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2017 Leadership Retreat: Elevate the Leader in You

by Travis Hunerdosse, PharmD, MBA President, ICHP

At the end of October, past presidents, current board members, and future leaders of ICHP gathered for the annual Leadership Retreat. The Leadership Retreat serves as an opportunity for attendees to learn new leadership skills, sharpen their tools, and actively participate in setting the direction for ICHP for the coming year. It is also a great venue to connect with old friends, meet new ones, and network with peers across Illinois. This is one of my favorite events and I was honored to be leading our discussion this year.

The theme for this year's leadership retreat was Elevate the Leader in You! Elevate yourself, your team, and your profession. I chose Michael K. Simpson's book entitled *Unlocking Potential: 7 Coaching Skills That Will Transform Individuals, Teams, & Organizations* because it provides tactics for us to use in coaching ourselves, teams, and our organization. This book provided the backbone for leadership development of the assembled group and guided our retreat discussions by weaving in the concepts to the topics that were covered. I am grateful for the opportunity to share some of the highlights of the book and the retreat.

In *Unlocking Potential*, the author highlights seven coaching skills that can help "big L" and "little l" leaders elevate individuals and teams into exceptional contributors to our profession. Having conversations with team members regarding the "big picture" and how their work makes a difference in patient care and our profession is important to advancing pharmacy practice. Being a coach is about having a positive impact on an individual's mindset and behavior and helping that person see how they can contribute and make an impact. It is about gaining trust, tapping into their potential, getting commitment, and executing specific goals.

Coaching is important, so what are attributes of a great coach? Effective coaches actively listen and focus on potential within an individual; reflecting, facilitating, and amplifying. They create an environment where people feel safe to express themselves and feel understood. Effective coaches also challenge paradigms that are holding back individuals from achieving their true potential.

Unlocking Potential highlights seven coaching skills, including building trust, challenging paradigms, seeking strategic clarity, executing flawlessly, giving effective feedback, tapping into talent, and moving the middle. While I would like to provide an overview of all of these coaching elements, I have chose to focus on three, starting with the importance of execution.

Execute Flawlessly

Execution of strategy is the biggest challenge of most organizations, yet it is of critical importance. What good is a well-planned strategy to an organization if it is not put into action? Individuals and teams can fail to meet their goals even when great strategies are put into place. It is extremely difficult not to get caught up in the demands of the day, such as e-mail, meetings, reports, or the crisis of the moment that distract from achieving strategic goals. In addition to the day-to-day swirl of competing priorities, there are four root causes for breakdowns with flawless execution. These include goal clarity, leveraged behaviors, compelling scoreboards, and weekly accountability. In summary, individuals and teams need to be able to state the goals, know what they need to contribute in order to meet those goals and the reasons why, communicate the metrics through a scoreboard and hold people accountable through routine conversations. In order to execute strategies, a coach must teach individuals the four principles of execution. Focus on “Wildly Important Goals” (WIGs), act on lead measures, keep a compelling scoreboard, and create a cadence of accountability.

Tap Into Talent

Many individuals underestimate their true potential. Effective coaches know how to help individuals tap into their talents and strengths. In addition, people want their talents to be leveraged and their skills to be put to work. Many employees feel that they are not being used to the best of their abilities. Leaders can evaluate by asking these powerful questions.

Team Coaching – Powerful Questions

1. Where could your team add the greatest value within the organization?
2. What unique capabilities does your team possess?
3. Do you and your people feel valued, appreciated, and recognized for their contributions in their roles?
4. How well do you effectively evaluate, develop, and promote the talent on your team?
5. How well do you match team members’ jobs with the right skills, competencies and capabilities?
6. Does your team have a clear vision, strategy, and goals to drive high performance?

Move the Middle

Leaders and managers often focus on elevating high performers. While top performers account for 20 % of the team; middle performers make up 70% and are often an overlooked talent pool. What many leaders fail to do is prepare a talent pipeline for moving mid-level workers into future key management and leadership roles. Leaders as coaches must clearly define how they can attract, retain and reward their employees.

1. Attract – getting the right people on the team and establish the right culture.
2. Position – identifying the skills required for a job specific role and getting individuals in the right role in order to thrive.
3. Reward – recognizing and rewarding exceptional performance.

Linking the Coaching Principles to the ICHP Strategic Plan

The retreat focused on specific areas of the strategic plan, including membership engagement, fostering leadership, advocacy for the profession, and improving patient care.

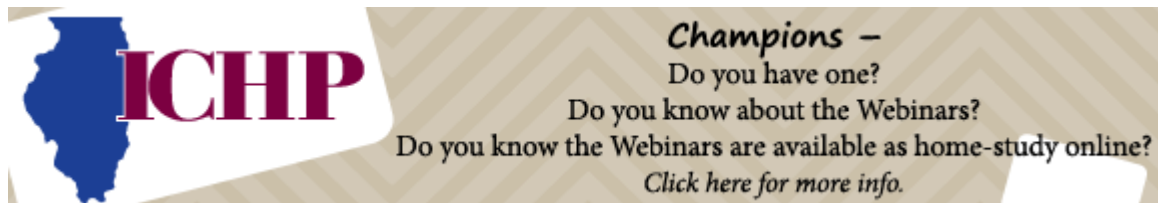
Our Members and Partners

- Maintain a high level of member engagement and satisfaction
- Provide the toolkits and resources members need
- Connect with members in a variety of ways
- Promote research by our members and share lessons learned

Our People, Resources, and Profession

- Foster organizational leadership with volunteers and staff
 - Provide basic leadership development opportunities for volunteers statewide
 - Develop an environment that encourages succession planning within the volunteer leaders of ICHP
 - Encourage opportunities and the freedom to learn and experiment
- Advocate for laws and regulations that improve care
 - Achieve Provider Status in Illinois
 - Provide input and guide the revision of the Pharmacy Practice Act

The 2017 ICHP Leadership Retreat was a very rewarding experience for me. As the president of our organization, I had the unique opportunity to lead the leadership and strategic discussions. I plan to use the coaching principles learned and the hearty discussions that was had throughout our meeting to move towards achieving increased member engagement, fostering organizational leadership, and advance advocacy efforts to improve the care of our patients across Illinois.



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