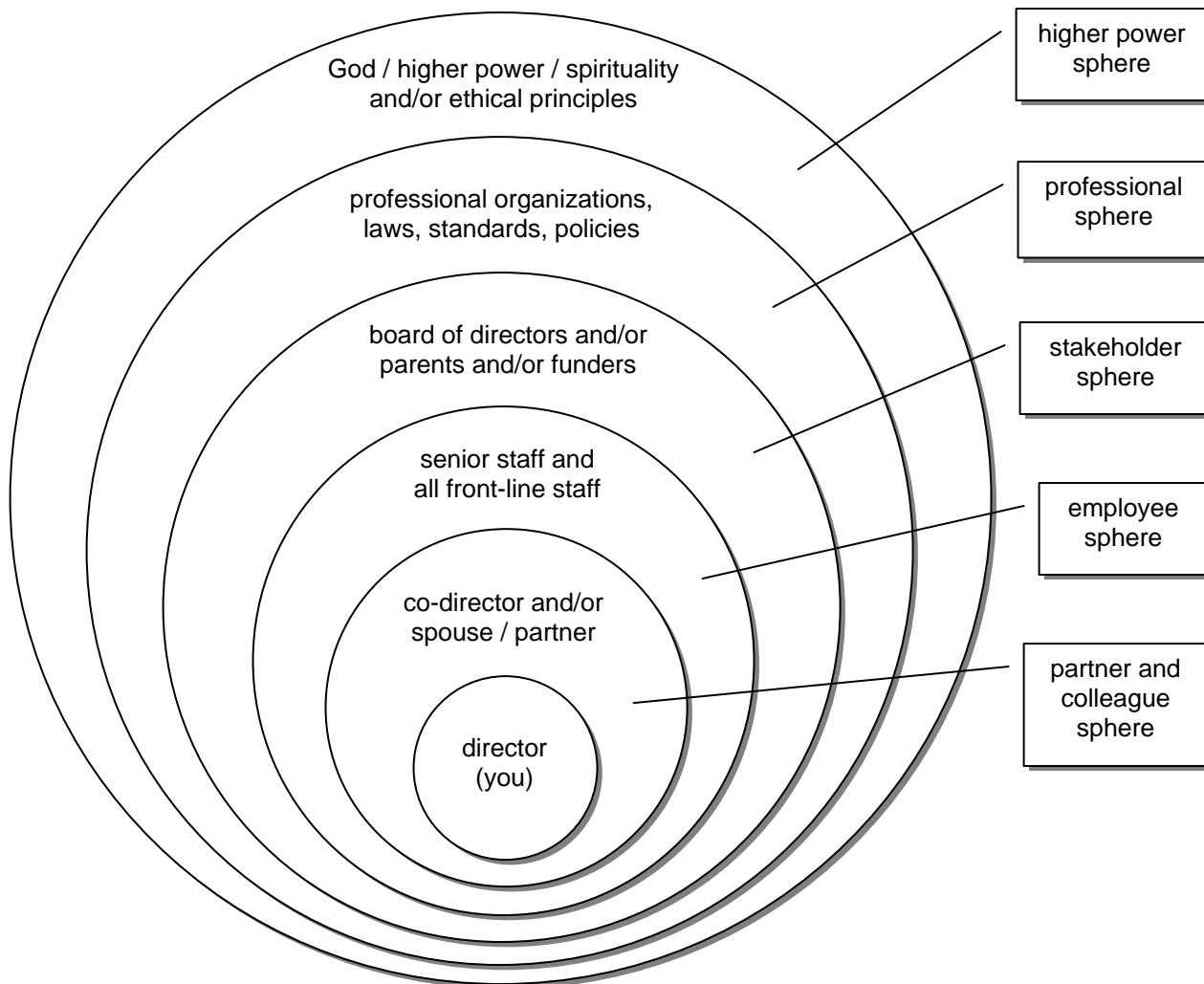


Top Teamwork & Peak Performance

Strategies Experienced Directors and Senior Staff Use to Maintain Stamina

An ecological framework helps experienced directors see the spheres of influence that contribute to or take away from their energy and goals. Director or staff “burn out” does not happen in a vacuum; it happens in a social, professional, and personal context. The best prevention strategies simultaneously target multiple domains. What additional elements or spheres of influence might be added to the diagram below?



Culture: Culture can be thought of as a set of shared assumptions. Culture pervades each of the spheres above. Cultures exist everywhere: at your camp, in your family, in your state, in the ACA, in this country, etc.

Leadership: Leadership can be thought of as a visionary force for unlearning dysfunctional cultural assumptions and learning new ones. Leaders must have perception and insight, cultivate motivation, and create involvement and participation. What can you do to create and manage a high-functioning camp culture?



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Practical Tips for Managing Director Stress

- 1. Dream It** Begin with a vision of what you want to create and commit to doing what you love. Authentic happiness (borne of using your signature strengths, for challenging situations, in service to others) usually produces the highest quality work.
- 2. Draft It** Hire the right people for the job by: (1) Understanding each position's requirements; (2) Cultivating an internal leadership development program; (3) Making thoughtful hiring decisions; and (4) Providing ongoing support and training to you and your staff.
- 3. Delegate It** Share the responsibility of running camp with other talented people. Be clear about your expectations from the outset and provide candid feedback along the way.
- 4. Demand It** Maintain high standards, but also be flexible. Demand the best from your colleagues, your staff, and your campers. Maintain your moral integrity, despite pop culture.
- 5. Design It** You can't "manage" time, (it ticks away constantly, no matter what you do), but you *can* design an efficient, gratifying schedule that balances work, play, and sleep.
- 6. Decide It** Committees and consensus-building both have a place in camp management, but so does decisiveness. Many will look to you to make tough calls and choose the hard right over the easy wrong. Consult outside of the camp circle for vexing problems.
- 7. Disown It** Jettison any "traditions" that work at cross-purposes to your stated mission. Be ready to dismiss any staff who cannot change behaviors that drag the group down.
- 8. Dissolve It** Practice meditation, yoga, prayer, imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, or anything else that helps dissolve stress. Use the "off" button on your cell phone and computer. Get enough sleep each night. Eat a balanced diet. Get aerobic exercise.
- 9. Deliver It** Bask in the satisfaction of delivering a high quality product. Provide surprising rewards to the staff when they deserve it. Follow-through on promises you've made.
- 10. Disregard It** Learn to pick your battles. Let the small stuff go. Distinguish between the things you can change and the things you cannot. Focus your efforts on what you can change.

Other ideas:



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