

Mouli Cohen on Leadership

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Business Entrepreneur and Philanthropist Mouli Cohen: Every Company Needs a Super Leader

SAN FRANCISCO, May 5, 2005 — Mediocrity. We've all heard this word used before to describe organizations. It runs rampant through thousands of companies of all shapes and sizes. It happens across all industries and disciplines. It even happens in firms with smart, well-intentioned people. Now, what can be done about it?

First, what do I mean by mediocrity? Mediocrity manifests itself in so many different ways from b.s. meetings where nothing gets decided to silly PowerPoint presentations. It is a lack of passion and drive. And though it tends to occur more frequently in large companies it can also happen in start-ups. In my organizations I would never allow this as it directly affects morale, progress and, ultimately, profitability.

Who is to blame for this? Ultimately it is the responsibility of the company's leaders and senior management team. It is all about leadership and how the wrong leadership (or lack thereof) wreaks havoc on the people who make up an organization. Weak leaders slow things down. Weak leaders stifle their employees. Weak leaders do not share information with their employees. An organization needs strong leaders – super leaders – who have vision, smarts and confidence.

1. Weak managers are the killers of business
2. Leaders manage by creating a vision and then get out of the way so that their people can run with that vision
3. Leaders instill confidence and respect in their people

Through the act of starting and running multiple successful ventures, I have learned a great deal about how to motivate and lead people and keep progress happening quickly, thus avoiding the fall into mediocrity. It may sound trite, but a company's most important asset is its people. Without the right people all bets are off. I put the best management on my biggest opportunities and allocate capital in the right places. Simple as that.

Here are some important tenets to remember about your people:

1. Integrity is a given. Otherwise you are not even allowed on the playing field.
2. Manage less and in the right way and watch how progress evolves.

3. Eliminate those in your organization who do not share your vision and your firm's values.
4. Find great ideas and spread them like crazy through your company. Put the right people in place to support and grow them.

As a super leader you must start with a group of people that can outsmart you. These people should be able to challenge and debate you. The best people are candid by nature and actively speak their minds in meetings and continually bring ideas to the forefront of discussion. When often I need to solve a business problem I assemble the right minds in a room and I let them go at it. More brains will ultimately come up with better ideas and the right solution faster than any one person.

Managing: Less Is More By talking to your employees and instilling in them your vision you will empower them to stretch for the stars. Then get out of the way and let it happen. By managing less you empower your people to achieve greatness. This also gives you time to think of new, big ideas.

As a super leader you must continually energize, excite with passion and introduce new ideas into your organization. Being a super leader is not an easy job. Not everyone can be a super leader. However, in today's competitive market super leaders are critical to a company's long-term success. Do not forget that every day is like the new start of the job.

— Mouli Cohen

About Mouli Cohen

In his career as an entrepreneur, Mouli has been one of the few to have success in biotechnology and high technology. His start-ups have generated well over \$1 billion in shareholder value. In recognition of his ability to generate mega investment in the U.S. economy and the creation of thousands of U.S. jobs, Mouli was awarded the first-ever "Millionaire Residency" with full citizenship status by President George H. Bush. For more information visit <http://moulicohen.com>

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