

Module: Leadership Training Workshop for Health Professionals
Organization: East Africa HEALTH Alliance
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Session 4: The Four Leadership Practices

What do leaders do?

But, what exactly do leaders actually *do* to: "enable work groups and organizations to face challenges and achieve results?"

To respond to this question, let us take a look at our own experiences of leadership:

Instructions:

- Choose a leader who you know or knew personally and who you consider a good or even great leader
- This person should not necessarily be a well-known public figure; he or she could be a leader at a local level
- Think about what this person does or did to produce results
- Think about this person's practices and behavior that inspired others to follow

What were the actions, behaviors and qualities of this person that, in your opinion, helped to produce results?

Let some volunteers share with us the characteristics of the leader they know

Four leadership practices

Effective leaders at all levels constantly use four essential practices:

- they **scan**
- they **focus**
- they **align and mobilize**
- they **inspire**

In their daily work this looks like this:

Scan: *Health professionals who lead scan both the external and the internal environment of the organization continuously.*

- Scanning helps leaders recognize the emerging needs of clients, communities and stakeholders
- It makes them aware of what is out there that is in the way of realizing the vision and opportunities that exist
- It helps a leader to understand better how to enable and mobilize their organization or team to do the work
- It also applies to the leader: It helps the leader to become aware of their emotional and physical states and how these impact on the tasks

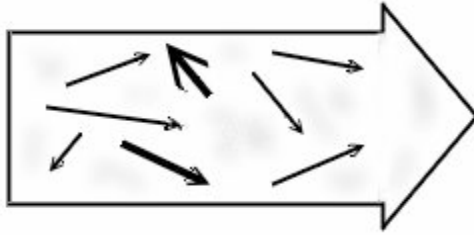
Focus: *Health professionals who lead focus their organization's or team's attention in order to address the challenges with a strategy and goals*

- By focusing attention, these leaders encourage their groups to set priorities that make it possible to move towards objectives with unit of purpose

Align and mobilize: *Health professionals who lead align people toward a common vision and mobilize energy, work, and resources toward achievement of the common goal.*

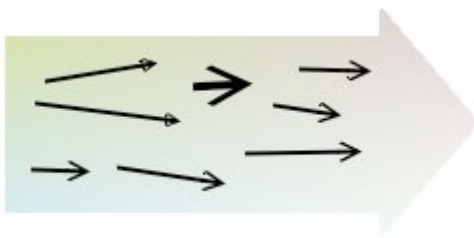
Peter Senge (1990), an influential thinker on organizational development, articulates well what many of us intuitively know:

- *When a group of people functions as a whole they demonstrate a phenomenon we have come to call 'alignment.'*
- *In most teams, the energies of individual members work at cross purposes leading to wasted energy as in the picture below:*



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- *By contrast, when a team becomes more aligned, a commonality of direction emerges, and individuals' energies harmonize. There is less wasted energy.*
- *There is a commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and understanding of how to complement one another's efforts as depicted in the picture below:*



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Inspiring: *Health professionals who lead* inspire others by creating an environment in which people want to take part and put forth their best effort

- Such an environment stimulates people to live up to their potential, to continue to learn and grow, and to take risks and be creative
- They do this in a collective effort to produce the desired results
- A study by MSH examined the values and functions that have enabled leaders to achieve results

The findings of showed that effective leaders:

- Achieve meaningful results in spite of complex work environments;
- Value integrity, good interpersonal relations, risk-taking, and learning.