

HOW TO CREATE HIGH ENGAGEMENT AND OWNERSHIP

**TWO SIMPLE, WELL-TESTED SCHEMATICS TO
GENERATE BUY-IN IN DIFFERENT SITUATIONS**



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INTRODUCTION



Within a change process or when working with colleagues or managers, one of the key challenges you will face as a leader is generating buy-in for the vision you want to realize or the plans you want to execute. Building competence in this area will deliver effectiveness, impact and success.

In this brief eBook, I explain two schematics you can use to generate buy-in and create ownership and engagement. They are built upon recent scientific brain research and our vast knowledge of leadership, communication and influencing skills.



The articles at the end of this eBook explain the main concepts and principles that underpin the schematics, namely:

Schematic A

“From challenge to co-creation of solutions” is based on the concept of the leadership funnel drawn from Filip Vandendriesche’s *Leading Without Commanding*;

Schematic B

“From solution to acceptance” is based on the extensive work of Timothy Leary as represented in *Leary’s Rose*, adapted and transformed by us into the leadership compass.

Although it is undoubtedly useful to read the articles and understand the principles utilized in the schematics from a theoretical point of view, another way to get to grips with the schematics is to simply apply them and experience the effects they produce.

The key principles to consider are:



After the age of seven, you can't teach anyone anything they do not want to learn;



Solutions defined by others tend to provoke resistance;



People will not be engaged to work on a solution when they don't see the problem in a clear, factual way;



People become inspired and motivated when they achieve purpose, autonomy and mastery;



You can waste a lot of energy selling a solution or an approach when it is more effective for people to buy-in to the challenge/problem being faced;



People will be more motivated to implement a "forced" solution when they have maximal influence and autonomy over the way it is implemented

The two schematics represent two clearly distinct situations, namely:

Schematic A

"From challenge to co-creation of solutions" is based on the concept of the leadership funnel drawn from Filip Vandendriesche's Leading Without Commanding;

Schematic B

"From solution to acceptance" is based on the extensive work of Timothy Leary as represented in Leary's Rose, adapted and transformed by us into the leadership compass.

Although the schematics are suitable for individual and team contexts, they can also serve as a blueprint for a longer change process. Each step can last from one minute to days, months or even a year.

So let's look at the steps involved.

Imagine that you are working in a team (as a leader or as a team member) and in the last three months you have lost two large business accounts representing 20% of turnover.

In essence, you have two choices:

Choice A (schematic A)

You want to present this challenge to all team members and together, with a clearly defined ambition and playing field, you want to find ways to tackle this challenge.

Choice B (schematic B)

You discuss this challenge with a few team members, experts or consultants and find a solution. This solution must be presented to the whole team and, of course, you want to full engagement to implement it.

In the following tables we describe the different steps of the two schematics based on the example mentioned above (the loss of two major accounts).

SCHEMATIC A

from challenge to co-creation of solutions

Step	Schematic A, from challenge to co-creation of solutions	Principle	Critical success factor
1	Determine the subject, goal, structure of the meeting/conversation and the time of the meeting.	Providing a clear structure before starting is an expression of respect and clarifies what people should expect and do.	Be brief and precise.

Example:

In this meeting, I would like to talk about the loss of key accounts we have experienced over the last three months. My goal is to make sure that we are all aware of what is happening and I would like to invite you to think about solutions to this issue. The approach for this meeting is as follows:

1. *I will present some facts on the challenge we are facing and I would like to know how you are experiencing the situation.*
 2. *I will present my ambition for the coming months and see if it is something we all consider important.*
 3. *I will outline the playing field within which we can find solutions and discuss this with you.*
 4. *Then, we can brainstorm and/or discuss next steps and allocate tasks.*
- We have two hours for this meeting. Is everything clear? Great, let's start.*

Step	Schematic A, from challenge to co-creation of solutions	Principle	Critical success factor
2	State the challenge (problem to solve or opportunity to grasp) in a few shocking facts. Use visuals or an appealing metaphor to tap into people's emotions/heart and CHECK.	Engage people on the level of the challenge. Don't sell a solution.	The facts must be indisputable. When people become aware of the facts they must feel a need to tackle the challenge.

