



Leadership Learnings

from Chile Miners Rescue story you can use Every Day

by Rafael Félix Torrese

*Learning is a wonderful experience.
Specially when you translate it into new behaviors.*

In the middle of all the huge emotional load of being present and close to the magnificent event of the Chile Miners Rescue, I asked myself " what can we learn from this ? ". So, I started writing.

The next day, I was happily surprised when a customer¹ started applying his own learnings to his everyday job.

Leadership learnings can be (and must be) very practical and applicable.

Here is my initial list.

1 - Manage to use the best aptitudes of each member of your team, do not focus on what can be developed : To get best results identify what is the best value each of your team members can add to the goal. You are a companion of your team members development... yes; but you focus on their best in order to support goal achievement.

2 - Humor : Use humor to get "in the zone", to relax your muscles and to confront your fears and "operate" better.

3 - The job well done. Always : Doing things right allows you to enjoy your life after work.

4 - Have a plan. Have a plan B. And a plan C : Stick to the plan and execute the plan. Include backup plans if necessary.

5 - Don't lose hope, but do something to achieve the goal : Results will not come along for free. You need to sweat for it. Good rhetoric is not enough.

6 - Give the team the appropriate tools : Tools are not expensive. They "pay themselves", with results.

7 - Say thanks : There is always someone to thank, during or after achieving the goal.

8 - Overcome the "valley" of hope : There will be challenging times. Always. So be conscious that things will be hard...but do not lose hope.

9 - Recognize others. Bring gifts : There is always someone to recognize. Give that person a gift. It does not matter the size or value of the gift. It can even be

a rock. Think about it.

10 - Play to improve performance : Remember and picture the miners "homemade Domino". Brain works better when it flows. Playing (like children do) helped it flow.

11 - Simple things can strongly support target achievement : Design a simple phone, make it happen not fancy.

12 - Complex things do not need to be beautiful : Same utility concept, now applied to the miners capsule. It works. It works great. Don't mess yourself in details.

13 - During crisis, leader acts, do not ask : When confronting the collapse reality, Luis Urzúa, leader of miners simply acted. He gave instructions to

¹ Even though I am keeping his name in private, the mentioned customer is the leader of a very effective functional unit, that achieves excellent results, every year. He is Chilean and works for one of the biggest and best regional retail companies from this side of the world. We already had a talk over the phone.

"count themselves". First action is key. And is an action.

14 - After crisis, leader is the last one to "leave the boat" : You already knew that. But leader is also the last one to be congratulated and recognized.

15 - A real leader administers resources effectively : There was no much food, so leader decided to dose it. If you lack of something, dose it. Understand the risk of the saving, but execute the savings.

16 - Celebrate success : You can have a whole country celebrating, even without expecting. Celebrate with team members. And at home. Why not.

17 - Monitor performance after success : I have a picture of miner Osmán Araya being monitored after his rescue. High tech equipment plugged to his body to track on (his health) success. Success needs to continue after the success itself.

18 - Practice before performing : If there is something critical relating to your performance, practice it. Learn. Train. Be coached. Rescue team practiced a lot with the rescue capsule. It's obvious !. 20 million dollars investment depended a lot on the capsule performance !

19 - Creativity rocks : Innovation, creativity. All sudden the magic is there : a piece of paper needed to get to the surface and be read: and it did (miners painted the first successful probe in red); a team designed a unique piece of equipment (the capsule)...and a lot of more examples.

20 - Take the chance to transcend : First key message of rescued leader : "Please Mr. President, don't let this happen again". With that powerful message the result transcended (impacted the right person) and will help transcend history to avoid similar situations...other things will change...maybe even laws !

I am pretty sure there are even more learnings.

But the important question is :
¿ What did you embraced as learning ?

About the Author

This article was written by Rafael Félix Torrese, Peruvian, executive director of Humanz Consultores, a consulting firm based in Santiago de Chile that combines the human factor development with process improvement towards the achievement of breakthrough business results.

Rafael is Coach and Leader, with more than 17 years of professional experience in world class companies, and vastly experienced as business executive and consultant for companies in Chile, Perú, Venezuela and United States.

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