

# You are Not as Clear or Motivating as You Think You are

Leadership is hard. Being clear and motivating is hard. Recently I asked a coaching client if when she was having “leadership moments” she was clear and motivating? I ask you as you read this, “When you have leadership moments with the people you lead, are you clear and motivating?”

My coaching client, Amaya, was recently promoted to a new leadership position that demanded a different set of skills to communicate with her new team. Her most recent leadership moments with her team left her feeling like the point was often being missed, and that the team wasn’t as engaged as she seemed to be about upcoming projects. Amaya was struggling with how to motivate and create clarity with her inherited team.

I asked Amaya, “If I went to all of your direct reports and asked them, ‘What are the most important things you are working on?’, what would they say and how motivated would they be to make those the priority?” Their answers should align with what Amaya is expecting her team to be working on. However, it is often the case that the main point can get missed in these conversations, and the top priorities within the team become unclear and lose momentum. Often Amaya walked away from these conversations feeling like her point had gotten across, but her direct reports left wondering what the message is and why the priority is important to them, which caused them to lose their motivation toward the task or goal at hand. Amaya’s team didn’t understand how they fit into the broader goal and why they are important to it, which was causing the disengagement she was seeing. Not only was she unclear, she also wasn’t explaining how the team fit into the bigger picture.



We discussed how Amaya could have the most impact with her direct reports, providing clear and motivating directions that align with the team's top priorities. There are two questions I always ask when evaluating a leader after an interaction with a direct report that was intended to be a leadership moment:

- Is something clearer because of the interaction you just had?
- Are you motivated to do something because of that leadership moment?

Amaya's journey brought to light the common challenge that most leaders face: communication that lacks clarity and motivation. Amaya is now asking herself if she is as clear and motivating as she intends to be. Because of her improved self awareness, her relationships with her direct reports are now enhanced, building momentum and motivation toward the team's goals. Taking the time to ask yourself these questions will ensure that every leadership moment contributes to the overall clarity of your message and the motivation of your team.