The 7 Habits of Highly Dysfunctional Leaders

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- City Manager, Anna Texas
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- ICMA-CM - credentialed manager
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- APWA
  - APWA Leadership & Management Committee
  - APWA Professional Awards Committee
  - APWA Top Ten Award Committee
  - TPWA Award Committee
  - VP of the NCTB-TPWA
  - APWA 2016 Top Ten Leader
  - APWA 2011 Community Involvement

- NCTCOG
  - PWERT, PWC, REPAC

- FEMA
  - Subcommittee to NAC
APWA Leadership & Management Committee

• The Seven Habits of Highly Dysfunctional Leaders
• Covey’s inspiration but with a look in the mirror
• Ted talks format in initial efforts
• Articles in December 2018 Reporter
• Training module on APWA
• Might be a book deal in our future...

• Jonathan Gano, Public Works Director, Des Moines
• Chas Jordan, Principal, Radiant Consulting LLC
• Jim Proce, City Manager, Anna
• Elia Twigg, Project Manager, Target Engineering (Knowledge Team Member)
• Laura Kroeger, Program Manager, Urban Drainage Flood Control District, Denver CO
• Harry Lorick, Principal, LA Consulting Inc.
• Bill Stogsdill, Public Works Director, Fairway KS
So what are the habits (dysfunctions)?

- Habit #1: Refusing To Make Decisions
- Habit #2: Not Doing What You Say You Will Do
- Habit #3: Not Doing What You Know You Should Be Doing
- Habit #4: Avoiding Responsibility
- Habit #5: Passive Aggressive Behavior
- Habit #6: Playing The Victim
- Habit #7: Resume Building
- Lots of Bonus Material (in the purchased training program)
Inspiration... or what the?

#1: Refusing to make a decision
- how often is the finished product of a meeting “let’s have another meeting”
- unwilling to accept risk
- “This isn’t the right time”
- ask for more data
- from living in the very short term

#2: Not doing what you say you will do
- cutting bait on a promise
- don’t be a phony
- questions one’s credibility in the long run

#3: Not doing what you know you should be doing
- basic leadership tasks and higher order leadership:
  - strategic planning
  - performance measurement/monitoring
  - checking in with the team
  - maintain morale

#4: Avoiding responsibility:
- not my job
- ignoring basic problems

#5: Passive/aggressive behavior:
- badmouth direct reports or the boss when they’re not around
- insecure leaders
- no direct feedback, good or bad
- instructions are vague
- critical of unimportant things
- hoarding of knowledge or information

#6: Playing the victim
- be willing to be the bearer of bad news, “this is what we’re going to do” not “You’re not going to like this, but we have to because the boss said so.” Big difference.
- common in junior leaders, particularly those promoted out of the workgroup they now lead
- basic motivation is that everyone wants to be liked and it’s easy, in the moment, to blame “the boss” for unpopular instructions, policies, etc.
- critical to earning the trust of employees; increases insecurity
- Niccolo Machiavelli advised, “Princes should delegate to others the enactment of unpopular measures and keep in their own hands the means of winning favors.” Good for a would-be ‘prince’, but bad for a leader.

#7: Resume building
- thinking we are indispensable
- empire building, even if it doesn’t make sense. Bigger for the sake of bigger, not necessarily better
- not in the best interests of the organization or community
- “it’s hard to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it.”
Not Doing What You Know You Should Be Doing

#3 of the 7 Habits of Dysfunctional Leaders

Jim Proce, ICMA-CM, PWLF, MBA
Not Doing What You Know You Should Be Doing - Ideas?

- This is an interesting topic and one most of us would not admit we have done
- So, for the sake of this discussion let’s just assume we are talking about people we have observed in another organization.
### The Not Doing What You Know You Should Be Doing List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive resistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procrastination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over-commitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mediocre work product</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Execution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celebrating</td>
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</tbody>
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Passive Resistance

- This project assignment or task is dumb
- This is not worthy of my time
- I am really busy on other priorities
- He won’t remember, so I won’t
- If it’s really important he’ll ask me again
Better approach to Passive Resistance

- Get clarification on deliverables
- Set specific expectations
- Explain your challenges
- Seek agreement consensus for compromise
- The alternative won’t likely be your desired outcome
Procrastination

