

WHITE PAPER | APRIL 2017

Leading a High Performance Payroll Team



IPPEX GLOBAL

The Red Book Consultancy

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Authentic Leadership	5
Adaptive Leadership	6
Motivating Leadership	7
Directive Leadership	8
Visionary and Impactful Leadership	10
Building Your External Leadership	11
Summary	12



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The role of a global payroll leader spans many facets of leadership including multi regional team management and the management of one or multiple vendor organisations . In addition, the role has to be answerable to every employee and manager whilst completing the payroll process without a single error. The goal of this white paper is to be an aid memoire, a reminder not to park the broader leadership tasks when in the heat of processing and completing the pay period.

Leadership is a broad topic, in this paper we have grouped ideas, methodologies and actions around key areas of responsibility. Some will be more applicable than others depending on the nature of your organization. Each business has their own structure to setting goals, employee review processes and establishing your growth objectives. This paper provides an opportunity to think more broadly about the leadership options and tools at your disposal.

A payroll team has many influencers and contributors and has to work with multiple business teams such as finance, treasury, HR, IT, procurement and people managers. As the owner of the payroll function, your leadership is required in all of these interactions, as well as harnessing the skills within your own team. Understanding the attributes within the five headings will enhance your internal and external engagements and the profile of your payroll organization.

- Authentic Leadership
- Adaptive Leadership
- Motivating Leadership
- Directive Leadership
- Visionary and Impactful Leadership



'It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit'

Harry S Truman

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

Being an effective and authentic leader begins with you...

- Being self-aware
- Being aware of the impact you have on others
- Knowing what really matters to you
- Behaving in alignment with your core purpose and values
- Expressing yourself authentically

Identifying how you prefer to lead is a big step towards being an authentic leader. Many psychometric tools are currently available to help you understand the impact your leadership may have on others... To name a few... Insights Discovery¹, Myers Briggs², DiSC³, TotalSDI⁴ and are readily available. These tools help us understand our personality, leadership strengths (and potential weaknesses) and how they may affect those we lead or interact with.

Being an authentic leader is critical to engendering trust, loyalty, team effectiveness and your team's belief in your abilities. Many businesses also use a 360 degree type review for receiving feedback from your team, your peers and management to gain their view on your leadership style. The style and culture of your counterparts in HR and Finance may be very different to the environment of payroll.

ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP

There is, however, no one leadership style which transcends all and although our personal leadership style is an important factor it is not the single most important ingredient, our approach will and has to change as situations occur or the organization evolves. Our leadership style can be influenced by many things such the culture, senior leadership, business environment and change within in the company.

There are numerous papers and eminent authors of leadership styles, in this paper the work of Blanchard and Hershey has been chosen to illustrate the important aspect of situational leadership⁵. They categorized leadership into the following headings:

- **S1: Directing** – is characterized by one-way communication in which the leader defines the roles of the individual or group and provides the what, how, why, when and where to do the task;
- **S2: Coaching** – while the leader is still providing the direction, he or she is now using two-way communication and providing the socio-emotional support that will allow the individual or group being influenced to buy into the process;
- **S3: Supporting** – this is shared decision-making on how the task is accomplished and the leader is providing fewer task behaviours while maintaining high relationship behavior;
- **S4: Delegating** – the leader is still involved in decisions; however, the process and responsibility has been passed to the individual or group. The leader stays involved to monitor progress.

When it is right to adapt your style to any of the above depends on the current situation or environment, the goal is to ensure you have a high performing, supported team which is both committed to the company and the operation.

Finally, developing your leadership style with remote workers requires a much deeper investment and face to face contact to build trust on a frequency that is right for your business and budget.

MOTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Remember and think, everyone is different even though they all have the same job title and could have been all hired by the same manager.

A building block for any team is to understand the skills and capability of the individual team members and how they form a cohesive and effectively operating team. Some of the early methodologies mentioned above, help to build an understanding of the personalities of individual team members. In addition Strengthsfinder⁶ from Gallup helps to surface the top strengths individuals will bring to the team. The output helps the leader understand why they perform the way they do, but also helps to guide the team member to partner with others to leverage less noticeable strengths and vice versa. More modern in its application Insights Discovery¹ simplifies some of the work of Jung⁷ provides an in-depth profile for each individual in the team and details how that person will interact with others with similar and dissimilar profiles. It can bring light to why tensions may occur within the team.

Many organizations have a preferred tool or methodology, has this been offered to the payroll operation, if not why not ? These tools help teams understand why they operate in the way they do. The output from any of these tools has to be interpreted carefully with a specialist who understands the terminology but more importantly how to use the data to build a stronger team.



DIRECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Setting the direction for the team is not a one-time exercise, it is something that should be reviewed regularly especially when there has been a change or something has altered the stability of the working environment. Also it should be acknowledged that every time team members change, the dynamic of the team changes.

