

Study of leadership: can leaders be born or made?

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



As everybody is living in a competitive world leadership skills are important for successful business. Leadership referred to as direct people to perform a particular task. In a business world, if someone wants to go ahead in the field he may need certain skills which may give an opportunity to be a good leader. Simply, it allows a person to climb up the business ladder. Therefore leadership can be considered as one of the main assets a successful manager should have.

Management concerns about an effective and efficient way to achieve organizational goal through planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling organizational resources. Whereas leadership is one of the components of directing function mentioned above. This means that leadership often linked to the role of the manager or expert. However, leadership and management are two distinguish roles which are confused by many people. Not all managers, for example, are leaders; and not all leaders are managers. Many researchers have studied leadership in a quantitative and qualitative way and seen that it is far more sophisticated and complex than the leadership concepts discussed in the popular leadership books.

Leadership can be represented as a process whereby someone influences the thoughts, attitudes and behavior to achieve an organizational goal. As a result, leadership can make employees more confident and train them to increase productivity through building trust and friendly atmosphere which makes employees to feel safety of their jobs which will help to increase the productivity. In an organization there are informal leaders with no title, no authority, no position power, but they can increase personal power.

Nowadays, most of the companies agreed that management without leadership is an ineffective activity. The resources of the organization cannot be managed without proper leadership. In addition to that without leadership organization may move too slowly and which may result lose their business too. Leader is the one who is a trustworthy, self-confidence and fulfill promises made and consider the work seriously. Different people are having different attitudes and therefore, they give a solution to a particular problem/conflict in a different way. Therefore, most suitable decision needs to be selected when conflict arises. Therefore, leadership is an activity to get other people to do right things. Therefore, the need of selecting better leader for an organization has become a challenging task. Thus, by having right team with fully motivated staff and great leadership qualities can enhance the reputation and productivity of the organization.

Some researchers commented leadership as a personality perspective such as a trait or behavior whereas others think leadership is an information processing perspective. Therefore, in this analysis it is going to be analyze whether leaders are born or can made.

Are leaders born?

In the real world there are so many self-made leaders who become success in the business. It is a debatable issue whether they become top by born or experience gained during their life time.

When considering Trait theory (Ghee & Draft, 2004) explained that “ traits are the distinguishing personal characteristic of leader such as intelligence,

honesty, self-confidence, and appearance". That means the Trait theory mainly emphasis that leaders are born.

However, this is questionable to see whether people are born as a leader. In that case, it is also needed to investigate people who are not born cannot be a leader. Vien Goleman (1998) reveals that five aspects of emotional intelligencesuch as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, social skills can be learned and provide. However, this concept is almost similar to the Trait Theory. Therefore, most of people argue that the traits are important in the development and deployment of people skills.

Most of the people argue that leadership is born when consider some characters such as artists and players. However, they have realized that leadership is actually not born. Therefore, following examples illustrate the above concern.

Tiger Woods- Golf Champion

He has born with some talents of sports. His father worked hard from his early ages to make him Golf champion.

Mozart- Musician

He also has born with certain musical talent. As his father wanted to make him as a musician from hischildhoodhe was trained to use instruments etc.

Hendry Ford – Automobile leader

His parents were poor people who came to America with the hope of new start for their lives. When he was a child, most of the time he spent with his mother. He is quite and inward looking. In his young age, he mother passed away. He was working as a low level mechanist in various places without having enoughmoneyspend better life. He didn't have any resources such as birthright and pedigree that could make him a born leader. But, finally he became as the greatest leaders the corporate world ever seen. (<http://www.businessworld.in/index.php/Columns/Are-Leaders-Born.html>, 14/03/11)

Those examples prove that their natural talent and qualities improved throughhard workof many years. In other words they have improved their influencing ability.

“ Leadership is as a process whereby an individual influence a group of individuals to achieve a company goals” (Northouse, 2010)

Above definition reveals leadership as a process which means it is not trait or characteristic of leadership, but something deferent between leader and the followers. In addition to that it tells that leadership is not a linear event, but it can be considered as a communicating event. Therefore, it emphasizes that leadership is available to everyone. In this circumstance, it is vital to discuss about whether leadership can be made or born.

