

Do You Want to Launch a Leadership Revolution?

There is a new book out entitled "Launching a Leadership Revolution (LLR)" by Chris Brady and Orrin Woodward. It combines a study of leadership as both an art and a science. It has been on a number of best seller lists. You can easily find it and reviews about it in a search with the keywords, "a leadership revolution".

It is information that deserves deeper study than just a casual reading. It is driven not only by loyal fans of the authors but also by the intelligent analysis of leadership provided within the book. It provides many of the guiding principles that make leadership a science. It is balanced with the emotional intelligence that makes leadership an art.

The principles in the book are given in explanations we are sure to hear repeated as leadership is taught and discussed in the future. This is especially true of concepts like: "the art and science of leadership"; "five levels of leadership"; and, "the tri-lateral leadership ledger".

What's in a word?

Before you start gleaning insights from reading LLR, I want to suggest you take a moment to consider the title and what it means. As you do so, why not apply the concepts to your own life and leadership scenario? Why not look at how they impact your life?

It always helps to pause a moment to challenge our own assumptions. I am always an advocate of the analysis process. (After all I paid a lot of graduate tuition to learn analysis processes and it would be a shame to let those thousands go to waste.)

I suggest that you take a moment and consider three words from the title. Even if you never read LLR, just pausing to consider these definitions and applying them with what you already know can be a mini refresher course in leadership.

It will often expand your thinking to look at the different definitions of a word in a dictionary. That is the expansion of thinking you will find here. You will find definitions of the words: launch, leadership, and revolution. With the exception of "leadership, the definitions are correlated to personality types.

The four personality types are: Choleric, Sanguine, Melancholy, and Phlegmatic. Cholerics lead through assertiveness and strength of will; Sanguines through charm; Melancholies through rules and systems; and Phlegmatics lead by consensus or mentoring.

Leadership definitions were not correlated with any specific type since all types can be leaders. As you read them, keep in mind you are probably a combination of two or more personality types. Don't try to understand yourself using one personality type only. There are numerous web articles about personality types if you want to learn more.

What is leadership?

To lead is to direct or control the movement of something. It is often associated with authority. Another meaning is to influence the action of others by example. A definition

which brings in the concept of future vision is "to guide on a way by going in advance". Using these definitions you are you are ready to define "leadership".

Definition 1: Leadership is an office or position according to Merriam-Webster. You may have a position in a corporation, a church, a business to which has been given to you. You may also have obtained it by virtue of being a founder.

Definition 2: Leadership is a capacity to lead. People may have said to you, "You have leadership". They mean that they see in you something that they often attribute to a natural talent for leadership.

Definition 3: Leadership was also defined as the act or moment of leadership. It makes me think of you as stepping forward and rising to show leadership because the moment called for it.

Definition 4: Leadership is also given a collective definition. It is a select group of people at a high level in the hierarchy of an organization, movement, or institution who collectively have the power to control direction and activities. In politics you might talk about party leadership in this sense.

How would different personalities define launching?

Definition 1: The first meaning of launch is "To hurl forward or throw. This is a great definition for a "choleric" personality. If you are choleric you want start as fast as you can and as hard as you can. It is a "Ready, Fire, Aim" type leader. Maybe it is you.

Definition 2: Merriam-Webster also defines launch as to "set into energetically, such as to launch a speech." This is definitely a sanguine. If you are sanguine you love the stage and whatever you do, you are going to get excited enough to generate some energy.

Definition 3: The third definition is in the context of computer programming. You load a program and then run it. You launch it. This has to be a definition that will resonate with you if you are a melancholy. You want lots of rules. (Computer programs have lots of protocols.) And then, you want things to run the same way, over and over.

Definition 4: There are two more definitions from Merriam-Webster that both describe you if you are phlegmatic. One definition is, "to make a start – to introduce". The other is "to initiate through self-propulsion" such as launching a rocket. Think about starting someone else out in a business or launching a new graduate into their career.

If you are phlegmatic are probably sensitive about other people. You are a person who knows how to help others because you understand who they are. You will enjoy launching someone you care about into something beneficial. At the same time, you do not feel a need to control them. You want them to become self-propelled.

How would the different personalities define revolution?

Definition 1: The "overthrow of one government and substitution of another by the governed". This is a definition from Merriam-Webster that choleric would like. If you are choleric you are ready to change the authority and governing structure and lead others to do something about it.

Definition 2: "A sudden, radical, or complete change". If you are sanguine you are always ready for change, perhaps even drastic change. Sanguines tend to get bored easily, and love the new. It doesn't necessarily have to be deep or philosophical, as long as it is positive change.

Definition 3: "A fundamental change in use or technology". If you are melancholy, any significant change in the status quo system is revolutionary for you. You lead by systems and feel uncomfortable if they are changed in large degrees.

Definition 4: "A fundamental change in the way of thinking about or visualizing something". As a phlegmatic you lead through consensus. You would probably want to convince people to change the way they think and then let them decide to do it in their own time. That would be enough of a revolution for a consensus-driven phlegmatic.

Now that you have these definitions, work with them, decide which ones best describe you, and use them. You may find you are launching a leadership revolution in your own life.

About the author

Rick Hubbard - B.A. in Communication and Organizational Leadership and an M.A. in Instructional Systems/e-Learning He is an instructional technologist at a Florida university and does consulting in communication and instructional design.

<http://www.ALeadershipRevolution.com>

Copyright © 2008 Rick Hubbard

Permission is granted to reprint this article under the condition that it is unedited and the author information is included in its entirety.