Many of you will be aware of the Bruce Tuckman⁸ model which identifies the four stages that a team goes through to achieve High Performing: forming; storming; norming and performing... In fact Tuckman added one additional stage, reforming. Payroll is seen by many outsiders as a constant, but it is affected by events, such as mergers or acquisitions, change in corporate leadership and directives to outsource or in-source functions. We suggest bringing the team together using the following approach to determining the state of your team and how to evolve to the team to the next stage, it will bring an inclusive and dynamic aspect to your team's development.

Discuss and document your observations on:

- What are the benefits of this group operating as a cohesive team versus working in silos or individually – both to us and the business?
- Where do we think we are on the Tuckman model currently?
- What can we and should we do differently or additionally to accelerate our journey to high performance as a team to lead the payroll business?

There is a wide range of other tools and methodologies which complement the development of a high performance team and we highly recommend reading “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team” by Patrick Lencioni⁹ which also provides a resilience audit and framework for assessing the team based on the five foundations of Trust, Open Conflict, Commitment, Accountability and Results

To support the team in its behaviours, you may also want to collectively develop a team charter. In essence this is what you aspire to achieve as a team outside of the regular KPIs or metrics, the environment you will embrace to achieve it and a core set of values or behaviours you will collectively and consistently demonstrate. All charters should be developed bottom up with the team and need to reflect their emotional connection to the goal and acknowledgement of their role in achieving it.

An additional area where the leader can set direction and support the team is around change. What we tend to see happen is a leader or leadership team embrace a change and prepare to drive it through, however, what we forget is that our people are aware of the change much later in the curve but we may expect them to embrace and accept quickly.

Context is key when driving change through any organization... Communicate constantly and consistently with an appropriate level of transparency.

Lastly, managing conflict within the team ... consensus is rare and passionate debate and disagreement can be healthy. As a leader, you should help “mine” for conflict within the team but also ensure that before everyone walks away from the discussion there is a clear action and agreement from all parties on the path forwards. Check in with individuals afterwards to ensure alignment.

*“It isn’t the changes that do you in, it’s the transitions.
Change is not the same as transition.
CHANGE is situational:
the new site, the new boss, the new roles, the new policy.
TRANSITION is the psychological process
people go through to come to terms with the new situation.
Change is external, transition is internal.”*

William Bridges, Managing Transitions

VISIONARY AND IMPACTFUL LEADERSHIP

As a leader it is important that you promote your organization. Payroll can be seen as a service centre or a necessary cost of employing staff, however it is a key part of an employees' satisfaction, their salary is their reward for their commitment and contribution to the business and your team's role in that is key

Networking and giving others an appreciation of the tasks you perform is important. Ensure regular reviews to receive feedback and to provide input to operations, especially with the touch points with HR and Finance, but also with the broader management structure.



BUILDING YOUR EXTERNAL LEADERSHIP

As a leader within your business, you have external responsibilities which are equally as important as your internal responsibilities to your team. It is therefore essential that you create an open and trusted relationship with your partners; invest time in understanding them, their pressure points and opportunities and provide them with feedback to develop desired outcomes.

You must also take the lead on issues such as governance and review processes, identifying areas of improvement and additional compliance.

And lastly, as a leader, you are representing not only the brand of your company, but your personal brand. Consider volunteering to participate on forums on topics that you have a passion for to both develop your skills and those of others, and of course your network.



SUMMARY

Many of us have been lucky enough at some time in our lives to participate in a high performing team whether at school, sports, community or business. When we are part of such a team, we get a strong sense of belonging, of pride and we thrive ...

High performance teams have:

- A deeper sense of purpose.
- Relatively more ambitious performance goals compared to the average teams.
- Better work approaches or complete approaches as the authors term it.
- Mutual accountability; acknowledgement of their joint accountability towards a common purpose in addition to individual obligations to their specific roles.
- Complementary skill set, and at times interchangeable skills.

The above points capture the qualities found in high performance teams and these qualities are indeed stronger extensions of the factors that are usually necessary and ideal for team work, some of which follow:

- All teams need a sense of purpose and a clear cut mission.
- All teams need the mission to be broken down into meaningful performance goals for each team member to pursue.
- All teams need to develop certain work approaches, procedures and processes to ensure that they accomplish a task efficiently and effectively.
- All teams have to support the common mission and take their individual responsibility seriously to do their part in accomplishing a task.
- All teams need a mix of skills, experience and expertise, in order to meet the challenges of the team task!