Example:

*In the last three months we have lost two large business accounts representing 20% of our turnover. This is essentially the same as all of us losing 20% of our income.
CHECK: Do you feel that this is not ok and we have to take action?*

3	State goal and CHECK.	Picture the desire end state, give perspective and direction	The goal must be a real goal, not a solution! What do you want to have achieved after the challenge is tackled?
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Example:

*My goal is not to accept this set-back but to turn into a lesson that will permit us to acquire at least 5 similar new accounts in the coming year.
CHECK: Can you feel the importance to us as a team and for our company?*

4	State playing field and CHECK.	Defining a playing field gives people autonomy within clear boundaries, making it safe for people to take the initiative.	Formulate a playing field in terms of very specific and concrete possibilities and impossibilities. Make sure that these are unambiguous.
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Example:

In a minute I would like to get your ideas and input on what we can do to reach this goal in a way that doesn't waste your energy and time. Let me first define some criteria that apply to possible solutions.

*We have a budget of \$100,000 but not a cent more.
All solutions must be acceptable to Sales and Marketing.
Solutions must respect our core customer values.
We cannot reduce the margin we have.*

CHECK: Are the criteria clear, can you understand why these criteria are important?

Step	Schematic A, from challenge to co-creation of solutions	Principle	Critical success factor
5	Do a problem analysis to explore the problem or brainstorm to find possible solutions. If there is no time for this during the meeting then plan next steps.	Make a start with positive action.	Give autonomy and trigger your own responsibility to find effective solutions.

Example:

Ok, now that we understand the challenge, ambition and playing field, let's try to analyze the problem together. Please, everyone take some post-it notes and write down some of the causes of the challenge as you see them. Then, organize these causes into categories, discuss and decide which are the most important.

Then, in this or in a next meeting, we will brainstorm possible actions.

6	Define actions and responsibilities going forward.	Don't leave things open-ended.	Ensure all agreements and arrangements are crystal clear. Everyone should know exactly who will do what by when and for what purpose.
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Example:

Ok, we have some solutions now. Who is going to do what by when?

SCHEMATIC B

from solution to acceptance

Step	Schematic B, from solution to acceptance	Principle	Critical success factor
1	Determine the subject, goal, structure of the meeting/conversation and the time of the meeting.	Providing a clear structure before starting is an expression of respect and clarifies what people should expect and do.	Be brief and precise.

Example:

As you know, we have lost two key accounts in the last three months.

We (the MT/Board) have discussed this in-depth and have decided on a new approach. In this meeting, I want to tell you about this new approach: Everyone needs to complete some training. My goal is to listen to your questions, thoughts and concerns on this, to answer your questions and to discuss with you how we can implement the training as smoothly as possible for you all.

The approach for this meeting is as follows:

- 1. I will tell you in a few words a bit more about the training.*
- 2. Then, I want to make a list of all your questions, thoughts, concerns and so on.*
- 3. After that we can see which questions I can answer and when and how I and/or we can tackle some possible concerns and allocate tasks.*

2	Present the solution in a maximum of three sentences. Don't sell, just tell it like it is!	Get to the point, avoid providing an introduction that is too long and can trigger resistance.	Be brief and to the point. Don't sell the solution, don't list advantages, just make a factual announcement of the solution/decision.
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Example

You will all complete a five-day training program on the proactive management of business accounts.

Step	Schematic B, from solution to acceptance	Principle	Critical success factor
3	Ask for thoughts, feelings, concerns ... List them. Don't engage in any discussion or provide any answers, just create a list.	Release energy. People have to vent concerns before they can really listen!	Don't argue, don't discuss, just write and ask questions to clarify concerns and make them as precise as possible. List the issue raised on a board.

Example:

Possible questions, comments you can expect: Why this training? Training never works in practice. We don't have time.

It's nice to have some training, but five days? Training is not the right solution, etc.

4	Acknowledge concerns, add your own concrete concerns if you have any.	Recognize people's feelings, show respect for the fact that they have concerns even if you disagree with them.	Be honest, pick a real concern to acknowledge or to add. Don't fake it!
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Example:

Honestly, I understand your concerns. Overall, I feel that five days is indeed a lot. You guys have a very tight and full schedule.

