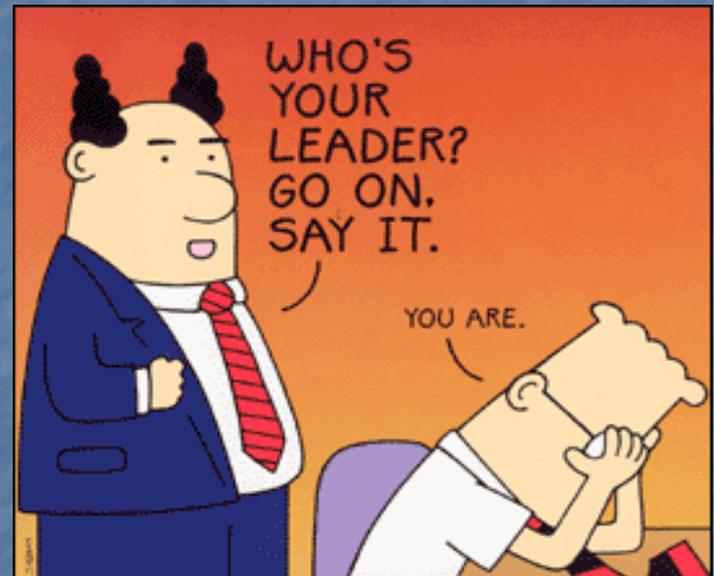


**Competent**

# *Desperately Seeking EMS Leaders & Managers*

*How to Avoid Meeting the  
"Peter" and "Dilbert" Principles*



Raphael M. Barishansky

***"In a hierarchy every employee tends to rise to his level of incompetence."***

- *Dr. Laurence J. Peter*  
*Author of "The Peter Principle"*

***"In many cases, the least competent, least smart people are promoted, simply because they're the ones you don't want doing actual work."***

- *Scott Adams*  
*Creator of "Dilbert" and Author of "The Dilbert Principle"*

# The Problem

- Stated simply - EMS tends to promote people who have been there the longest as opposed to those with managerial education or training
- So how do *you* avoid the being a victim or example of the Peter Principle (and/or the Dilbert Principle)?

# Overview

*(or what you will need to know)*

- Organizations: Structure, Cultures & Behaviors
- Understanding the Challenges
- Evaluating Your EMS Agency / System
- Understanding and Handling Change
- Leadership and management

# You are in charge...now what?

- Do you know what to do?
- Do you know your organization?
- Do you understand the challenges of successfully running it?
- Do you understand the challenges facing the field of EMS globally?



# Is This Your EMS Agency.....?

- Over 100 years of tradition, unimpeded by progress!



.....Or is this?

- **Team-work:**  
*“the joint action by a group of people, in which individual interests are subordinate to the group’s unity and efficiency”*
  - Webster’s Dictionary





# TEAMWORK

A FEW HARMLESS FLAKES WORKING TOGETHER CAN  
UNLEASH AN AVALANCHE OF DESTRUCTION.

[www.despair.com](http://www.despair.com)

## Organizations

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# Organizations

- A system that coordinates:
  - People
  - Jobs
  - Technology
  - Management Practices



# Organizational Behavior

- The study of human aspects of an organization, which includes:
  - Individual behavior
  - Group behavior
- Outcome equals organizational structure, culture and process



# Examining Your Organization



- How are tasks assigned?
- Rules (SOPs/By-laws)
- Authority & Responsibility
  - Is there always someone steering the boat?
  - Is it the right person? Are you the right person?



# CONFORMITY

WHEN PEOPLE ARE FREE TO DO AS THEY PLEASE,  
THEY USUALLY IMITATE EACH OTHER.

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## Organizational Culture

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# Organizational Culture

- All organizations have a culture and no two are the same - it's what makes working with or for each organization unique.
- Organizational (or corporate) culture is the beliefs, values, and symbols that a company uses to define itself.
  - "How things are done around here."

# Organizational Culture

- This culture is determined by:
  - Beliefs
  - Philosophies
  - Values
  - Behaviors





# ADVERSITY

THAT WHICH DOES NOT KILL ME POSTPONES THE INEVITABLE.

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## Challenges

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# Know the Challenges

- Operations Side
  - Guidelines / policy development
  - Staffing patterns /unit deployment
  - Recruitment / retention
  - Increasing / Changing type of calls
    - Demands of an aging and more informed populace
  - Quality Improvement

# Know the Challenges

- Administration side
  - Money, money, money
    - Billing, budgeting, grants, even audits
  - Local, regional, state and federal laws
  - Quality Improvement
    - Yes – for business activities too!

# Know the Challenges

- This doesn't only mean understanding just what's impacting *your* EMS agency
  - Area/system
  - Statewide
  - Nationally



# CHANGE

WHEN THE WINDS OF CHANGE BLOW HARD ENOUGH,  
THE MOST TRIVIAL OF THINGS CAN TURN INTO DEADLY PROJECTILES.

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## Change

*"It is not necessary  
to change.  
Survival is not  
mandatory."*

- *W. Edwards Deming*

# Change

- Change is universal.....
  - Has everyone on the room experience some degree of change on their EMS agency ?
  - Is your agency the same as it was 5 years ago? 10 years ago?
  - Tell me about it

# Change

- ...But it is the most feared component of leadership
  - You need to be a “master of change.”
  - How you look at change will largely determine how you react to it.
  - Change and challenge bring constant opportunities to grow and improve.

