

# Core Components of No-Drama Leadership

A 3-part mini-series with organizational and personal action items

*by Marlene Chism*

## A Message from Marlene

Dear Leader

Thank you for your interest in my work, and thank you for downloading this mini-series, which includes three short lessons on the three core qualities of No-Drama Leadership, alternately referred to as “enlightened leadership.”

Over the next few days you will get a condensed series of mini-lessons delivered by email for the purpose of helping you to retain what you read here, and to guide you to additional resources.

In this document please note that each core quality includes two sets of action items: The organizational action items and the personal action items.

Use the organizational action items to implement changes on the organizational level.

Use the personal action items to help you elevate your own leadership skills.

My hope is that this learning will benefit you no matter what your role or title. For example, if you are the owner or executive of the organization, use the organizational action items to implement the small changes to benefit the organization as a whole. Or, if you are more interested in elevating your personal leadership qualities you can use the personal action items for improvement.

I hope you find value in this mini-lesson and will keep in touch and let me know about your success.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marlene Chism". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

# Mini-Lesson #1

## Core Component #1 Alignment

We often think of alignment as walking the talk but alignment is more complex than just walking the talk. Alignment is about congruence and harmony, and misalignment causes problems personally and professionally.

### How Do You Recognize Misalignment?

Discomfort, discontent, and the small voice telling you something is off are indicators of misalignment. Most likely the misalignment is due to the inability to manage or prioritize competing values. For example, as much as you value your family, you also value your career, and being an excellent leader means sacrificing time with family. Or, as much as you want to become physically fit, there aren't enough hours in the day for high-level personal care.

When people are unhappy or disconnected at work, it's usually because of some type of misalignment personally and professionally. In fact, leaders leave companies when their own values do not align with those of the organization.

In No-Drama Leadership there are examples in business, politics, entertainment and sports illustrating the effects of personal and professional misalignment.

In short, if enlightened leadership is about anything it is about alignment, and alignment is about focusing energy toward an intentional result.

Here are some action items to use in your organization and in your personal life.

### → *Organizational Action Item*

- Teach the concept of alignment to your new leaders.
- Use examples in No-Drama Leadership to discuss misalignment.
- Ask each leader to declare a set of core values.
- Add alignment to personal values as part of performance feedback.

### → *Personal Action Item*

- Declare a core value.
- Describe the requirements of living in alignment with that value.
- Define how you will know when you are misaligned.
- Identify priorities and desires that might conflict with the core value.

## Mini-Lesson #2

### Core Component #2 Awareness

In No-Drama Leadership I devoted an entire chapter to four domains of awareness including self, other, spiritual and cultural. Every problem can be overcome with higher levels of awareness. Let me introduce two domains of awareness here: Self-Awareness and Other-Awareness.

#### Self-Awareness

Self-awareness includes the ability to notice and monitor your thoughts and to accurately label your feelings. Most of us are not aware of how much our inner dialogue affects our performance and leadership effectiveness. We all operate from our belief systems, and these beliefs manifest into actions, and actions manifest into results. For example the belief that conflict is bad manifests into leaders avoiding difficult conversations, which results in poor performance, low morale and ineffective teamwork.

#### Other Awareness

Other-awareness allows the leader to tap into and empathize with what employees are going through, without taking on their feelings. It is the ability to listen intently and see what is possible for the other, without judgment. Many times leaders have either an overabundance or a deficiency in **other-awareness**. For example a leader who is a people-pleaser (over-abundance) versus a leader who is arrogant (deficiency).

Balancing self-awareness with other awareness is the key.

#### → Organizational Action Items

- *Look at turnover (High turnover is almost always related to poor leadership)*
- *Look at orientation (Do you teach new employees about the culture?)*
- *Determine the impact of leaders avoiding difficult conversations.*

#### → Personal Action Items

- *Examine the areas where you use avoidance as a coping mechanism.*
- *Identify times anger gets the best of you and see what issues are in play.*
- *Describe a time when you were unaware of the underlying politics.*
- *Do you need to become more other-aware, or more self-aware in your leadership role?*

## Mini-Lesson #3

### Core Component #3 Accountability

Leaders often tell me about their employees and their lack of accountability, but very the issue is not accountability. The issue is responsibility. In No-Drama Leadership I make a distinction between responsibility and accountability. **Responsibility** is about ownership while **accountability** is about measuring results.

Responsibility (ownership) must come before accountability (measurement) has any power. Leaders who have it backwards try to use accountability to **force** responsibility and it almost never works. In fact when you use accountability as a fear tactic, you get people skewing the numbers and cheating simply to beat the system.

I certainly saw a lot of this type of activity in my 21 years on the factory floor, and I know exactly how to take the fear out of accountability. In fact, I give you a formula in No-Drama Leadership to do just that.

(If you have the book the formula for enlightened accountability is on page 48. On page 53 there is a blueprint to help you crack the accountability code.)

In the meantime here are your action items.

#### ➔ **Organizational Action Items**

- *If you have instances of employees cheating on metrics, examine the reasons why.*
- *Examine areas where leaders avoid responsibility.*
- *Ask what needs to change to shift to a culture of enlightened accountability.*
- *Do a quick poll to see how the workers interpret accountability versus responsibility.*

#### ➔ **Personal Action Items**

- *Make a list of the resources you need to become more effective.*
- *Ask yourself what would make accountability become enjoyable?*
- *Where are you avoiding taking complete ownership?*

In short, responsibility is of the heart while accountability is of the head. If you want to build a culture of accountability both heart and head must align and work in harmony. So now you have the three core components of enlightened (No-Drama) Leadership.

If you would like to take this lesson further to understand the critical skills and mindsets of the No-Drama Leader, [click here](#).

## About Marlene Chism

**Marlene Chism** is a consultant, executive educator, and international speaker. She is the author of two books: *Stop Workplace Drama* (Wiley 2011) and *No-Drama Leadership* (Bibliomotion 2015). She has a bachelor's degree in Communications from Drury University and a master's degree in HR Development from Webster University.

Clients who work with Marlene report the following results: Increased personal effectiveness and focus, stronger communication skills, increased profitability through clarity and alignment, and dramatically improved workplace culture.

From stopping drama to building enlightened leaders, Marlene's message is spreading across the country at association meetings, corporate retreats, universities and other venues.

