



Cultivating Second Chair Leaders

Conversations about living out servant leadership in the second chair

Episode #012: Grow in Wisdom

August 17, 2022

On this episode of Cultivating Second Chair Leaders We discuss the importance of keeping our mind sharp with opportunities for continuing education, not just in an academic setting, but growing in wisdom as it shapes us to be more Christ-like as servant leaders in the second chair. Our guest, Kyle Blake (@khblake), also shares about his unique roles and experience as both a 1st and 2nd chair leader.

Quotes for Reflection

- “Even as a second chair leader it’s important for me, for the sake of the team, to keep working on me.” - **Kyle Blake**
- “I am a huge proponent of therapy...These are people who serve the church through serving others and helping them reconnect.” - **Kyle Blake**
- “Be wise enough to say, I need to learn something new.” - **Kyle Blake**

Scripture/Doctrinal References:

- Philippians 2:1-4
- “...who had redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil...” Explanation of The Second Article of the Apostles Creed from Luther’s Small Catechism.

Engagement Questions/Next Steps

- There are different types of self-work. Which of these resonates with you in this season? (therapy, spiritual direction, coaching, mentoring, other) Why?
- What are some ways you can lead up with your first chair and down with other second chair leaders you serve with? (*Concept from “The 360° Leader” by John Maxwell*)
- Is there a tool that I am lacking? Who has that tool that I can learn from?
- Do you live in the community you serve/work in? Why or why not? What are the challenges?

We would love to hear insight from your discussion. You can send an email to emily@kindleservantleaders.org and we may share your story in the future!

The A.R.K. Team Model (printed w/ permission)

What does A.R.K. stand for?

Authority: The individual(s) to whom we report the progress of a function or project.

Responsibility: An individual responsible for some function or project.

Knowledge: Individual(s) with specific expertise or knowledge about a function or project.

An A.R.K. team always begins with RESPONSIBILITY taking on a function or project. Dialogue begins when KNOWLEDGE becomes a part of the team. AUTHORITY has a limited role in this process, but it is an important one. These three people form a triad to work on one specific issue, project or function. When that project is completed the molecule dissolves. They can work together for months or for moments depending on the project or momentary problem solving need. Traditional hierarchy is only a part of the team in the reporting relationship between RESPONSIBILITY and AUTHORITY. Remember: Everyone wears different A.R.K. "hats" at different times within the organization.

What are the A.R.K. rules?

Rule #1 – Deal at the level of RESPONSIBILITY.

The action takes place at the level of RESPONSIBILITY. The key person is whoever is responsible for the issue at hand. KNOWLEDGE should always seek to deal only at the level of RESPONSIBILITY regardless of where you (or RESPONSIBILITY) are in the chain of command.

Rule #2 – Seek consensus agreement between RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE.

The process should begin and end with these two entities. If possible you don't want AUTHORITY to be involved with the discussions and decisions. AUTHORITY gets briefed after the fact, but we want the decisions to be ones that both RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE can support (consensus).

Rule #3 – RESPONSIBILITY makes the decision.

RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE must discuss the issues and all its ramifications. Both must support the decision that is made. However, it is the job of RESPONSIBILITY to make the final decision.

Rule #4 – KNOWLEDGE can appeal the decision.

RESPONSIBILITY makes the decision, and hopefully it will be a decision that KNOWLEDGE can support. KNOWLEDGE must appeal to AUTHORITY if they cannot give consensus support to the decisions of RESPONSIBILITY. There is no middle ground here for KNOWLEDGE, either appeal the decision or give it consensus support.

Rule #5 – RESPONSIBILITY communicates with AUTHORITY.

It is RESPONSIBILITY'S job to communicate progress to AUTHORITY. That task is not required of KNOWLEDGE.

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What are the roles of each A.R.K. team player?

