



Which Way, Boss?

Leaders like to think that when they issue commands, they get followed to the letter. That can't happen all the time, but what really happens often gets in the way of companies making true progress. There's also a real disconnect between managers and executives about what really happens when leadership tries to set a direction, which hurts leaders' abilities to have their vision carried out to their satisfaction.

Where's that laughter coming from?

Leaders like to think that when they issue commands or set goals, they will get implemented immediately and to the letter. We all know that doesn't happen all the time, but just how often? It turns out it happens quite a bit—far more than any of us probably realize, and far more than any of us would probably like.

We conducted a national random survey of 1,137 managers and executives about just how often leadership's commands receive immediate attention or create unintended mirth or worse, politicking and infighting. Orders from on high cause employees to work together to achieve the goal 77% of the time, but only *effectively* mobilize action about 66% of the time. This indicates an 11% gap where employees achieve the goal, but perhaps only grudgingly.

Leadership setting a direction results in politicking and infighting about 32% of the time and outright laughter 28% of the time. Though these are relatively small frequencies, ask any CEO how often he would tolerate laughter at his expense. Probably not anywhere close to three times out of ten! And if one third of your managers are laughing behind your back, imagine what the rest of the company is thinking!

It's Coming From Your Managers

As you can see, executives have a far more positive view of their organizational leadership's ability to set the agenda in a positive and productive way. Severe gaps exist in all categories between managers and executives, especially on how effectively employees are mobilized and the amount of perceived infighting that takes place.

When Leadership Sets A Direction...



The closer one is to the top of the company ladder, the more they believe that leadership is delivering a cohesive vision to the rest of the company. The top of the organization is clearly shielded from what their managers actually think about their proposals. But is that a good thing? Shouldn't an executive want to know if their orders are essentially being dismissed, guffawed at or causing gladiator-style battles to the death on the floors below them?

Conclusion

Executives still have a very different perception of just what is going on beneath them in corporate hierarchies after they issue directives. In order to get managers and executives on the same page, executives need to reexamine their company dynamics to make sure their managers don't start laughing as soon as the conference call ends.

To learn more about our unique think tank and findings, contact us at 602.504.8787 or info@nslg.net.