Why do Leaders Need to be Decisive?

“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing. The worst thing you can do is nothing”
~Theodore Roosevelt

What Must a Leader do to be Successful During a Crisis?
First, they must create a positive team environment. Set the vision for example, "We are here to save lives"! Ensure your team members embrace the vision and mission.

The next step is the step that truly defines a leader during crisis. That step is to take decisive action. Many leaders “freeze” when faced with making decisions. Many leaders panic because, they say, “I don't have enough information, or I have too much information.” Both will be true. Freezing though is not an option.

Decisiveness spells success. It means making firm, reasoned decisions that you have confidence in and that you stick with.

Being Decisive Requires Four Key Enabling Behaviors.
These enabling behaviors help leaders to understand decisions, make decisions, and execute them:

1. Knowledge and Expertise
Leaders who are effective at being decisive start with a knowledge, experience, and insights about the decision to be made. In many cases, the person making the decision involves others because they do not have all the needed knowledge and expertise. Insights come from looking at the data, analyzing results and discussions with peers and colleagues. Without proper knowledge and expertise, the only thing a leader can rely on is luck.

2. Clear Strategy and Direction
Once a problem is fully understood, a good decision needs the context of the organizational direction and strategy. A person can make a good decision, but if the organization is headed in a different direction, it will quickly become a disaster. Once again, involving others is critical here because there are changes in direction that may not have been discussed throughout the organization.
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3. **Courage**

No amount of data, analysis or reports will make the decision for you. All the data comes from looking backward, but decision effectiveness is based on what will happen in the future. Someone is going to have to make a decision, and that person will never be 100% sure it is the correct decision. For the life of that decision, it will be attributed to the person who made the decision, and this requires a willingness to take risks and pure courage. Not every decision made will be correct and so another aspect of courage is to identify and correct poor decisions. The natural tendency of those making decisions is to defend them but taking too long to recognize a poor decision can negatively influence the perception of an individual’s effectiveness and negatively impact the organization.

4. **Deliver Results**

The final element, good decisions that fail to be implemented become bad decisions. For decisions to be implemented, change needs to occur. Implementation requires that a person is willing to take the initiative who can act with speed, conviction, and a sense of urgency. Just because a decision has been made does not mean it will be implemented.

**A key element with implementing is follow-through and execution.**

**Commitment to Follow Through and Execute:**

**Commitment to follow through** means you are set to execute your decision and can do so purposefully. Committing to follow-through is like pulling an internal switch—after the switch is on, you do whatever it takes to make your decision real.

When you shift from considering a decision to being in the state of commitment, you are clear and can proceed without reservation and you are conscious of potential consequences. Successful follow-through requires resources such as time, effort, and help from others. It also requires being prepared to overcome obstacles.

The most successful leaders will tell you they have made many wrong decisions throughout the lifetime of their careers, but those failures always lead to valuable learning experiences, so above all, it’s important to find ways to make the tough decisions.