- Delivery of bad news
- Bad news doesn't get any better with time
- In some cases, it may get worse
- Probably best to do this ASAP
- Better if you craft the story and deliver a positive slant on a bad situation
Procrastination

Waiting until the last moment, or worse yet being late
Process interruption; derails others in process
Dependencies failed
Reputation building (in a bad way)
If you’re in this trap you need to dig out
Get some wins to rebuild
Over-Commitment

• This is inadvertent procrastination
• When you can’t say no to anyone or anything
• When you are involved in too many things
• When you are actually good at what you do and everyone knows it and you get loaded down
• When you are otherwise distracted by other things in your life
Mediocre Work Product

• This is where you do what you should be doing
• But you just do the bare minimum, enough to get by, but certainly not your best and what is otherwise expected
• Good engineer/bad manager story

• You need to give things your best effort
• At worst get help and enlist others who may like the undesirable task
Prioritization

Understanding what is important is important

If you are busy you need to have prioritization skills a process and a regiment

Leaving things to chance results in the wrong things getting done

Make lists, use technology, whiteboard things
Planning

This is likely the most obvious

As a manager or someone striving to be a manager you have to think ahead

You have think strategically and predictively

As a former public works director I made decisions for things that may not occur for years

If you are going to need a tree, you need to plant the seed today

Those who need the tree today, failed to plan
Execution

- Follow the plan
- Be prepared for changing conditions
- Do what you promised
- Do what you promised when you promised
- So tell me, how long will this take?
- How did I fix this guy?
Evaluating

• You should be measuring what you do and evaluating the results
• Many agencies measure tons of stuff
• Monthly reports that no one reads
• Lets pick no more than a half dozen things that are important and track those, with a strategy to overcome a challenge or deficit
• Failed inspections? Good or bad?
• Work orders? Good or bad?
Evaluating

- Debriefing/after action reports
  - What went well?
  - What went poorly?
  - What could we have done better?
  - What did we learn from this?
  - What actions do we need to plan for follow up?
Celebrating

• When you do all those other things and good things happen
• Celebrate
• Show folks you care
• Show folks you notice
• Show folks you are paying attention

• Which lead to one last items I didn’t have on the list
Fostering Relationships - Keys to the Vault

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Priorities</th>
<th>Tactical Priorities</th>
<th>Operational Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Community</td>
<td>• City Manager’s</td>
<td>• Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• City Council</td>
<td>Office (CEO)</td>
<td>• Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Management Team/Peers</td>
<td>• Budget</td>
<td>• Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Staff</td>
<td>• City Secretary</td>
<td>• Expenditures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self</td>
<td>• Payroll</td>
<td>• Variance Analysis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Purchasing</td>
<td>• Productivity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Human Resources</td>
<td>• Best Practices</td>
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</table>
Summing it up #3
The **Not Doing** What You Know You Should Be Doing List

- Passive resistance
- Procrastination
- Over-commitment
- Mediocre work product
- Prioritization
- Planning
- Execution
- Evaluating
- Celebrating
- Relationships!
HABIT #3: DOING WHAT YOU KNOW YOU SHOULD BE DOING

Note: You do not need to be the top-level administrator to incorporate many of these items into your leadership plan. Even as a team leader you can be consistent about your vision for the team, set clear vision and operational goals for your team, etc. While it is certainly nice for top-level administrators “to do what they know they should do” as a matter of course, they do not have that ability to use many of these tools.

HAVE CLEAR END GOALS

It is important to have consistent documents in place that will tell your team what the priorities and direction are. It is important that these items align with one another and are not just there but are pointed and used on a regular, even daily basis. These items ensure team members make decisions and take ownership over their own. Some foundational items might include:

a. Clear Vision/Strategy
b. Strategic Plan
c. Operations/Activities
d. Consistency of Priorities

How do you know if you’ve achieved the outlined goals if you aren’t assessing your work? It is important to assess both the people you lead and the organization in which you operate. You likely are not maximizing your team’s capabilities or being consistent in words and actions if you are not consistently assessing:

a. Assessment of People
   i. Motivation: What is the motivation level of your team members? What motivates them to do their job?
   ii. Skill Levels
b. Strengths and Challenges Area: What is their area(s) of
c. Match between job responsibilities and strengths: Are they in a position where they have to share their responsibilities with others? Do their job responsibilities align with their areas of skill?
   i. Are there any changes that occur in these job responsibilities, and if so, how can they share their strengths?
   ii. Are there any changes that occur in their job responsibilities, and if so, how can they share their strengths?
   iii. Are there any changes that can be part of their success?
   iv. Are these changes that are detrimental to their success?
   v. Regular performance feedback/coaching

