

Leading Teams

A Fired-Up! Culture Resource



WELCOME

Hello Leader!

In nine seasons as leader of the Green Bay Packers, legendary coach Vince Lombardi won five championships, including the first two Super Bowls. Coach Lombardi became so synonymous with winning, that today the trophy the Super Bowl champions hoist each winter is named in his honor.

While he's revered for his on-the-field accomplishments, Lombardi knew that winning didn't just happen. It happened because of the dogged determination of every member of the team. It happened through the tireless work of the leader of that team.

"Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

If you lead a team, it's your primary duty to take an eclectic group of professionals and harness each of their individual skills for the greater good.

Want to lead great teams? This thought manual is for you.

My name is Chris Ihrig, founder and CEO of Fired-Up! Culture. Me and my team want to see your organization thrive. We are dreamers. We're creatives. We combine cutting-edge theory, world-class tools and practical application to take organizations around the world from Burnt-Out to Fired-Up!

I hope you'll spend a few minutes with these words and be inspired to lead your team with excellence, determination and creativity.



Chris Ihrig
CEO
Fired-Up Culture!

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CHAPTER 1

Lasting Change: a Fired-Up! Checklist

The vast majority of change initiatives fail. According to one Harvard Business Review article, a whopping 70% fail. But all teams go through seasons of change, and you, dear leader, are the facilitator, shepherding change, first in the hearts of your team.

So how do you make the change last? Here is a quick checklist. If you can answer yes to most or all of the following questions, then there is a good chance the change will last:

	Yes	No
01 Are the changes focused first on delivering more/better value to customers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
02 Have the people working in the system designed the system and are they responsible for making improvements as needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
03 Is everyone working within the newly redesigned system clear on what their new roles and responsibilities entail?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
04 Are the new roles and responsibilities taking advantage of each person's strengths?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
05 Does everyone understand how to access needed resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
06 Is the decision-making process clear? Does everyone know when and how to choose the appropriate style of decision-making: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. unilateral (one person solely responsible for the decision) b. participatory (the decision-maker consulting others before making the final decision) c. consensus (the group agreeing on a decision together) d. voting (a simple majority carrying the day) e. relying on an expert (relying on an expert to make the decision) f. compromise (finding the middle ground) g. task force (assigning the decision to a small team)? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
07 Are the goals clear? Are they within each person working in the system's control to accomplish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
08 Is everyone clear on what success looks like and how you will track and measure it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
09 Is everyone in the system accountable for producing results?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 Do people have the authority they need to do their work and respond to customers appropriately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Getting clarity on the answers to these questions and more is what Fired-Up! Culture is all about.



CHAPTER 2

Teamwork: Finding Your Inner Creativity

The great 19th-century psychoanalyst Otto Rank said that “the new meaning of soul is creativity” and that exploration of creativity would lead to a new type of person, one who would usher in a new civilization.

For the sake of this discussion, let's not fall into the trap of defining creativity in terms of artistry in a traditional sense. Creativity is not about painting or sculpting, but rather about rethinking our day-to-day lives at work, and how creative meaning is part of being fired up about what we do and why we do it.



Start by asking yourself a series of questions and discovering how you can apply the answers to the moments you spend at work, as well as the moments you spend at home.

- What is it about your life that gives you meaning?
- When are the moments in which you feel most alive and most connected to being alive?
- With what do you connect throughout your day that makes you inspired?

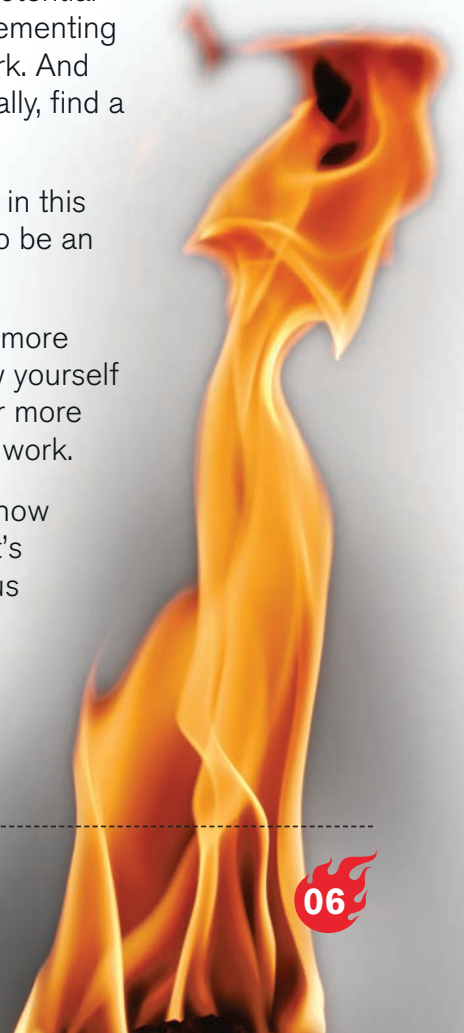
Without a sense of connectedness to life, we are like the walking dead. That shouldn't sound too intense, especially if you've been in the wrong job before. You know what it feels like to go day to day not connected to your work. A recent study showed that just 13% of employees are fully engaged at work.