The role of RESPONSIBILITY:

1. Seek out all pertinent knowledge. Don't assume that KNOWLEDGE will come to you. It is your job to make sure you are analyzing all pertinent information before you make your decisions.
2. Make your decisions from a "mission statement" viewpoint. Decisions should always reflect the overall mission so that consensus support becomes inevitable. Collaboration is key here. Poor quality decisions result when we resolve conflicting viewpoints by compromising the mission. Review the facts and choose a course that is in the best interests of the organizations mission.
3. Be willing to defend your position to AUTHORITY. Remember, your job is to decide— KNOWLEDGE'S job is to support your decision or appeal it to AUTHORITY. If and when KNOWLEDGE appeals your decision, they are only doing their job. They are not going behind your back or around your authority. It is your job to make good decisions, but be prepared to defend them if necessary.

The role of KNOWLEDGE:

1. Provide your knowledge and expertise to those who need it. They may come to you first with a request, or you may go to RESPONSIBILITY first with some idea or plan. It does not matter who makes first contact. No one should wait to be asked. We want KNOWLEDGE and RESPONSIBILITY working directly together to achieve the best decisions possible.
2. Affect the outcome by influence. You will not make the final decision, so you must influence the outcome by the way you present the facts, figures and information. You don't carry official authority in the A.R.K. molecule, so you must influence through compelling knowledge and expertise.
3. You must support the decision or appeal. These are your only two options. You may not agree with RESPONSIBILITY'S decision, but you can still support it publicly for the good of the organization and its mission. Consensus support is the goal if total agreement cannot be reached. If you absolutely cannot support the decision, then appeal to AUTHORITY is your only course of action.

The role of AUTHORITY:

1. Let RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE do the work. Often times RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE don't think they should work directly together because they think it violates the organizational hierarchy. Make sure RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE are empowered to do the work and that you can be informed after the fact. You don't need to be involved in the process itself.
2. Be ready for appeals from KNOWLEDGE. Remember, they work for the organization. They are paid to be experts. Be wise and listen for violations of the organization's mission when hearing an appeal. Don't be a conflict manager.

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3. Don't be afraid to overturn a decision by RESPONSIBILITY if upon appeal you think (after reviewing the facts) the decision is the wrong decision, violates the organization's mission or reflects obvious incompetence. Judge wisely and in the best interests of the organization.

Common mistakes of RESPONSIBILITY:

1. The number one problem is usually failing to keep the boss informed about what progress is being made by RESPONSIBILITY and KNOWLEDGE. This can lead to AUTHORITY thinking that KNOWLEDGE is interfering with his domain. Remember, RESPONSIBILITY is driving the function or project. If AUTHORITY gets surprised it's RESPONSIBILITY'S fault.
2. Thinking you show a weakness when you ask for help or input. In fact, it is just the opposite. We don't want "Lone Rangers" on a team. We value teamwork and recognize that collaboration assures a better end result.
3. Seeing KNOWLEDGE as an enemy to be feared instead of as a resource to be used. Remember, RESPONSIBILITY gets to make the decisions. You will be evaluated long term on the quality and consistency of your decisions. It makes sense then to value the input of the KNOWLEDGE people on your team.

Common mistakes of KNOWLEDGE:

1. Trying to dictate. Remember, you don't have the authority to make decisions. You can't dictate, you can only influence the decision through compelling information found in your expertise of the matter.
2. Lack of empathy for RESPONSIBILITY. If we don't have the responsibility, it is easy to only look at things theoretically, and miss the scope of the problems present in the reality of the situation.
3. Forgetting that you may only support or appeal. There is no middle ground.
4. Waiting to be asked. Things get done by people who take risks and join an A.R.K. to help move a process along. You have an obligation to participate when you can have impact. You have no obligation to wait until someone invites you into the A.R.K..

Common mistakes of AUTHORITY:

1. Not using RESPONSIBILITY to help you get your job done better and faster.
2. Not allowing KNOWLEDGE and RESPONSIBILITY to work directly with each other. This is usually due to a fear of losing control or a lack of confidence in RESPONSIBILITY.
3. Supporting KNOWLEDGE or RESPONSIBILITY in an appeal because of politics or to avoid conflict as opposed to supporting them because it is the right decision for the organization and its mission.

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