I will explain in a minute why this training is essential

5	Tackle concerns together and define which can be solved, how and by whom.	Provide support wherever you can. The moment people feel that you really want to listen to and help they will go for your solution!	Don't solve every issue yourself! Assume responsibility for your people but give them the time and means to find their own solutions to their concerns.
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Example:

Ok guys, let's have a look at your questions and concerns and let's see how we can tackle them. First of all, you asked why you need to do the training. Well, we have proof from people we know in the business that this training offers tools and tips to increase leads by 30% with a very high conversion rate.

Let's look at your concerns.

What could WE do to:

Make sure that we implement the training in practice;

find time for the training, etc.

I can check if we could bring the training down to four days, etc.

Step	Schematic B, from solution to acceptance	Principle	Critical success factor
6	Define actions and responsibilities going forward.	Don't leave any loose ends. Define next steps	Be specific: Who will do what by when and to achieve what purpose.

Example

Ok, we have some actions now. Who is going to do what by when?

LEADERSHIP COMPASS



The leadership compass is based on the work of the famous American psychologist Timothy Leary. He discovered during his research that patterns in behaviour are predictable. People always react to one another whether this is conscious or unconscious. Everything we do is behaviour; even not reacting is a form of behaviour. The model takes the view that your own behaviour triggers behaviour of the other person. In other words: action and reaction, cause and effect, sending and receiving.

It shows us:

- 1 Which type of behaviour triggers which type of behaviour
- 2 How to influence behaviour.

The model has 2 axes:

1. Active – passive (influence and dominance dimension)

2. We – I (having an eye for others interest vs only defending own interest).



Every person incorporates the behaviour mapped in the compass and will show this behaviour in specific situations. Every person also has a preferred pattern of behaviour. It is important to emphasise that none of the behaviour visualised is good or bad behaviour. It all depends on the particular situation which behaviour will be most effective for the outcome of the interaction that is taking place.

The laws

There is a relation between 'we, I, active, passive' behaviour

WE

behaviour from one person is answered by We-behaviour from the other person

I

behaviour is answered by I-behaviour

ACTIVE

Active behaviour is answered by passive behaviour

PASSIVE

Passive behaviour is answered by active behaviour.

These laws of behaviour can be used when analyzing behavioural patterns between people. You can simply ask yourself two questions:

1

Is this WE or I-behaviour?

2

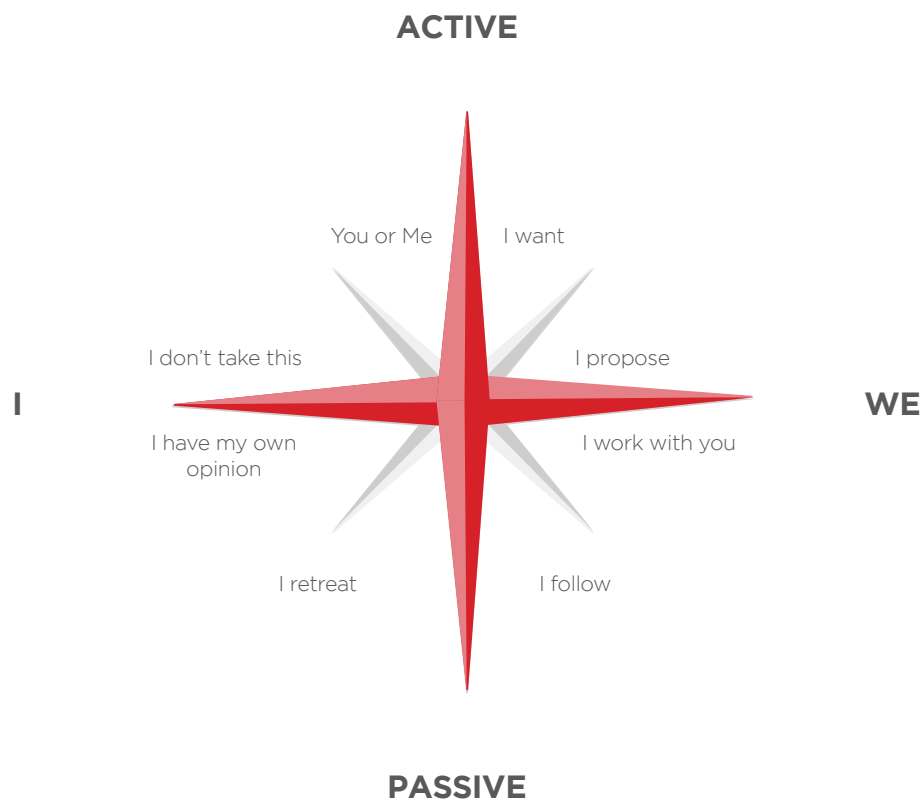
Is this active or passive behaviour?