ASSESS

b. Team/Department/Organization
   i. Culture: What is the current culture of your team?
   ii. Policies and Procedures: Do the policies and procedures of the team/department generate support for the kind of culture you want to develop?
   iii. Environment: Does the physical environment support the kind of culture you want to develop?
   iv. Team Efforts: Are there areas that need improvement in this area?
   v. Evaluation: What is the effectiveness of the above items in creating the team you want?
   vi. Do these items align with your team priorities and with the kind of team you want to develop?

DEFINE AND MEASURE SUCCESS

In order to celebrate success, you must be able to identify when a success has been achieved. It is important to have a clear definition of what success looks like with regards to:

a. People: the people on your team and their growth and contribution
b. Programs: What programs are you overseeing, the alignment of their purpose and impact
c. Team/Department/Organization: What does success look like for your team, organization or department? How do you know when this task has been successful?

Questions to consider:

- Are you using all the tools for measuring success that are available to you?
Identify the Problem

- Is the outcome risky or likely to have meaningful long-term consequences?
  - Yes: Gather Information
  - No: Identify Options

Identify Options

- Select option that addresses need or issue given major priorities (time, resources, etc.)

Gather Information

- Develop implementation plan with checkpoints and change matrix

Identify Pros/Cons of each option

Select Option

Gather feedback from others

- Do others agree with selected plan?
  - Yes: Review Decision
  - No: If you feel concerns raised are valid, return to identifying options and involve others

Implement Plan

- Review Decision
Confrontation

7 Steps of Positive Confrontation

1. Initiate Contact
   - Where are good places to initiate confrontation?
   - What about bad places?
   - How many confronters should be included?
   - Are you the best person to confront?

2. Establish Rapport
   - Be authentic and friendly.
   - This step may require more or less time depending on your relationship.

3. Identify Issue/Problem
   - Use "we" or "I" statements versus "you" statements
   - If the problem is not identified by confrontee, return to step 2.

4. Problem is Agreed Upon
   - If agreement cannot be reached, return to step 2 or 3.

5. Obtain Attainable Commitment
   - Provide the person with an opportunity to succeed; don’t set them up to fail.
   - Pledge your support.

6. Keep Commitment
   - Establish a regular schedule to check in together and evaluate progress.

7. Evaluate Progress/Praise Success
   - Be a supporter as much as possible!
   - Be ready to return to previous steps if success is not being achieved.
Confrontation Do’s and Don’ts

**Confrontation Do’s**
- Confront in private; praise in public.
- Show respect for the person.
- Indicate “I care about you.”
- Carefully involve others.
- Pick a confrontee who is respected and admired by the person being confronted. Sometimes the confrontee is not an option; it is your job as the supervisor. This may require more effort within Step #2 if you don’t have a good relationship with whom you are confronting.
- Condemn the behavior/action, not the individual.
- Keep to the issue.
- Before confronting, get the facts about what happened.
- Help the person identify the impact and consequences of his/her actions.
- Clearly define repercussions for the act.
- Listen to what is being said.
- Handle silence appropriately.
- Cool off before confronting.
- Time the confrontation as close as possible to the inappropriate behavior.
- Be sincere.
- Language should reflect that “we have a problem” rather than “you have a problem.”
- Follow through on any agreements made.
- Show empathy, not sympathy.
- Be firm in the standards you set.

**Confrontation Don’ts**
- Don’t attack the individual, physically or otherwise.
- Don’t be condescending or sarcastic.
- Don’t excuse behavior.
- Don’t get trapped by the person’s excuse for his/her behavior.
Myths of Confrontation

Myth #1: Confrontation is negative. Confrontation is merely a means to dissuade or someone bad or directly, and purposefully. Confronting someone is to force a solution, such anarchy, or simply try on top of a situation. There's nothing inherently negative or positive about it.

Confrontation is essentially neutral.

