

"What really matters in the leadership of business and organizations is getting results, reaching benchmarks, and achieving success."

---

Although the issue of what constitutes success is not black and white and some experts object to the statement that what really matters in organizational leadership is getting results, I agree with the above statement because achieving results benefits stakeholders and failing hurts both stockholders and stakeholders.

First, achieving results is the most important aspect of leadership because they benefit the owners and stakeholders. For example, stockholders in struggling companies are adamant that new management be found that can produce better financial returns and deliver gains in the stock price. Just as it is unfair to pay for a service that is being poorly rendered, so it is unfair for a business and its leaders to be compensated and viewed as achieving what really matters while they fail to meet the objectives of the stockholders and stakeholders.

Second, when a business or organization adopts a mentality that what matters is not results, it often fails and hurts stakeholders. For example, in Hurricane Katrina, the American people saw a government that paid little attention to achieving results and succeeding in its job. As a result of a mindset that what mattered were not results, the government demonstrated considerable apathy and the victims of the hurricane suffered. As New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin and Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco said, the Federal government's lack of focus on results mattered in a significantly negative way for the people of New Orleans and Louisiana.

On the other hand, some may argue that a focus on results and success breeds corruption. These individuals may point to examples of corporate fraud such as Enron or WorldCom. However, a crucial benchmark that every business should meet is acting socially responsible and delivering long-term growth in the stock price. Consequently, the leaders at businesses such as Enron failed to deliver true success for the stockholders since the value of the company evaporated. If the leaders of the company had focused on results, they would have avoided making unethical decisions that led to the company's subsequent collapse.

In conclusion, the aspect of business leadership that matters most is achieving results because stakeholders benefit and avoid painful consequences that arise from an organization or business that fails to deliver results. Although some may argue that this mindset leads to corruption, it is actually a lack of focus on reaching benchmarks and becoming successful that causes leaders to make decisions that produce painful consequences for both stakeholders and stockholders.