

Theories of effective leadership and (b) power and influence



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Which of the theories do you best relate to in your understanding of leadership? Over the time, many theories of leadership have come to light. The best theory that I can relate to in my understanding of leadership is 'relationship theory.' Relationship theory is also known as transformational theory (Northouse, 2009). It focuses on the connections that are formed between leaders and followers (Yukl, 2007). This theory in essence describes what leadership qualities should a leader possess in order to motivate and inspire his/her followers. Transformational leaders help members of their groups to understand the importance and nature of the task (Yukl, 2007). They are involved on improving the performance of the group members as well as focus on each individual to achieve his/her potential (Yukl, 2007). It is a common perception that leaders have to build and maintain strong relationships with followers, co-workers and subordinates. In other words, relationship leadership inspires leaders to inculcate in themselves these leadership qualities (Northouse, 2009). Leaders with this style of leadership have high moral and ethical standards which build trust and authenticity amongst his/her group members (Northouse, 2009). Without the bond of trust and standards, the leaders might be disliked by his/her followers making their leadership role short-lived. A successful relation is one that can create and maintain trust. According to Northouse (2009) relationship between leaders and followers must be found on trust or else a leader will be unsuccessful. To build trust, it is important to start with authenticity. Being authentic with followers allows them to look upon their leader with inspiration. Fake personas can be adopted quickly but will also be easily picked up by others and fail to create authenticity and build trust (Yukl, 2007). Leadership is suppose to inspire people to work hard and diligently

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which is exactly what relationship leadership enables leaders to achieve. Social exchange theory describes the process by which individual leaders gain and lose power over time. How useful is this approach? According to Winkler (2009), social exchange theory is one of the most prominent leadership paradigms in organizational behaviors. This theory takes into account the exchange system within the social interactions and its effect on leadership traits (Winkler, 2009). The usefulness of this theory is that it allows both leaders and followers to have benefits when an exchange is taking place within them (Bowerman and Wart, 2011). This implies that there is an equitable exchange relation between followers and leaders. When the roles of both are mutually acknowledged, both followers and leaders can satisfy the expectations of each other (Bowerman and Wart, 2011). This is the power that leaders have in social exchange. If they do not pursue this in a social exchange they might lose power over their followers (Winkler, 2009). Therefore, this theory holds that if leaders wish to be successful, the social benefits should be higher than the costs associated to it. In other words, leaders under social exchange theory gain power when they provide structure, guidance and reward to the members of their group in event of accomplishment of a given task (Bowerman and Wart, 2011). In return, the followers provide the leaders with the status of leadership which allows the leaders to grow in power (Bowerman and Wart, 2011). The advantage of this theory is that it provides a clear framework for the leaders what traits they should encompass in order to have more power over the followers. This continues like a loop that if leaders do not exhibit the qualities expected of them, then the followers have the power as long as the social benefits outweigh the costs of it (Winkler, 2009). References Bowerman, K. & Wart, <https://assignbuster.com/theories-of-effective-leadership-and-b-power-influence/>

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