

Development as a leader

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



Leadership refers to a process through which a person influences others to accomplish a specific objective and directs the organization in a way such that it makes it much more cohesive and coherent. This process can be carried out by leaders through applying their leadership attributes which include beliefs, knowledge, values and skills.

A position of someone as a manager, supervisor among others, may make one have the authority to accomplish some tasks and given set objectives in an organization, this however does not make one to be a leader. It may make one a boss. Leadership would make the followers aim to achieve much higher goals rather than just directing people around. What determines leadership is the character coupled with willingness to serve and sacrifice purely for the sake of the company or organization.

There are various theories that explain how someone is likely to become a leader. Some of the basic theories are as follow:

Trait theory.

There are people who believe that leaders are born. The theory basically centers on this factor. There are specific traits that may be common among all the leaders. Therefore it is a belief that they are born with these characteristics. These characters are usually referred to as the qualities of a good leader. Therefore the theory defines what qualities that a good leader should have rather than looking at the quality of work that one has achieved. It only bases on the fact that if one is a leader then he should have these leadership traits

Behavioral Theory

Here the group of expert dwelt on what the leaders had done in relation to their followers. The theory groups various different forms of behavior that leaders possess towards their followers in sections which include:

Participative	leadership
Directive	leadership
Task	oriented
People	oriented

Contingency theory

The theory of contingency takes into consideration the weaknesses of the trait theory and the behavioral theory. Leadership is always a dynamic situation therefore it can only be logical to say that different traits and styles work in different situations. This theory puts into consideration the level of context. The basis to the approach is due to the variety of reasons that determine whether a leader can become active or not. Therefore defining ones leadership then a greater consideration on the style and traits are best within the given situation.

Transformation theory

Transformation theory defines a leader as change agent. a leader is vied as someone who is likely to initiate change. A leader is looked through the follower. There are three ways through which a leader can make changes to the followers:

Increasing the level of awareness about the value of work and how to attain the fit

Enabling the team to be focused towards the bigger goals of a given unit and not just individual goals.

Giving the followers the motivation into towards a higher-order need, for instance, basing on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Charisma is viewed as an important aspect of the theory. It is a belief that charisma is able to affect the followers through stirring their strong senses of emotion and enabling followers to associate with their leaders. Transformation leadership has got five pillars namely: stimulation, team building, inspiration, coaching and vision. When the five are combined then the results are always tremendous.

Nahavandi (2003) similarly suggests that there are transformational leadership factors which include intellectual stimulation that compels one to generate new ideas coupled with empowerment, inspiration together with charisma to overcome any form of resistance to change. The other factors are individual incentives and the consideration to be able to motivate and give the followers the needed encouragement.

Weaknesses of Trait Theory

Researchers are said to subjectively decide the type of traits that are important. So far there is no definitive list of trait that has been published. To add on that, traits have never been shown to give quality results that are desired in organizations therefore this has proved to be a major weakness. It is also hard to train future leaders due to the existence of the theory. There is always the acceptance of the belief that ability is bestowed upon someone at the moment of conception, a fact that can be misleading.

Weaknesses of contingency theory

The theory does not explain the reason as to why individuals are likely to be more effective in various situations than others. When there is a mismatch that might exist between the leader and the situation there has to be an explanation to this, the theory does not provide the explanation. Leaders who are more effective are likely to be promoted or moved to handle new roles which may not fit them basing on the strength and the level of performance in the roles they play.

Weaknesses of Transformation theory

According to Vries (1994), this type of leadership is likely to fail due to “ the Faust syndrome”, a situation whereby the leader feels that he or she has already achieved almost everything and nothing more is left to be achieved, “ the false connection” whereby the followers are not able to respond appropriately to the reality of the fact. They become people who can only accept anything due to the leadership fear. Leaders are afraid of any form of betrayal response from the followers.

Unrealistic expectations about a vision, depending too much on leaders, disenfranchisement of leaders of the next levels of managers because of the strong influence and the limitations of the leaders. Transformation theory also shows that effective leaders require charismatic leadership and instrumental leadership that mainly focus on the management teams, control and the mechanisms of rewards.

The role of leadership in business

An increase in the rate of change in the business sector is one of the main factors in the current emphasis on leadership. Sometimes back the managers were supposed to maintain the status quo to be able to move ahead. Increased levels of the new forces within the market place have made it necessary to broaden the narrow focus. Visionary leaders are the new leaders of tomorrow. They are both teachers and learners. These are the kind of individuals who are able to foresee paradigm changes but still have very strong sense work ethics and can easily build integrity within their organization.

