

How do you as a supervisor bring alignment among those you oversee to the direction you've received from your leaders? I think alignment can be illustrated by the wheels of a large truck driving down the highway. The driver wants all 18 wheels to be pointing in the same direction as they spin around at high speeds. Once they are aligned, it is important that they withstand the curves and bumps in the road without being thrown out of alignment. If this is true with 18 moving parts, how much truer will it be for organizations of tens, hundreds and thousands. So how do you bring alignment in your part of the organization to a new direction or a priority initiative which you've received from your leaders?

As I study the life of Moses and begin to see how God used him to bring alignment to a nation of over a million people, I find there were at least five steps or processes that God used in and through Moses.

Self: God called Moses from the burning bush and signaled to him a new direction. *"I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey...Come, I will send you..."* God, then, helped Moses to align his heart to this call by addressing his objections. We also find Moses continuing to seek God's help in aligning his heart: *"O Lord, why have you brought trouble upon this people? Is this why you sent me?"* Exodus 5:22 *"You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me... now show me your glory."* Exodus. 33:12&18 *Did I conceive all these people? Did I give them birth? Why do you tell me to carry them in my arms..."* Numbers 11:12 Sound familiar?

The first step in bringing alignment among those you oversee is to bring alignment to your own heart. Just like Moses, we need to go the Lord (and our leaders, when appropriate) with our objections, questions and concerns. Let's not complain about it to those we oversee. Ask yourself: What is the direction that is being set? What do I need to do to understand this direction better? How is it consistent with our Calling, Core Values and Vision? Have I sufficiently voiced my concerns and sought clarification, as appropriate, with my leaders? What do I do with my own feelings about it? Ask the Lord, to show you His glory in it.

Signal: The first thing Moses did when he arrived in Egypt was to gather the elders and tell them everything the Lord has said to him. The people believed and they bowed down and worshiped when they heard that the Lord was concerned about them and had seen their misery. Exodus 4:30-31. The Lord gradually revealed the details of this new direction: calling them to be a devoted nation, a people of His own who possessed the very words and law of God, to be a light for the nations. Exodus 19:3-6. Each time God revealed these details to Moses, he expeditiously transmitted them to the people, even recording them with explanation.

At some point, early in the alignment process, a signal needs to be sent to those you oversee that a new direction has been given and how that direction affects them. Multiple means of communication will likely be necessary to send that signal. Two-way dialogue in groups or one-to-one is always helpful. Listening first and clarifying, as appropriate, is key showing them that their voice matters and that you care about their perspective and the impact on their situation. Help them to process it and seek the Lord.

Series: It always amazes me how God endures and works through processes to bring about results. After all, He is God...He could just make it happen. We see Him manifesting His glory to His people through the plagues inflicted on Pharaoh. This series of events left a lasting memory in the hearts of the people of Israel and unified them as a nation set apart for God. We see that the Lord used other

processes or series of events, such as the manna every day to foster daily dependence upon Him, the pillar of cloud/fire to train them to follow His leading and the forty-year journey to remind them to trust Him, even in the hard things. As impactful as these events must have been however, we see an entire generation who were not convinced, so the process alone is no guarantee of immediate success. Nonetheless, these events were part of the process God used to align the people to this new direction.

Consider how to engage the hearts, minds, and attitudes of those you oversee with some kind of participatory series or campaign of activities, events, or reflections. For example, a daily series of reflections or activities for a set period of time that helps your staff engage with the ideas and strategies at a deeper and more practical level will help with alignment.

Support: Time and time again, we see Moses stepping in to support and reinforce the new direction set by God, to bring His people out of Egypt and establish a new nation. On the banks of the Red Sea, he said *"Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again."* Exodus 14:12. Throughout their journey, the people spoke of returning to Egypt, (Exodus 17:3, Numbers 11:5,18; 14:2-4; 20:5 and 21:5), but God through Moses continued to support and reinforce the new direction.

Keep the direction aligned by constant support and reinforcement. This can be done with reminders, assignments, questions, etc. This phase will help the staff to implement the new direction into their work and keep you from losing ground.

Solidify: Finally we see God solidifying the new direction with everything from writing the Ten Commandments in stone, to instituting annual festivals and services. One of the most vivid ceremonies God uses to solidify this new direction was prescribed through Moses in Deuteronomy 11:29 and 27: 12-13. but was not actually observed until Joshua 8:30-35 after Moses death as they began the conquest of the Promised Land. Joshua gathered half the tribes of Israel on one mountain and half on an opposing mountain. He read the words of the law with the tribes on one mountain shouting the blessing and the other tribes shouting the curse.

How do you keep this new direction from becoming a passing fad? Think about how to memorialize it with celebration, illustration, or legitimate formalization of some kind that is helpful and attractive.

Summary: Consider how you can bring alignment to your direct reports as part of your supervisory responsibilities. Start with yourself by bringing alignment to your own heart. Send a clear signal, early. Consider a series of events or activities to help your direct reports connect with and align to the new direction. Support and reinforce it regularly, as appropriate. Finally, why not solidify the new direction in some helpful and attractive way that keeps it fresh.

If you have other ideas on how to bring alignment, I would love to hear them. Send them to me at mike.whitney@navigator.org. I'd love to issue a sequel to this article with your ideas.