(source Katzenbach and Smith¹¹)

**Building high performing teams is a constant ongoing investment,
and leading your team effectively is a big responsibility...
But an incredibly rewarding one...**

Notes

1. **Insights Discovery**, Inspired by the work of psychologists Carl Gustav Jung and Jolande Jacobi, father and son Andi and Andy Lothian founded Insights in 1993. Insights is a global organization, helping to transform individuals, teams and even whole organizations. www.insights.com
2. The **MBTI** model was constructed by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers. It is based on the typological theory proposed by Carl Jung who had speculated that there are four principal psychological functions by which humans experience the world – sensation, intuition, feeling, and thinking – and that one of these four functions is dominant for a person most of the time. Myers, Isabel Briggs with Peter B. Myers (1995) [1980]. *Gifts Differing: Understanding Personality Type*. ISBN 0-89106-074-X. Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), www.CPP.com.
3. **Everything DiSC®** tools are designed to help individuals understand themselves and other people too. The solutions help build more effective working relationships based on an understanding of different behavioral styles. www.everthingdsc.com
4. **TotalSDI**, involves helping people understand how their motives drive their behaviors, how those motives and behaviors change during different situations, and how to develop a better understanding of the motive-driven behaviors of others. www.totalsdi.com
5. **The Situational Leadership® Model** is a model developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard, while working on Management of Organizational Behavior. The theory was first introduced as “Life Cycle Theory of Leadership”. During the mid-1970s, “Life Cycle Theory of Leadership” was renamed “Situational Leadership Model”.
6. The Gallup **CliftonStrengths** assessment is the culmination of more than 50 years of Dr. Donald O. Clifton’s lifelong work. The Gallup CliftonStrengths assessment is an online tool that helps individuals identify, understand, and maximize their strengths and there is also a Publication StrengthFinder 2.0. www.strengths.gallup.com
7. **Jung, Carl Gustav** (August 1, 1971) was a Swiss psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who founded analytical psychology. His work has been influential not only in psychiatry but also in anthropology, archaeology, literature, philosophy and religious studies. “Psychological Types”. *Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, Volume 6. ISBN 0-691-09770-4
8. The forming–storming–norming–performing model of group development was first proposed by **Bruce Tuckman** in 1963,^[1] who mentioned that these phases are all necessary and inevitable in order for the team to grow, to face up to challenges, to tackle problems, to find solutions, to plan work, and to deliver results.
9. **Patrick Lencioni** is an American writer of books on business management, particularly in relation to team management. He is best known as the author of *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, a popular business fable that explores work team dynamics and offers solutions to help teams perform better.
10. The Transition Model was created by change consultant, **William Bridges**, and was published in his 1991 book “Managing Transitions.” The main strength of the model is that it focuses on transition, not change.
11. A book *The Wisdom of Teams*, McKinsey partners **Jon Katzenbach** and **Douglas Smith** answer these questions and outline the discipline that makes a real team

IPPEX Global

IPPEX Global delivers independent consulting to businesses with global payroll portfolios. Helping businesses to understand how to manage, own and deliver global payroll, utilising industry best practice and technology. IPPEX Global was formed of global practitioners who have operated in the provider environment serving Fortune 500 businesses.

Our services include pre-procurement and procurement consultancy, project management, process improvement, data security and GDPR readiness. Our detailed knowledge of payroll operations, experience of leading a global payroll provider business and our leadership careers in multinational corporates, enables us to provide skills and training for payroll leadership.

www.ippexglobal.com

The Red Book Consultancy

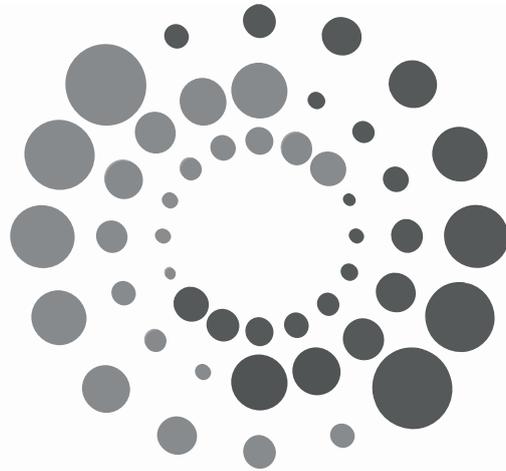
The Red Book Consultancy was formed having identified a gap in the business market for high quality communication and organisational skills across individual Executives, small, medium and large enterprises.

With over 20 years knowledge and experience in the arena of business management and psychometrics with some of the largest corporations in the world - Microsoft, PepsiCo, and Avanade - we understand the need in today's market for flexible yet superior quality business skills, to be available either on a short term intense project assignment basis or on a flexible retainer over a period of time.

Our philosophy is to work with you the way you like to work and adapt our style to meet your needs. We will be as flexible or as structured in our way of working with you that you need us to be.

Our client-base includes BBC, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard, SAP, Brooks Running, to name but a few.

www.theredbookconsultancy.com



IPPEX GLOBAL

UK (+44) 203 287 1234
US (+1) 323 570 4680
www.ippexglobal.com
info@ippexglobal.com

IPPEX Global and other marks used herein are trademarks of IPPEX Global
All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.
Copyright © 2017 IPPEX Global