Raymond Cattell (1945) developed an equation known as Leadership Potential Equation which has used to date to determine the traits that determine some the traits that characterize an effective leader. They include the following:

Emotional stability: Eligible leaders should be able to overcome stress and frustration. Generally, they have to be well-adjusted and psychologically mature to handle any form of task they are required to handle.

Dominance: Leaders are to be competitive and decisive. They should enjoy overcoming obstacles. They generally need to be assertive in thinking and possess good attitude when dealing with others.

Enthusiasm: In most cases, leaders are supposed to be seen in active form, expressive and full of energy. They have to be quick and alert and inhibited.

Conscientiousness: Leaders are usually possessed with a sense of duty and tend always to be exerting in their sense character. They possess high

levels of excellence and an inward desire to perform to the maximum. Self-discipline is one other trait that they have.

Social boldness: Great leaders are spontaneous takers of risks. They are socially aggressive and thin-skinned. Generally, they are responsive to others and usually they are very high in emotional stamina.

Tough-mindedness: Effective leaders are highly practical in nature, logical and are usually to the point. To some extent they tend to be low in sentimental attachment and are not moved with criticism. They become insensitive to hardship and they are generally very much poised.

Self-assurance: Resiliency and a sense of self-confidence are some of the common traits of the leaders. They are very free of guilt and they tend to have little or even no need for approval. They tend to be generally free and quite free from any form of guilt and are generally unaffected because of past mistakes and failures.

Compulsiveness: Leaders have to be controlled and highly precise in their social interactions. Generally, they have to be very much protective of their own integrity and that of the organization they serve. They have to jealously guard the reputation in addition being socially aware and careful, highly abundant in foresight and cautious when making decisions or even while determining some specific actions.

Leadership and Gender perspective

History has always tried to make many believe that leadership is a traditionally masculine activity. However observations have been made that if women in some organizations can emerge as leaders, it is crucial that they

are perceived as influential and motivate individuals. Research carried out way back in 1970s indicated that there was too much gender bias regarding the achievement of women in the business sector. However, in contrast, Charles & Joel (1980) were able to observe that the likelihood that the female would be able to emerge as leaders increased steadily as the number of women increased.

Currently leadership qualities can be possessed by any individual irrespective of the gender. What one needs is the ability to accomplish the challenges that are involved. Other researches have shown that women amount to almost half of the labour force. Though they go to the Universities in large numbers, they fill disproportionately a very small percentage of the senior positions of leadership. According to Charles and Joel (1980), women can bring a very different perspective towards business problems through enhancement of creativity. It is for this reason that promoting women can be a vital and strategic move in fostering development. Many people have always assumed gender difference before making any form of research.

Leadership Ethics

Leaders' conduct and character are always under a microscope. The aspect of influence of leadership refers to enacting on the lives of the followers. Leaders therefore have to be ethical enough. The values of a leader can always be equated to the values of the organization. It is always stated that the need for leadership morals are mandatory in the 21st century. This is actually an integral to leadership, and not just an optional add-on. The definitions of ethical leadership, however, rely on the perception of an

individual and not on empirically tested theories this is because a concrete body of research has not been produced yet.

Leadership, corporate culture and Personal values

Any one that would wish to push for the organizational improvement must always deal with cultural and behavioral obstacles to change. The attempts to organizational change must consider the three key features of the life of the organization:

The culture of the firm

Leadership of change effort

The existing network of power.

In dealing with the organizational culture, the management must work with the present culture to be able to transform the organization. It does not matter whether the culture's changes is secondary; the most vital thing is to improve the level of performance of the company. Leadership plays an integral part in dealing with culture. Leadership has to take a given direction in order to be able to handle the culture of the organization. Based on the recent research, the top management must lead the effort of change. There are also key leadership actions that are likely to assist in helping those efforts to succeed. Goals can only be accomplished within the organizations mainly through the use of power and politics. So it is almost obvious that changing an organization requires some use of intelligence.

Leadership and Influence

Most efficient leaders should be able to combine different forms of leading styles. They should not be bogged down by the thought and some of the

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related models they once learned but should continuously observe various changes in the environment together with the state of the organization. Through doing this they will be able to look for the best instruments of influence for each given situation. With this kind of leadership, there is need for an open mind and the promptness to renew oneself on a basis that is very much continuous. The kind of leaders who are continuously developing themselves and are quick to find right channels to influence, are usually worth the weight in gold in any given networked society. These are the kind of individuals who constitute the highest element of competitiveness. However, it is, a little bit easier to encourage continuous learning coupled with the best application of novel approaches to any given situation

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