
Visionary Leadership/Empowerment

Definitions

Handbook concise definition:

Visionary leadership/empowerment is the organizational competency area concerned with collaborative leadership to reach the shared vision.

Competency component definitions:

Visionary (vizh' an er' i) adj. sees desired end results; describes picture of preferred future

Leadership (led' er ship') n. the process of developing the vision of success and the collaborative support to achieve it

Empowerment (im pou' er ment) n. the process of enabling through information, support, opportunity

Examples/actions:

- Helps to define key values and uses these principles to guide action
- Participates in scanning the environment—internally and externally—for information critical to the agency's mission
- Keeps the mission in focus and articulates it clearly
- Facilitates creation of a vision of excellence, a compelling scenario of a preferred future
- Allows others to be empowered to create and implement plans to enact the shared vision



What behaviors demonstrate visionary leadership/empowerment in your organization?

Are your organization's vision, mission, and values operationalized by staff at all levels? In all settings?

How would you know?
What would you look for?

Vignette: Visionary Leadership/Empowerment

Since the Centerville Agency got serious about embracing visionary leadership as an organizational competency, the culture has changed a lot. This change is reflected in the way every staff person behaves. For instance, stop any employee and ask him or her what the mission of the agency is and that employee can repeat it verbatim. Then ask the employee how what he or she is doing this minute relative to the mission and be ready for an answer. These folks know why they are here and what they need to do to fulfill their mission.

Of course, this phenomenon, while unusual in any field, is not surprising. The director and a cross-agency learning team worked long and hard formulating the mission statement with stakeholders both within the agency and within the community. Once the mission was stated, a very concerted effort took place to communicate and operationalize the message through

every medium at the agency's disposal—newsletters, meetings, notes in paycheck envelopes—as well as a full-blown poster program and a host of other extra-creative efforts. Anything an organization makes that much of a priority is going to yield results.



How important will visionary leadership/empowerment be for your organization in the future?

- High
- Medium
- Low

Does your organization encourage the demonstration of leadership at all organization levels?

If so, give examples:

Is leadership shared by community partners?

If so, give examples:

Visionary Leadership/Empowerment...

Subcompetencies by Customer Setting

- **Individual/Client**

- Promotes sense of self-worth in client
- Facilitates process of empowerment for clients through knowledge of risk factors for disease and control of personal behavior
- Is supportive to client in choosing health-promoting lifestyles
- Is receptive to new ideas and innovative solutions and modifies own thinking and behavior accordingly

- **Organization**

- Promotes development of a shared vision of organizational success
- Assists units in aligning their visions with organizational vision
- Facilitates process of defining organization's mission and core values
- Is able to operationalize the mission of the organization within personal or unit scope of work
- Understands and supports the contribution of other agency programs relative to achieving the public health vision and mission

- **Community**

- Promotes the formulation of a collective vision of a healthier community
- Facilitates a dialogue among multisector organizations and stakeholders about strategies to attain and sustain healthier communities
- Participates with other components in community health system to create systems that support health
- Influences the use of community resources to promote public health mission and vision
- Supports both community institutions and organizations in their efforts to improve community quality of life



Visionary Leadership/Empowerment . . . Subcompetencies by Organization Level



- Creates a compelling vision of preferred health futures and facilitates the empowerment of others to participate in the vision.
- Creates a vision respectful of individual's autonomy and dignity
- Leads process of defining mission
- Articulates a vision of community health and well-being



- Leads by example and supports leadership roles of others
- Fosters the process of individual empowerment
- Aligns department work with overall organization mission
- Encourages use of community resources in support of public health



- Generates, shares, and implements new ideas and incorporates them in own daily work
- Directs individuals/clients to appropriate sources/locations
- Makes suggestions for improving unit procedures and performance
- Promotes/supports health-related initiatives in daily interactions in/with community organizations

Examples of Visionary Leadership/Empowerment Exhibited by Setting and Level

- **Technical/Support Level Staff in the Organizational Setting:**
Organize time and work to support units' priorities and deadlines

Vignette: Jane, secretary to the director, clearly understands how the agency's mission is being translated into practice. She organizes her time and work to support her director's and the unit's priorities and deadlines. Every employee can count on Jane being clear, professional, and informative.

- **Credentialed/Supervisory Level Staff in the Individual/Client Setting:** Foster the process of individual empowerment

Vignette: Roberto is a restaurant inspector. He fosters the process of individual empowerment by suggesting that each level, from owner to dishwasher, take responsibility for proper food handling procedures.

- **Senior Management Level Staff in the Community Setting:**
Articulate vision of community health and well-being and facilitate the empowerment of others to participate in sharing that vision

Vignette: Carlos has been refining the mission and priorities of his organization with other community leaders. He's a popular, well-recognized, and highly respected leader. They say of him, "Here's a man who walks his talk."



Do all levels demonstrate or contribute to visionary leadership/empowerment in your organization?

- Senior Management
- Credentialed/Supervisory
- Technical/Support

Or use the levels you described earlier.

Observations?

Comments?

Notes?