'Placing' someone's behaviour is important in better understanding the other person. Furthermore, it gives you insights in how you can influence the behaviour of that person. You can consciously show certain behaviour yourself or adapt your own behaviour to the behaviour of the other person.

Why would you trouble yourself assessing the other person's behaviour and showing or adjusting your own? The most important reason is that it will assist you in having a more effective outcome of the interaction. More effective meaning achieving your objectives while continuing to keep a good relationship with the other person. Another advantage of assessing the other person's behaviour and adjusting yours is preventing an automatic reaction.

Through life we all develop automatic patterns of behaviour: a standard way of reacting to others in certain situations. This automatic reaction is not always the most beneficial reaction for that particular situation. Therefore being conscious about your own behaviour and that of the other person can result in more effective interaction.

Explanation of The Leadership Compass



The vertical axis represents to which extent we are more/ less active while interacting with another person(s). Active meaning both verbally and non-verbally showing yourself: speaking, moving around, having eye contact, making gestures, speaking with emphasis, being independent, and influencing the other. Passive behaviour is characterized by being silent, nodding, avoiding eye contact, be polite, humming, conforming, and being more dependent.

The horizontal axis represents the closeness in relationship people have with each other. We-behaviour focuses on wanting to work together, helpful to others, and emphasizing mutual interests. I-behaviour focuses on own interests, fighting for these interests with for example arguments, and being critical.

Description of The Eight Positions from

“I Want” > Giving Instructions

Typical behaviour	Relational message
Directing, initiative Organize Define the rules Giving instructions Assign tasks Define working method Evaluate contribution	I am strong, confident, powerful, skilled I can give good advice, give instructions, taking the lead, taking decisions

“Let’s / I Propose” > Convincing / Helping

Giving advice Encourage Mediate Reward Help out Showing sympathy Showing understanding Convince Being available	I am a skilled and understanding person who you can lean on for understanding, emotional support and contiguity.
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“I Think Along” > Active Collaboration

Agreeing Collaborate Condone Lean on Obliterate oneself Avoiding conflicts	I am a friendly, pleasant, non- threatening person and I want you to like me
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“I Follow / Tell Me” > Being Dependent

Being obedient Taking no initiative Asking for help, guidance and approval of others Imitate Insecure presence	I am weak, needy and I need your support
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Typical behaviour	Relational message
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“I Retreat: Go Ahead / I Quit” > Indifference / Being Inferior

<p>Being reserved Being withdrawn Being quiet Being absent, deviate Apologize Dissatisfied with oneself Paralyzed by own deficit</p>	<p>I doubt myself, I am worth nothing, I feel worthless</p>
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“I’ve Got My Own Opinion” > Sceptical and/or Suspicious

<p>Passive Dissatisfied, irritated Protesting Cynical remarks Sceptical, doubting Complaining Building subgroups Sabotage Asking difficult questions</p>	<p>I do not trust you. You do not deserve my attention, appreciation nor affection.</p>
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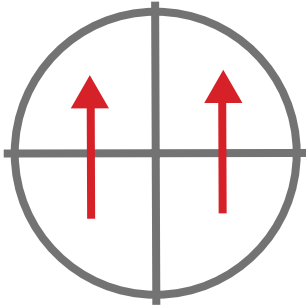
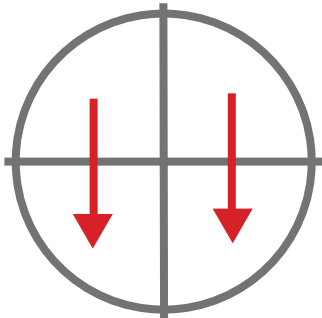
“I Don’t Agree” > Assertive to Aggressive, Confronting, Critical

