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Where have All the Leaders Gone?

By Richard Hohmann

One financial advisor stated that we are in the middle of a very dark tunnel. If that be the case, I guess I can say that I don't see light in either direction. The economy has offered some hiccups but no demonstrable change and it does not appear to look like there will be any major change in the very near future. We are in a bail-out mindset and it is kind of frustrating when most small or even mid-size companies have no real safety net to protect them from making bad decisions. The job market is much worse today than it was even two months ago. So where is the light going to come from?

Possibly the most frustrating thing for leaders and managers is that they have to personally manage the employees so that they stay engaged in their jobs and don't get distracted by the lack of sunlight. I would go even further to state that much of the leadership prefers to stay in the dark and not come out into the light, if there is any, and address the issues straight forward with their employees.

A recent survey from the public relations firm of Webber Shandwick noted that 71% of workers felt leadership should be communicating more about the current economic conditions and 54% of the workers have not heard anything from their leadership on how these conditions might affect their company and positions. On top of that, it was interesting that almost 75% of the workers said they had heard their colleagues and co-workers talking about the subject, but not the leadership of the company.



Where have all the leaders gone? Maybe they don't realize that it is a tunnel and mistook the current environment for a cave. I really believe that leadership today is scarce and middle management is being forced again to demonstrate that they are the glue holding the worker to the strategy of the company.

Engagement is more than having fun in your job. It is an understanding that your contribution is significant in regard to the overall effectiveness of the organization. This engagement process must incorporate the alignment of individual goals with those of the company, demonstrate why performance management can make a difference, and the really great companies focus on their strengths to get them through the rough times and they do this by planning and implementation.

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