# Process of Change

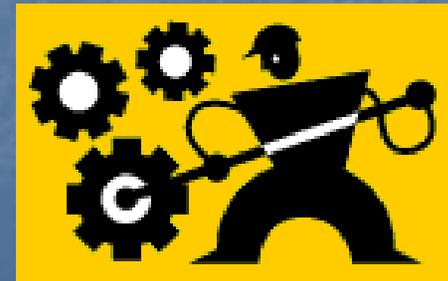
- Stage 1 – Unfreezing / Unlocking
  - ⇒ Breaking the habit, disturbing the equilibrium
  - ⇒ Leads to uneasiness, feeling frightened
  - ⇒ Results in anger and defense of status quo



# Process of Change

## ■ Stage 2 - Moving

- ⇒ Reduce threat and break barriers
- ⇒ Provide information
- ⇒ New group identity



# Process of change

- Stage 3 – Refreezing / Re-locking
  - ⇒ New feelings and responses become comfortable for the individual and are reinforced by others.
  - ⇒ Change now becomes status quo.





# IGNORANCE

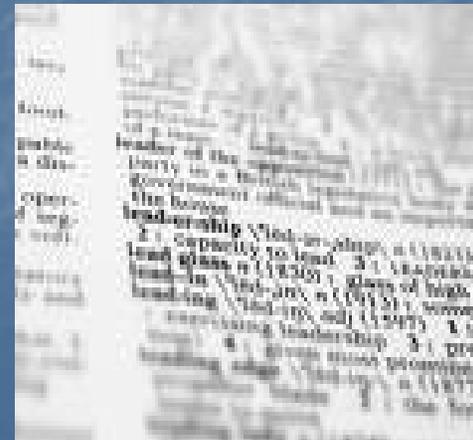
IT'S AMAZING HOW MUCH EASIER IT IS FOR A TEAM TO WORK TOGETHER  
WHEN NO ONE HAS ANY IDEA WHERE THEY'RE GOING.

[www.despair.com](http://www.despair.com)

Leaders  
&  
Managers

# Definition

- What is leadership ?
  - *"..the ability to persuade through process, or encourage through example, individuals with similar shared objectives to achieve outcomes"*
    - Webster's Dictionary



# Another Definition

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it”



- *Dwight D. Eisenhower*

# So what makes a leader?

- Tend to learn by experience  
(usually what not to do)
- Leadership is not formally taught to EMS  
(unlike the other emergency services)
- What attributes do leaders share ?

# Making the Grade

- Leadership needs:
  - Vision
  - Strong communication skills
  - Passion
  - Integrity (consistently ethical behavior)
  - Diplomacy

# Making the Grade

- Leaders (the good ones) are:
  - Consistent
  - Learners
  - Positive / Constructive
  - Big-picture thinkers/visionary
  - Open minded
    - Not the "*We've always done it that way*" or "*We've never done it that way before*"

# Making the Grade

- Know your people – and apply them accordingly
  - Appoint talented administrators, preferably stronger than yourself
- Be 100 % committed to the organization
  - Embrace errors and learn from setbacks
  - Remove obstacles

# Making the Grade

- Ask questions and LISTEN !!
- Encourage dissent (constructive)
- Keep people involved
- Be ethical
- Encourage other leaders



***“I'm slowly becoming a convert to the principle that you can't motivate people to do things, you can only demotivate them. The primary job of the manager is not to empower but to remove obstacles.”***

***Scott Adams***  
*(Creator of Dilbert)*

# Definition

- What is a Manager?

- *“A Manager is the person responsible for planning and directing the work of a group of individuals, monitoring their work, and taking corrective action when necessary. For many people, this is their first step into a management career.”*

- Webster's Dictionary

# Traits of a Good Manager

- Diplomacy
- Patience
- Communications skills



# Making the Management Grade

- Do not think of yourself as a 'Boss'
- Lead by example
- Learn to delegate
- Resist the urge to micromanage
- Give an opportunity for your team to give you input on what they think of you
- Recognize individuals and teamwork

# Leader or Manager?



## ■ Leaders:

- Innovate
- Create
- Develop
- Challenge

## ■ Managers:

- Administer
- Follow
- Maintain
- Cooperate

# Leader or Manager?



## ■ Leadership

- occurs whenever one person attempts to *influence the behavior* of an individual or group regardless of the reason. Broader concept than management.

## ■ Management

- process of working with and through individuals and group and other resources such as equipment, capital, and technology to accomplish *organizational goals*.

# Leaders & Managers

*"Managers, by their very nature, thrive on control therefore anything that they perceive as costing them control is unsettling and is to be avoided ... managers do not allow themselves the luxury of failure whereas a leader will try, fail and try again all the while learning new and valuable lessons. The manager on the other hand learns only one lesson in life—don't fail—and to ensure non-failure managers seldom take risks."*

- Harvard Business Review

- EMS is in dire need of both

# Resources

- Books –

- *First Time Manager*

- Lorin Belker and Gary Topchik

- *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

- Stephen Covey

- National Fire Academy Classes -

- Advanced Leadership Issues in EMS

- Management of Emergency Medical Services

# Closing Thoughts

*“A good leader inspires people to have confidence in the leader, a great leader inspires people to have confidence in themselves”*

*-Unknown*

# Questions



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Thank You !

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