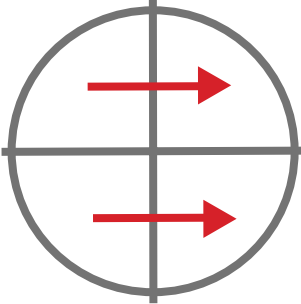
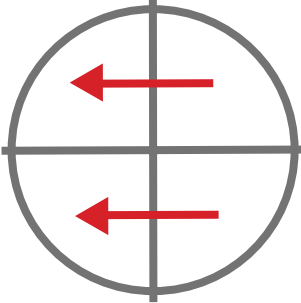
<p>Criticize Disagree with... Claim Putting boundaries Stand up for yourself Punishing Hostile, attacking</p>	<p>I won’t make it easy for you / I am threatening</p>
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It’s You or Me” > Competitive Behaviour

<p>Dwell on Independent Confident Dominant Condescending towards others Boasting Keeping initiative</p>	<p>I can handle it perfectly myself, I rely on myself and do not need others</p>
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How To Influence Behaviour

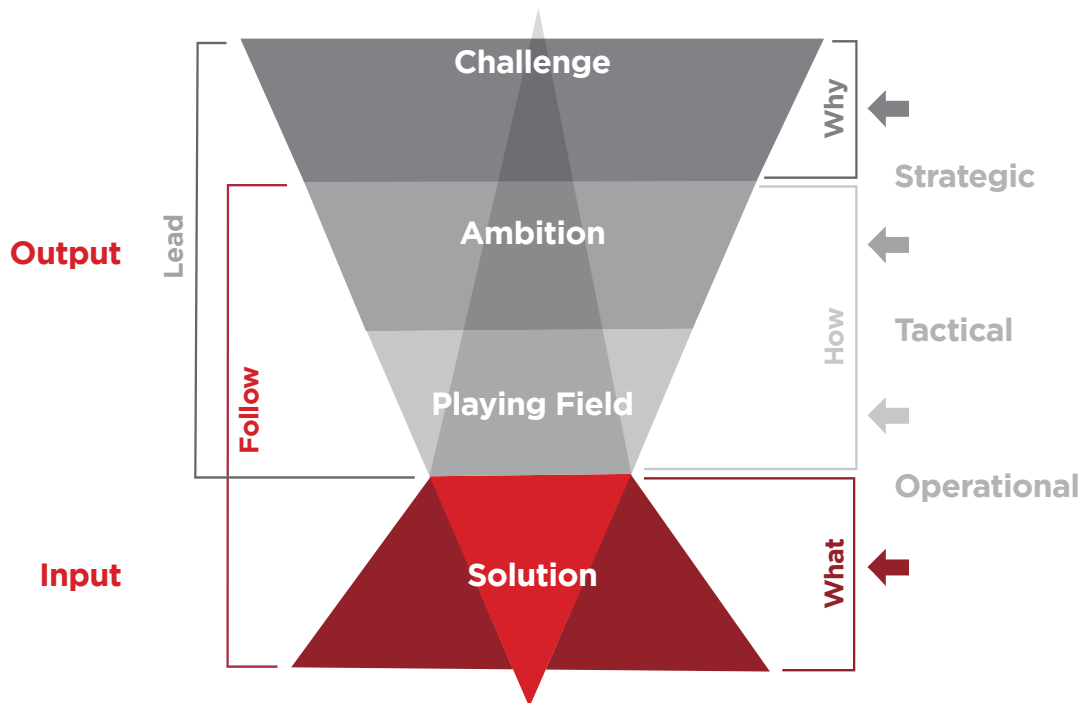
Activate	Your verbal behaviour	Your non-verbal behaviour
	<p>What do you propose? What is your view of the situation? I value your opinion. I am a bit lost; what do you think of this situation? What is according to you the main issue in this discussion? Can you give an example from your experience?</p>	<p>Say little Pause Be silent Not asking too many questions at the same time Relaxed body posture Inviting attitude by smiling Short sentences</p>
Deactivate	Your verbal behaviour	Your non-verbal behaviour
	<p>Deactivate on the I-side: I want this because... These are the objectives because... Please stop giving even more arguments. What you say is not correct. These are the criteria because... It is logical to do it this way. No discussion is possible.</p> <p>Deactivate on the WE-side: Communicate in terms of figures, facts and examples Investigate if you share the same goal? If you do, don't get fixated on a black/white discussion about a solution but look for the interest behind the different solutions and see if you can find a win/win after listening to the other ask if you can make proposition.</p>	<p>Deactivate on the I-side: Speak loud Use lot of emphasis when speaking Make yourself bigger in your posture Strong eye contact Sit with your arms on the table Stand up Be physically close to the other person More hand gestures to emphasize</p> <p>Deactivate on the WE-side: Speak in a clear voice but neutral, don't be angry or irritated. But state in a clear and loud enough way what you want to say.</p>

