

## The ACTIV<sup>2</sup>E Leadership Model, Part 5

### Value/Vision

In this essay about ACTIV<sup>2</sup>E Leadership, we'll discuss the twin concepts of *value* and *vision*. Value and vision are inseparable; without value, vision cannot be attained. Without vision, you cannot build value.

As a leader, you must build value for your members: value in your organization, value in the mission and goals, value in the culture, and value in their service. Often value is underappreciated in terms of leadership, and yet it is among leadership's most important facets.

### Why Value?

Building value talks to the human component of leadership. It is in value where you as a leader set the culture, and build motivation to stay. It is here where members decide what and how to use what they've learned.

It may seem trite to talk about building value in an organization. After all, members wouldn't join or stay if they didn't believe in the organization, right? That is true, but building value in an organization in this context means to build value in the organization's system and process.

To build value means properly using the system you have or finding ways to work within the system for change when you feel the system needs to change. Building value means making the system work so that the mission or goal is accomplished, and the organization is continuously improved.

### Building Value in the Mission

It's also necessary to build value in the mission or goal. Just as you build value into your product to market to your customers, so you should do the same thing with your mission. Think of the mission as the product, and your members as your customers.

When building value in the mission for your members, your objective should be to get your members to turn your mission into their mission. They must be absolutely synchronous; and it cannot be done by declaration. It is a sell job: an emotional connection.

Having said that, building value in the mission is accomplished by using logic as well as by using emotion. The mission or goal must be of benefit to the organization; and you as the leader must present a clear and logical argument about how the mission benefits both the organization and the members.

You must be able to clearly describe how your members contribute value to the mission and how their important piece(s) accomplish the mission. It's not enough to say that "our job is to be

the best band-aid maker in the world.” You must show your members how being the best band-aid maker helps the world, helps the company, helps them, and how their quality work will achieve that.

### **Building Value in Members**

This brings up an important point. At least as important as building value in mission is building value in members. While we touched on it briefly, it’s important to discuss the value of the member. It’s elementary that without the quality work and dedication of the members, accomplishing the mission or goal is not possible. Who builds value in members? You do.

Your encouragement, attention, assistance, discipline, training, and equipping of your members builds their value. They must believe that their (even small) contributions make a difference. If your members can’t make that connection they’ll wonder why they are there.

This is not about esteem issues. Self-esteem helps, but that’s your member’s responsibility, not yours. This is about the literal value of a member’s contribution to the mission. A member needs to see how the glue they are making for the band-aid is important to the band-aid, and how getting the batch right helps the company. While this particular example is simplistic, it’s also illustrative of the thought process that must take place.

### **Building Value in the Culture**

As a leader, you must also build and promote value in your organization’s culture. Usually when describing a corporate culture, terms are used like: customer service, integrity, safety, good stewardship, and building shareholder value. CAP describes its corporate culture by using what is called core values. As you know, our core values are Integrity, Volunteer Service, Excellence, and Respect. Core values are the fundamental beliefs of the organization, defining the culture and are the basis for member conduct within CAP.

How important is building value in corporate culture and living core values? Consider Enron and other companies you’ve read about in the news. They didn’t make the news because of their stellar performance. You know their names because their culture was poisoned.

As a leader you show that core values are more than merely buzzwords, but the way your organization does business. Model the best of your organization’s culture. Your customers and your members expect nothing less than the best. Your corporate culture should bring out the best in everyone. Building value in the culture is key to making that happen.

### **Vision**

Hand in hand with value is vision. Your vision creates value for the member; it’s the foundation on which you build value.

## **Vision for the Mission**

Two pieces to this: macro vision and micro vision. Macro vision refers to the big picture: to be the best band-aid maker in the world. Just as there should be a clear vision at the top, so there should be at lower levels. Each department in the organization should have a clear vision of how their piece fits (micro vision). And, everyone needs to know that vision – including those from other departments. This is the part of the communication process that lets everyone know all are headed in the same general direction.

## **Vision for the Members**

Your vision is your members' roadmap; and what they will adopt as their goal. Visions must be clear, consistent with the mission and objectives of the organization, and attainable. Vision must be sold to the member. Building value can enhance the selling of one's vision.

## **Vision for the Culture**

It isn't enough to have vision for the mission and for how the members should achieve it. To be truly successful, you must also create and articulate a vision for the organization's or department's culture – how you see the work environment, incorporation of core values, and ultimately how you see each of the departments working together and working with customers.

Vision for the culture brings all the pieces together. It creates the bridge between the vision for creating product and how your members accomplish that. It's the piece that my squadron commander missed.

Value and vision may seem like luxuries when you're busy trying to get the job done, but your members will not be as effective without them. They need to understand the "why" in order to do the "how," particularly when the tasks may be difficult or unpalatable. It's not that they are being rebellious. Particularly with the tough stuff, it's about understanding the context.

Value and vision help your members to do the tough stuff.