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# The Mathis Group's Messenger

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## Leading Your Troops To Victory

In today's business, it is difficult to complete projects on our own--it takes teamwork. The projects most of us face are so complex that it requires several people to get the job done. With so many people involved, and with one person leading the way, it is vital that the team leader be well equipped in order for the team to be victorious.



The type of leader that a team has will have a direct result on how productive and cohesive the team will be. If you have a leader with a bad attitude who doesn't want to delegate tasks or who won't keep the rest of the team informed, that team will not produce the desired results. It is the team leader's responsibility to:

- Give vision to the team
- Coordinate meetings and keep them focused
- Communicate across to other teams
- Help build team synergy (working as a group instead of individually)
- Teach others to self manage

Not only does the team leader have to be committed, but so does the rest of the team. There are four things that goes into team commitment.

### **Respect**

Team members must respect and trust their leader. If they do not, it will be impossible for the leader to get them to do anything. The leader's authority will be questioned at every turn.

### **Open participation**

The team leader must be willing to share information with the team. Everyone needs to feel that their ideas and

suggestions are important and will be taken seriously. Employees have some of the best ideas when it comes to doing a project. They are the ones who work in this area day after day.

### **Goal directed**

The end result should be the focus of everyone on the team. With different personalities it is inevitable that there will be some fussing and fighting within the team. Each person on the team should remember that there is a common goal in which everyone is striving. Be considerate and respectful to others--even if you don't always see eye to eye.

### **Motivated**

All teams members should be dedicated to the task. Once one person starts to slack off and not do his/her job, more and more people will do the same. By the end of the project, only a handful of people are doing the work. This will cause major problems and stress.

So what exactly does working as a team even mean? When you work as a team, the team leader will facilitate the process rather than give orders and gather group input for problem solving. The entire team will reach a consensus in decision making and work together at keeping each other accountable.

(continued on page 2 *Leading Your Troops to Victory*)

*The function of a leader is to produce more leaders, not more followers.*

*Ralph Nader  
Consumer Advocate*

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(continued from page 1 *Leading Your Troops to Victory*)

As the leader, it is your job to run each meeting and delegate duties. When facilitating a meeting you should:

- Have an agenda for each meeting--don't waste everyone's time. All team members' time is extremely valuable. An agenda will ensure that you stay on track without forgetting anything that needs to be communicated.
- Start on time--again, don't waste everyone's time. Everyone has a schedule that needs to be kept. If the meeting starts late, that will have a ripple effect of the rest of the day and everything will be running behind. As a team member, it is disrespectful to be late to a meeting. If you know that you are not going to be on time, let the team leader know. That way he or she can still start the meeting on time and know to catch you up on everything you missed.
- Allow for balanced input--accept input from everyone. Don't immediately dismiss an idea that may seem farfetched--it may be the one that works the best.
- Stay on the topic--don't chase rabbits. Doing so will make your meeting run long, and, again, that will waste your team's time. If the conversation starts to get sidetracked, bring it back to the topic at hand.



During the meeting, encourage discussion from the group. Don't go into the meeting with a chip on your shoulder that your ideas are the best and only way to do things. Allow others to give ideas. Don't fear questions and don't take them personally. Keep in mind that when people ask questions they aren't attacking you, they are simply clarifying the ideas. They may catch a potential problem that you have overlooked. Finally, lead the team toward consensus. Let team members take part in the direction the task is to go. Allowing a consensus will give ownership to everyone. If the entire team feels like they have helped with the direction they are taking, they will be more likely to be committed and diligent to their responsibilities.

A good leader is one who builds leaders. Equip team members to lead. Increase self-confidence within the team. If a person is self-confident, he or she will be more willing to make decisions on their own. This will allow the team leader more time for his or her duties. Allow team members to give input. Doing so will give them ownership of the task. Open communication so it can flow. Don't be stingy with the information that you pass around. If you withhold information, you may unknowingly be sabotaging a given area of the job. You may not realize what data everyone needs to complete their role.

The Mathis Group would like to welcome to our team Micah Mathis, Vice President of Sales and Customer Relations. Beginning the first of June, Micah will assume responsibilities in the areas of sales, seminar presentations and technology.



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