Deactivate	Your verbal behaviour	Your non-verbal behaviour
	<p>Wait for him/her to say yes.</p> <p>Make a proposition which take into account some of the interests of the other</p>	
Towards WE	Your verbal behaviour	Your non-verbal behaviour
	<p>I understand you consider the situation to be... shall we...?</p> <p>Shall we think of a solution together?</p> <p>I would like to work together with you.</p> <p>Shall we discuss the situation so we can agree on the starting point?</p> <p>I am sorry that you feel that way.</p> <p>I have a problem and ask for your advice.</p> <p>I do not understand, can you further explain?</p>	<p>Speak in a soft voice</p> <p>Relaxed body posture</p> <p>Open arms and hands</p> <p>Short sentences, let the other speak</p> <p>Smile</p> <p>Be not too close physically to the other person</p> <p>While sitting lean to the other person to show interest</p>
Towards I	Your verbal behaviour	Your non-verbal behaviour
	<p>I do not agree with you.</p> <p>I interrupt you because...</p> <p>Again I emphasize that we have to take this decision because of...</p> <p>I am not interested in your point of view.</p> <p>Why do we continue discussing while it is clear what to do?</p> <p>I can decide for us all.</p>	<p>Speak louder</p> <p>Look away</p> <p>Strong arm and hand movements</p> <p>Sit back in your chair</p> <p>Crossed arms</p> <p>Stern facial expression</p> <p>Frown a lot</p>

LEADERSHIP FUNNEL

The leadership funnel is based on the management funnel, a concept developed by Filip Vandendriessche (“Leading without commanding”). The golden circle is a concept of Simon Sinek (“Start with Why”).

Both concepts perfectly connect and describe the essence of management and leadership.



Leadership and Management Take Place on Three Distinct Levels

1. The level of “WHY” or strategic level

CHALLENGE OR VISION

As a leader you have an overview of how your team and organization functions, if you achieved your goals, what consumers want, etc., now and in the future. This leads to a thorough insight and analysis of what needs to be accomplished. An effective leader can support this vision with indisputable facts and figures. So “we aren’t customer-focused enough” is not factual enough. Facts only will turn into challenges when measured against the context, mission and company values. The mission as such provides focus, direction and priority. In short it describes why a certain situation is a challenge.



The ‘WHY’ inspires, moves and gives purpose and meaning.

1. The level of “HOW” or tactical level

OUTPUT GOALS

The leader translates this vision in goals. Goals in terms of the desired tangible end result that you want to accomplish on the short, mid or long-term. These types of goals are output goals. However, often goals are defined as input goals. Input in the sense that the goal describes the means and way (=solution) to achieve the goal.



Input goal (=solution)		Output goal (=end result)	Smart output goal
Lower the maximum speed on motorways from 120 to 100 km/hour	In such a way that	... there are less fatal accidents	... by the end of 2013, 20% less fatal accidents in traffic
Within 2 months all documents are alphabetically filed	In such a way that	... we can find a document fast	... within 3 minutes we can find a document
At the end of May I have followed a course in negotiating skills	In such a way that	... I can realize more of my interests	... at the end of this year management has assured me that we are going to invest \$200,000 in the development of our sales staff

In the first example the goal incorporates a solution 'lower maximum speed'. Therefore we typify this goal as an input (=solution) goal. To achieve the output goal 'less fatal accidents' you can lower the maximum speed, construct a roundabout, educate youthful drivers about the risks of drink and drive, take away distracting billboards, etc. Formulation of a goal in output terms leaves creativity for finding the appropriate solution and addressing the real issue at stake.

The importance of formulating output goals is that you as a leader explicitly indicate to your employees what is expected of them while in the same time giving them responsibility and freedom for realizing this output goal in their own manner (=input/solution).

PLAYING FIELD

At this level the translation is made from vision and output on the one hand to possible solutions on the other hand. As a leader you formulate a number of criteria that represent the scope for your employees for searching fitting solutions.