In order to connect more deeply with what makes you a vital part of any team, in fact, a vital participant in your own life, is to connect with your potential through rediscovering what means the most to you and then implementing that spark as fuel throughout your days. Make life part of your work. And don't limit yourself to just one spark. Find a number of them. Actually, find a whole torch.

Most importantly, don't let another minute go by without engaging in this process. Don't let yourself burn inside with the unrealized desire to be an achiever. If you do that, the world will just see you smoldering.

Take chances with yourself and your creativity. Get fired up! Write more intensely and more expressively. Communicate more clearly. Know yourself more deeply. Talk to people. Talk to yourself. Laugh with people, or more importantly first, with yourself. Find truth in your work, or find new work.

If you want to be a powerful leader for your team, consider first how you show up on that team. Would you want to play with you? Let's all challenge ourselves to redefine what has become normal to us and to push ourselves to be better team players through being better people.





CHAPTER 3

3 Steps to Full-Team Engagement

“You know, my people don’t seem to be as excited about this business as I am. The work ethic just doesn’t seem to be there anymore.”

If you’ve talked to other leaders, you’ve probably heard these words, or something very similar. They’re baffled as to why their teams are not more engaged in their work and they’re looking for solutions.

Most team leaders have tried all the standard solutions: reorganizing the hierarchy, providing more direct supervision, imposing quotas, beefing up the policies and procedures manual. In addition, they've offered incentives, created contests and revised their appraisal systems.

Often the outcome of these strategies ranges from marginally effective to outright disaster.

Here's the problem: all of these strategies are some variation of control-based thinking.. That is, these strategies are all based on the belief that imposing authority, offering rewards and granting partial freedom in exchange for compliant behavior will motivate people to step up their performance and engage in their work with more enthusiasm and effectiveness.

Here at Fired-Up! Culture, we've never seen evidence that *control-based thinking* and strategies produce sustainable results. Sure you can get a dog's attention by yanking on a leash attached to a choke collar. But, as soon as the dog is off the leash, it's either back to the old habits or if it's had enough, attacking the person who yanked the leash. Of course people aren't dogs, and we don't literally leash people. But all of the control-based strategies listed above, and many more, try to control people's behavior by using psychological leashes.

Do you want your team to be more fully engaged? Get rid of the controls and set your people free!

Here are three simple things leaders can do to get things moving in the right direction regarding team engagement:

01 **Have faith in people.** Hire people who really want to be great and then trust them to do great things. Be careful who you hire, but once you've hired them, expect great work and provide the resources for them to be successful. If you find someone within the ranks whom you and their teammates find you cannot trust, release them immediately. Letting people hang around who are untrustworthy drags the entire team down.

02 **Expect every person to be personally responsible.** Allow teams to design and continuously improve the systems within which they work. Allow them as well to negotiate with their teammates for the jobs they would each like to do on the team. Allow each teammate to choose the jobs for which they have skills and passion. For those lacking skills, but who have the passion to learn, give them the opportunity to do so. For those who lack passion for their current job responsibilities, help them choose responsibilities for which they do have passion.

03 **Give people freedom to make choices.** The most motivating factor in a worker's everyday life is having the opportunity to have some control over how and when they do their work. Yes, there need to be specific deliverables defined to ensure both consistent quality and high customer-satisfaction; but once the standards have been set and expectations made clear, treat everyone like adults and give them control over their own work processes and outputs.



CHAPTER 4

5 Healthy Ways to Lead Through Tough Times

Adversity breeds resourcefulness, capability, and high levels of engagement. Getting people to do their best work in trying times is one of your most significant, enduring and elusive challenges as a leader.

There are seasons in all organizations when the external environment conspires against success. When adversity approaches the doorstep, it fosters seeds of doubt, lack of hope, deep anxiety and a loss of focus in employees. Demotivated and uncertain, the workforce withers under the blistering heat of anxiety and change.