Myth #2: Confrontation is synonymous with conflict. Whereas confrontation is neutral in concept, its use in conflict is defined as a state of animosity, often prolonged fighting, a battle or war or a state of disagreement between incompatible or adversarial parties, ideas, or interests; a clash. Conflict has a clear-cut nature.

Myth #3: Confrontation only occurs when there is conflict. This is where some of the confusion is occurring about confrontation occurs. People are expected to avoid confrontation when it's totally unclear what the result of a discussion would be. Unless and unless they take both sides from current positions and issues, that's what we need to be confronted and a conflict with. At the time, the confrontation can't be used or associated with conflict.

Myth #4: Confrontation can be avoided. Confrontation is inevitable. It's up to you to decide if it's constructive or destructive. Avoiding Confrontation is not a solution. In fact, it can lead to a situation where the problem becomes more complex and difficult to resolve.

Myth #5: There is nothing constructive about confrontation. When confrontation is used as part of a deliberate, intentional, and systematic approach to personal and organizational productivity, it is immensely constructive. Forming teams that both parties agree to address or implement the constructive and consistent schedule is a great tool for resolving conflict with others, which helps everyone feel better.

Myth #6: Clear communication and consistent follow-up are easy for leaders. It should be simple and straightforward for leaders to communicate clearly and follow up consistently. However, most leaders were not trained on how to use their skills and are unprepared for the changes in others. Therefore, even simple-sounding tasks like communicating effectively are difficult for many people-oriented leaders. The constructive confrontation process is actually simple concepts are easily executed.

Myth #7: Continuously confronting progress is micro-managing. What people commonly call micro-managers is what Karl Ignatieff calls “‘self-managing.” Many managers are unorganized, they are backloaded, they are focused, and they focus. People would rather have it than to be backloaded. Nevertheless, lack of clear direction and consistent leadership involvement show the lack of professionalism. We've known since the Western Electric Company’s Hawthorne studies of the 1920s that people work better when management takes an active interest in what they're doing.

Myth #8: People push back and resent their work being monitored. Resistance is a direct result of backtracking. People are often asked to do things they don’t want to do, and they resent it. People would rather have it than be backloaded. Nevertheless, lack of clear direction and consistent leadership involvement shows the lack of professionalism. We've known since the Western Electric Company’s Hawthorne studies of the 1920s that people work better when management takes an active interest in what they're doing.

Myth #9: Effective leadership requires the courage of a lion. If leaders follow a prescribed course of continuous communication, setting clear expectations from the start, maintaining relationships with the asymmetric expectations, adjusting expectations accordingly, and recognizing progress, they'll be successful beyond their wildest imaginations. Confronting has nothing to do with it. However, if you’re following the constructive confrontation process, it's required. The work ethic - make it good.

Myth #10: Confrontation never results in anything positive. Confrontation has the potential to improve the quality of discussion and help identify areas for improvement. Confrontation in the absence of a clear agenda, without adequate preparation, and with insufficient follow-up will only lead to conflict and a lack of progress.

The 10 Myths Of Confrontation
Leaders... 

• Lead by Example
• Act with Honesty & Integrity
• Get & Stay Organized
• Communicate Effectively
• Are Consistent
• Empower Others
Resources

• The “dysfunction” videos are available here on the APWA YouTube channel:
  • [https://youtu.be/flcXUzYQfMk?list=PLbTAQf0hXtkr9Eoh0bJentNleQZngg ps](https://youtu.be/flcXUzYQfMk?list=PLbTAQf0hXtkr9Eoh0bJentNleQZngg ps)

• The 7 articles are found here (they are awesome & you should read them!)

• The entire program, should you want to get the entire program, can be found here:
  • [https://www.apwa.net/MYAPWA/Events/MyApwa/Apwa_Public/Education_and_Events/Habits_of_Dysfunctional_Leaders.aspx](https://www.apwa.net/MYAPWA/Events/MyApwa/Apwa_Public/Education_and_Events/Habits_of_Dysfunctional_Leaders.aspx)

• The 3rd habit presentation can be found here:
  • [https://www.slideshare.net/JimProceMBAPWLF/not-doing-what-you-know-you-should-be-doing](https://www.slideshare.net/JimProceMBAPWLF/not-doing-what-you-know-you-should-be-doing)

• The closing act:
  • [https://youtu.be/Csk7dZGQtZc](https://youtu.be/Csk7dZGQtZc)