Important for an effective leader is to formulate these criteria at the start (and not afterwards). Once criteria are formulated you as a leader have to accept from your employees any solution that fits these criteria!

Criteria often deal with the availability of means like time, budget, and staff. However core values of you as a leader and those of the organization are a crucial part of the playing field. In that sense the playing field becomes an way to define culture and to anchor the solutions, way of working, actions and behaviour you want. So additional criteria could be: solutions must fits organization values, must be aligned with other departments, may not imply more hassle for customers, must be co-created by the people which have to implement them and so on.

3. The level of “WHAT” or operational level

This level is about deciding which actions and solutions (how, who, what, when, where) are needed to realize your output goals and therefore your vision. An effective leader gives his employees a free hand in coming up with solutions while he continues monitoring the process. If needed, he facilitates and gives support to his team. And of course, as a leader you have the final responsibility.

Importance of The Leadership Funnel for you as a Leader

The leadership funnel indicates that your attention and priorities need to be at the level of vision, output goals, and criteria. As a leader you can permit yourself not to have a solution, however, you cannot permit yourself not to have a vision. Therefore the output level is the responsibility of the leader, the input level is the responsibility of the employees. This means that you can be quite ‘directive’ up to the level of criteria. Of course you can engage your employees to discuss the vision, goal and criteria. Not only the leader, also employees can come up with criteria (‘I need at least 2 weeks’). This makes the level of criteria a process of negotiation between the leader and his employees. Formulate few criteria as the more criteria you formulate, the more you are defining the solution. When as a leader you have defined together with your team the goal and corresponding criteria, you have to accept all solutions your employees present to you.

The leadership funnel can assist in resolving conflicts. The conflict pyramid is the opposite of the leadership funnel: at the level of solutions you can easily and often have discussions and conflicts as many options exist to address the goal. However, the conflicts are not that profound. At the level of vision you do not have a difference of opinion easily. However, if you do have a difference of opinion, it is a serious one. When ending up in a conflict about a certain solution, you can refer back to the level of vision. First find agreement at this level, then go back to the level of solutions.

For example: we most probably agree to have less fatal accidents (no conflict at challenge and goal level). However, which solution to choose to realize less fatal accidents can give many discussions and conflicts. One person focuses on the construction of the road, while the other is in favor of awareness raising.

Applying the leadership funnel is a way to influence others. In 7 steps you can have your employees 'buy' the vision. As opposed to 'selling a vision' (top-down approach) which is mostly practiced in organizations. The essentials of this 'buying process' is that you involve your employees in the various stages of the leadership funnel. Important is that they agree on the challenge (will you work on a solution for a challenge you do not acknowledge?).

In case of resistance you can use the leadership funnel to identify at which level the resistance is situated:



Does your employee not agree to the chosen solution?



Does your employee agree to the solution but not to the criteria?



Or is the resistance at a deeper level – perhaps your employee does not agree to the goal that needs to be realized?



Or most fundamental – your employee does not agree to the vision or challenge situation?

In each of these cases an action at a different level is needed to overcome resistance. For example: no use to convince with all kinds of arguments someone about the solution, if this person does not see or agree to the challenge.

<p>Challenge</p> 	<p>Based on indisputable facts & figures. When to consider a situation to be a challenge? If the reply is 'no' to the question 'can we leave the situation as is?' You cannot continue with asking 'why' as it is inappropriate. (Why should we have less fatal accidents?) In the formulation of the situation you use words like 'not, nobody, nothing, never, too'.</p>
<p>Goal</p> 	<p>Positive translation of the challenge. Output formulated. Focused on the future (want). Inspiring ! a list of numbers to reach should go to better with an image of something desirable (eg. by the end of next year we will be in every newspaper in the country with this achievement)</p>
<p>Playing field</p> 	<p>Criteria for the solution. Needs to be verifiable. Makes the goal more concrete, abstracts the solution. 'In such a way that', 'without which'.</p>
<p>Solution</p> 	<p>The way to achieve your goal and solve your challenge. How? Who? When? Where? How many?</p>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marc Vanschoenwinkel is the founder of Compassion to Lead. It is his mission to support organizations in attaining high productivity as well as health and wellbeing. He does this mainly by shaping authentic will to understand each other. Marc holds a deep and rich international track hold and is an expert in executive coaching, facilitating effective leadership programs and team coaching.

