

YOUR NEXT
STEP

IS BETTER THAN

MY NEXT
STEP

LEADERSHIPWISDOMS.COM

Your Next Step is Better than My Next Step – from [Leadership Wisdoms](#)

The leadership role is an elevation. It moves the work from one where we carry out mostly tasks, to one where we are specifically focused on getting the best from our people. It is a clear change in role as we step up to a different sort of responsibility.

When your people come to you, the subtle change means that in place of being the solution provider, you help them find solutions for themselves. When you answer their queries with a solution from you, they do not grow. They don't show creativity, confidence or resourcefulness. So, a good leader has to help them find their next step, rather than give it to them.

When a leader asks 'What will you do?', or 'What ideas do you have?', rather than 'This is what you need to do', they are building their peoples' capabilities, developing long-term skills and attitudes that will serve the employee forever. They are growing abilities rather than being the source of solutions. Of course, this can be a challenge for a leader, who might feel that problems brought to them are tests for them to solve. Yet the more valuable challenge is not to problem-solve, but to help their people to problem-solve for themselves.

It's a shift in role that moves a leader from fixer, to enabler. That's the job. That's the role. Moving from doer to leader. This will not be exact. There will always be times when any leader has to step back into doing tasks. Just less though, whilst making sure their role is as it should be. Helping others develop.

One of the benefits is where the team members take solution-finding on for themselves, the leader is needed less. Their time is freed up because their people begin to solve their own problems, becoming an effective team of more capable individuals.

Everyone is a winner when the next step is theirs, rather than yours.

5 Steps to Making Your Next Step the Priority

1. For a week, catch yourself problem-solving. To start just notice when you do it.
2. The following week, target yourself on at least one occasion where you might have 'fixed' something for someone, to consider what a different, better way might be.
3. Ask open questions to help them find their own solutions (beginning with Who, What, Where, When, How)
4. Provide them with the confidence to try out their ideas by encouraging them.
5. Afterwards, help them reflect on their ideas and solutions. If the solution hasn't been quite right, ask 'What would you do differently next time?'

How will you make sure the next step is theirs?

About Martin

Martin Haworth is a leadership coach and trainer based in Gloucester England. He coaches individuals one-to-one developing their leadership skills, on their personal development and career planning. He also works with organisations helping them deliver effective leadership throughout their organisation in a kind, supportive and motivational way. martinhaworth.com

More

