

The Language of Influence: Transform Your Project Management Leadership and Communication

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Introduction to Leadership and Management

Delightful day, everyone.

Leadership is the art of influencing others to follow your direction, while management is the art of achieving outcomes through the efforts of others. As CEOs, Executives, Managing Directors, Managers, or Project Managers, our role is to achieve results and inspire colleagues to follow our lead enthusiastically, even without doing the groundwork ourselves. This is no small task, requiring significant influence.

The Nature of Influence

Influence involves altering others' behaviour by indirect or intangible means. This means any change we wish to implement must first convince and consume us as leaders before we can expect others to buy into it. Consider a preacher whose message must come from the heart to truly resonate with the congregation, or a football coach whose conviction drives the team to peak performance.

The Interplay Between Leadership and Management

Management becomes easier when there is good leadership, as leadership creates an environment that sets the stage for performance. Good leadership is often invisible, manifesting through a culture of high achievement, high performance.

Delivering Transformative Strategies

As a CEO / Leader, delivering on a transformative strategy requires a portfolio of strategic projects managed within the constraints of scope, time, cost, resources, risk, and quality. While managing risks and maintaining quality. Deliberate influence and a strategic communication plan are essential.

Projects as Vehicles for Transformation

Projects are the vehicles for organisational transformation. You can't transform and remain at the same position. At the end of a project, they must result in impactful change and tangible benefits for the organisation or company. Without these, a project is merely routine business

maintenance. Therefore, projects must deliver results. Modern organizations often projectises strategy implementation, breaking down the strategy into manageable projects for agility and effective execution.

The CEO's Dual Role in Projects

As the CEO, I play both leadership and management roles in strategic projects. I cannot delegate the initiation, planning, execution, and monitoring of these projects entirely. My role as a project portfolio sponsor allows me to directly influence project outcomes, leading an effective projects steering committee.

Driving Success Through Projects

Throughout my career, I have driven organizational success through successful projects. I expect my C-suite colleagues to share this enthusiasm, as successful projects signify an advancing organization. Senior leadership's influence on projects must be distinct, driving desired outcomes across the value chain. As project success is communicated effectively, the organization's success becomes visible and palpable.

Case Study: ZBFH Transformation

Let me share a recent example of project leadership I am particularly proud of. I joined ZBFH in August 2021. The Group had a five-year mid-term strategy plan centered on the Organizational Transformation Program (OTP), encompassing several strategic projects like Digital Transformation, Business Model Review, Sustainability, and Culture Transformation. I immediately committed to this strategy, leading from the front.

Defining the Digital Transformation Goal

The goal was a One Digital ZB Digital Firm, aiming for 80% of customers on OneZB digital capabilities and 60% digital revenue within five years. This involved answering four key business model questions: What do we offer (Value Proposition)? Who do we serve? (Customer Journey-driven digital innovation), What is our revenue model? (Value), and How do we create this value?

Transformation Pillars

The transformation relied on five pillars: Customer Journey, Ecosystems, Data, Digital Capabilities, and Innovation and Agility. We established a OneZB with three clusters—ZB Banking, ZB Insurance, and ZB Investments—optimizing business functions and providing a one-stop shop for all Group products and services. We also created an enabling governance structure and a new organization structure primed for innovation.

Close Involvement in Project Execution

To achieve this transformation, We maintained close involvement. We established a flat structure with two Program Managers, supported by a project team drawn from various functional areas. This team, known as the Organizational Transformation Program (OTP) team named the **Peregrineshift**, was supported by digital transformation, communication and change management, organization design consultants and a brand strategy consultant.

Regular Review and Steering Meetings

From the start, I held regular Sponsor/Program Managers' Status Review Meetings and chaired the Group Projects Steering Committee. This hands-on approach ensured I could influence project outcomes directly and strategically.

Results and Improvements

Over the past three years, we have seen significant improvements in performance, accountability, service delivery, and organizational culture, heavily driven by our refined brand DNA, that takes service seriously. We have adopted a performance-based culture, introduced new systems, and fostered a more positive organizational culture.

Conclusion: Creating a New One Digital ZB

In conclusion, we have created an exciting new OneZB. Our rebranding reflects a people-centered organization, offering an unmatched service experience. By 2025, we aim to be a fully digital brand, providing robust digital systems and services. This transformation requires ongoing influential leadership and project management at the highest level, starting with the CEO. Effective communication and change management will continue to distinguish us as a humane organization.

Thank you.