Leadership is Made:

A successful business requires proper leaders, but not managers to run the organization to a leading position in the market. Therefore, to achieve this, managers should be a real leaders. Some argue that good leaders are made

not born. If someone wants to be a leader he can be an effective leader by improving leadership qualities such as goals, values and concepts.

Bateman & Snell (2009) reveals a leader who keeps focus on moving the organization towards its ideal future, motivate them to overcome whatever barriers lie in the way. Therefore, leaders need to motivate others and build cooperate with them to achieve organizational goals. Simply, leaders need to make friends rather than enemies. Further, smiley and friendly approach will be the asset to reach for the success. In order to be a successful leader who needs to gain better training to harvest the success. The leader can develop positive thinking which can be enhanced by positive thinking and better training. Therefore, one's own abilities and traits are not enough to become a successful leader.

In a real world, “ he is born to be a leader” or “ he is a natural leader” is commonly used phrase. It suggests the Traits perspective takes major part in the leadership. Further, it says that a particular person may have inborn characteristics or qualities which will help them to become leaders. However, figure 1 shows there is a difference between the Trait concept and Process concept (Northouse. P, 2009).

Figure 1- The difference between the Trait and Process concept

The Trait leadership tells that people who have special, inborn, talent can be a leader. Some of the traits are identified as height, intelligence, fluency and etc. Whereas, the Process concept suggests that leadership is interaction between leaders and followers and makes it available to everyone. Further, it

says that leaders need followers and also followers need leaders who are closely linked to communicate each other to continue relationship.

Northouse (2009) suggests that according to Douglas Mc Gregor (1960) theory, leadership can be concerned in two aspects such as Theory X and Theory Y. Theory X emphasis if employees are shy, they need to monitor, direct and control by the leader. On the other hand, Theory Y concerns that some people take responsibility and organize themselves to achieve organizational goals. According to theory Y, employees can be easily motivated. However, this concept was taken into account later years and Black and Mounton (1964) developed “ Managerial Grid” (Northouse, 2009). In this grid he suggests two aspects of leadership behavior such as production and concern of people.

Production- this aspect concern about task oriented behavior such as clarifying roles, scheduling work, and measuring output.

Concern for people- this emphasis on building trust, camaraderie and a friendly atmosphere. As this is more concern about the people, it helps to motivate employees in order to achieve defined set of vision, strategies and targets of the organization.

Therefore, all the theories mentioned above reveals that leadership is accessible for everyone. Northouse (2009), suggests that leaders should focus on vision, purpose, core values and the structure to translate them to take better business decisions. Therefore, it is essential that all level of employees needed to motivate to achieve the organizational targets. Many researchers such as Mc Gregor’s (1960) theory and vroom’s (1964)

expectancy theory motivation reveals that followers are able to achieve targets of the organization with the influence of leaders. In addition to that, in expectancy theory it also suggests that different people concern different things.

Therefore, different motivational needs are required. Hence, to understand different situations and different people within the organization the need of training and learning skills required for an effective and efficient leader. Further, leaders should have some attributes and qualities to motivate employees or the team in the organization. Therefore, an effective leadership is an important asset to the organization as great leaders create great business components of business success through delegation, direction, motivation, evaluation and conflict resolution.

Bateman and Snell (2009) suggest that leadership can be learned and improved by coaching or mentoring. Therefore, better training will enhance the leader to self-motivate and hence, he or she can motivate the team as well.

Conclusion

In my concern, leaders can be made which means it is accessible for all people and can be learned as a behavior. There are no born leaders. However, all humans born with unique strengths and it enable to be a successful leader. Leadership is a skill, a proper leader needs to have and can be improved with practice.

As a person gain more and more practice his or her leadership qualities improve. In some situations, the company may have leaders but not identified their potentials. In that case, they can make a better leader by giving them better training and performance appraisal. This proves that people are not born leaders. In my view, someone can born with some personal qualities and characteristics that makes it easier. When the responsibility is given to a person it gives an opportunity to get broad skills and being coached by someone to encourage them. Hence, they can be motivated and perform on their own skills and knowledge to succeed the company.

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