P/S plane

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3 Capable but cautious Low satisfaction, high performance.	4 Inspired achiever High satisfaction, high performance.
2 Disillusioned learner Low satisfaction, low performance.	1 Enthusiastic novice High satisfaction, low performance.

S A T I S F A C T I O N →

*Natural and expected.
Managed well, you guide
people through all four
stages.*

Steps to adapting leadership style

01

Recognize

Read each team member's current stage - without judgement.

02

Diagnose

Identify what they need at that stage - direction, encouragement, autonomy.

03

Adapt

Shift your style: directing, coaching, supporting, delegating.

MATCHING STYLE TO STAGE

Adapt as they grow

STAGE	STYLE	HOW IT SHOWS UP
Enthusiastic novice	Directing	Show the how. Be explicit about what good looks like.
Disillusioned learner	Coaching	Keep direction high, but explain the why. Re-engage motivation.
Capable but cautious	Supporting	Lower direction, raise encouragement. Hand back ownership.
Inspired achiever	Delegating	Step back. Trust, sponsor, unblock - don't manage. Challenges are key.

QUESTION

Which style feels most natural to you?

STAGE	STYLE	
Enthusiastic novice	Directing	Show the how. Be explicit about what good looks like.
Disillusioned learner	Coaching	Keep direction high, but explain the why. Re-engage motivation.
Capable but cautious	Supporting	Lower direction, raise encouragement. Hand back ownership.
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The four moves

01 Build trust

Empathy + Authenticity + Logic. Know your wobble.

02 Drive performance

Goals > guide > evaluate. Stretch, don't hover.

03 Tend satisfaction

Autonomy, mastery, purpose - on a safe floor.

04 Adapt your style

Read the stage. Direct, coach, support, delegate.

Thank you

Lead the person in front of you - not the one in your head.