



# Empowerment – A Theory

(Blanchard Model)

A theory that leads to a better reality



◆ “Unless empowerment starts at the top, it’s going nowhere.”

Ken Blanchard





## First Key

- ◆ Share information with everyone!
  - People *without* information cannot act responsibly
  - People *with* information are compelled to act responsibly



# Sharing Information

- ◆ Builds trust
- ◆ Is a form of currency – *“It’s what you know.”*
- ◆ Initiates breakdown of hierarchical thinking
- ◆ Helps people be more responsible
- ◆ Creates “ownership” thinking



◆ “People will never feel empowered if they don’t know what their job is.”

*Empowerment Takes More Than A Minute, Blanchard*



## Second Key

- ◆ Create autonomy through boundaries
  - Boundaries focus energies
  - Boundaries define operational freedom
  - Boundaries establish known limits for personal/team authority



# Autonomy via Boundaries

1. Purpose — stated mission?
2. Values — operational guidelines?
3. Image — picture of the future?
4. Goals — What, when, where, how?
5. Roles — Who does what?
6. Organizational Structure and Systems — resources and support?



“Empowerment comes from teaching others things they can do to become less dependent on you.”

Ken Blanchard





## Third Key

- ◆ Replace hierarchical structures with teams
  - A team of empowered individuals is far more powerful than a disconnected set of individuals
  - Everyone shares equally in the responsibility
  - “Positional” leadership is powerless



# Self-directed Teams

- ◆ Empowered teams > empowered individuals
- ◆ People must be trained in team skills
  - Western individualism vs. community culture
- ◆ Dissatisfaction is a natural step in the process
- ◆ Teams need commitment & support from the “Top”
- ◆ Teams with information and skills can replace old hierarchical structures