Leaders striving to boost motivation should anchor to conventional wisdom that a motivated workforce translates into better corporate performance. This is particularly true when faced with adversity. But what practices can leaders take to directly increase employee engagement and motivation during challenging times?

By amplifying the good and filtering the bad, connecting the employee with the broader organization, and bridging individual performance to organization success, leaders play an active role in providing guideposts during challenge and adversity.

Here are five healthy ways that Fired-Up! leaders infuse personal motivation and grounding in their teams:

- ✓ Go beyond the soundbite and establish a compelling purpose for your organization's existence that captures the attention and demonstrates a hope for the future.
- ✓ Allow people the opportunity to make a personal contribution to organizational success by being creative and innovative while being less dependent on the structures and policies that constrain and restrict. Let your team dream!
- ✓ Recognize people for their achievements. Genuinely. Publicly, when possible.
- ✓ Allow each member of your team to have an area of expertise that they are known and appreciated for throughout the company.
- ✓ Give people a place to go to voice their worries and concerns, either individually or collectively while encouraging accountability.



Studies have shown that only 7% of our impact is through the text and words we say, 93% is in how we “show up” energetically, our beliefs, our presence, even our posture. That’s pretty significant. And it means you have super powers.

– Anese Cavanaugh



CHAPTER 4

Create a Culture of Abundant Grace

In order for organizations to thrive in the Twenty-First Century, what is needed is an old spiritual ideal—Abundant Grace. Rather than seeing people as incompetent, lacking gifts, and creativity, believing in abundant grace sees that people, regardless of race, creed, national origin, or gender are blessed with innate goodness, talent, and an ability to do great things together.

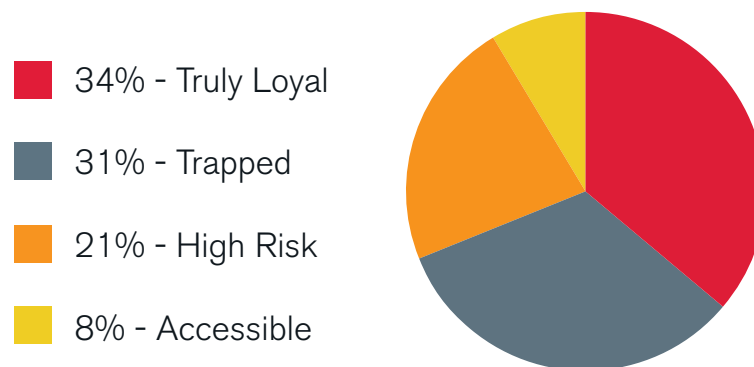
Abundant grace embodies a willingness to see the good in people and to forgive mistakes. In *The Art of Japanese Management*, authors Richard Pascale and Anthony Athos recount how Matsushita Electric Company, one of the largest corporations in the world, adopted operating values that include the concept of forgiveness.

And everyone has heard and reheard the famous words of the founder: "If you make an honest mistake, the company will be very forgiving. Treat it as a training expense and learn from it. You will be severely criticized however, [dismissed] if you deviate from the company's basic principles."

In other words, as human beings we share a responsibility with one another to hold individuals personally accountable for their choices.

Abundant grace shows genuine concern for the community. In the early days of McDonald's, founder, Ray Kroc, would lead his employees out into the streets before opening for business, and together pick up trash around the neighborhood. In this simple daily chore they were physically demonstrating an ethical behavior.

An *MIT Sloan Management Review* article by Katherine J. Sweetman cites a global study conducted by Walker Information Global Network and the Hudson Institute. They surveyed more than 9,700 employees from business, nonprofit, and government organizations in 32 countries across the globe. The research segmented employees into four groups:



“Employees who perceive their employers as ethical are more likely to be proud to be associated with the company.” Fully one third of employees worldwide, according to the survey, do not believe their organizations to be highly ethical. These employees, Sweetman points out, tend to become High Risk employees, highly unproductive while part of the organization, and highly likely to abandon the organization at the earliest opportunity. Sweetman concludes that the Truly Loyal exhibit the very behaviors that make an organization successful, “working hard, staying late, going the extra mile for customers, and recommending their company to their friends as a good place to work.”

As a Fired-Up! Leader, you need to work hard to recognize which category each of your team members falls into, and work to move them up.



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**“Perfection is not
attainable. But if we
chase perfection,
we can catch
excellence.”**

– Vince Lombardi

