

Aislamic leadership: a spiritual leadership paradigm

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



Leadership has been an object studied by many scholars for centuries, and brings a lot of theories forth in term of leadership. Leadership is a multidisciplinary field concerned with both ethics and morality. Davis, K. (1967) defined Leadership as the ability to persuade others to seek defined objectives enthusiastically. It is the human factor which binds a group together and motivates it toward goals. Management activities such as planning, organizing, decision making are dormant cocoons until the leader triggers the power of motivation in people and guides them toward their goals.

The above definition of leadership stresses that a leader is more than just a manager. Leading and managing are not the same thing. Warren Bennis in Fortune (January : 1988), a leadership expert, summarized the distinction between leadership and management as follows: “ The difference between managers and leaders is fundamental. The manager administers, the leader innovates. The manager maintains, the leader develops. The manager relies on systems, the leader relies on people. The manager counts on control, the leader counts on trust.

The manager does things right, the leader does the right thing. ” Spiritual Leadership Recently several high-level leaders have mysteriously lost their way. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, former head of the International Monetary Fund and a leading French politician, was arraigned on charges of sexual assault. Lee B. Farkas, former chairman of giant mortgage lender Taylor, Bean & Whitaker, in April 2011 was found guilty for his role in one of the largest bank fraud schemes in American history.

These talented leaders were highly successful in their respective fields and at the peak of their careers. In these ongoing revelations, the media, politicians, and the general public frequently characterize these leaders as bad people, even calling them evil. Simplistic notions of good and bad only cloud our understanding of why good leaders lose their way, and how this could happen. In a Leadership Forum, held on April 11-12, 2002, executives from a wide range of industries gathered in Harvard Business School to discuss how their spirituality helps them be powerful leaders.

The conference explored issues of leadership, values, and spirituality in business and it came up with 5 (five) characteristics of spiritual leadership that can bring success to CEO, namely: 1. Integrity. We need leaders with strong values grounded in a commitment to a life that is whole and consistent with the things they believe. They should take personal responsibility for their actions and be honest with others, and with themselves. 2. Energy. Leaders who energize and inspire other people make everyone around them better—not by administering, but by ministering. . Inspiration. Trust and confidence are vital, but it is a leader's responsibility to help create a vision of what is possible. They should inspire others to see the greatness that is within them. 4. Wisdom. Leaders need to be teachers. They must see beyond the horizon and understand the principles that underlie success. It is necessary to be a great communicator and teach in deed. 5. Courage. Leaders have to do hard things. They have to have standards and make tough decisions that might make them unpopular, and do the right thing though the wrong thing is easier.

Courage is hard, but it can be developed. According to Khalil Khavari PH. D, the characteristics of spiritual intelligence consist of 3 (three) aspects, namely : (1). Spiritual Intelligence as spiritual-religion (vertical relationship of man and God) which related to the ritual worship, (2). Spiritual Intelligence as social-religion, which reflects on social attitudes which emphasize on togetherness and social welfare. this is in line with the opinion of Firoz Rasul, chairman and CEO of Ballard Power Systems , he said that “ Religious practice without a social conscience is a deceit”.

It was stated in Harvard Business School discussion on leadership forum, (3) Spiritual Intelligence as social ethic which emphasize on our obedience in ethical and moral manner. Some scholars may not agree with Khavari statement, they say that spirituality is not always talking about religion, it is different. According to Jennifer F. Lawrence (MBA ‘ 87), a marketing consultant and professor at Boston University, says, “ Spirituality should not be confused with ‘ religion’”. ‘ Spirituality is simply having a sense of inner calm and a willingness to reflect carefully on yourself and the world around you.

Integrating spirituality into the workplace means creating a place where it’s all right for people to bring their whole selves, with all their talents and complex emotions; where there’s enough safety so that people can speak the truth openly at meetings, rather than secretly in the hallway afterward; where there’s an elevated sense of integrity. These ideas are not new, and may even seem obvious, but it’s amazing how infrequently they are applied in the corporate environment and how harmful their absence can be. Islamic Leadership Dr. Rafik Beekun and Dr. Jamal Badawi in Leadership: An Islamic

Perspective(1998), said that An organization with good management, but poor leadership will preserve the status quo, but may not be able to advance to a higher level of performance. An organization that has an excellent leader, but nobody with good management skills may aspire to great heights, but crash precipitously because there is no one to follow through. In modern Islamic organizations, both leaders and managers are needed.

Leaders can reframe experience to open new possibilities; managers can provide a sense of perspective and order so that the new possibilities become reality. Though several studies and concepts have been conducted about it for years, may it be leadership roles, traits and theories but do not say much about Leadership in the Islamic Perspective. Islam, a religion of peace but often misjudged and misunderstood, has a very comprehensive concept of leadership that is centered on faith and values according to Allah (God).

Hence, the focus of Leadership in Islam is on doing good things based on the source of Law of Islam. Leadership in Islam is a trust (amanah). It represents a psychological contract between a leader and his followers that he will try his best to guide them, to protect them and to treat them fairly and with justice. The subject of leadership is crucial in Islam. In most circumstances in life, Muslims are urged to appoint a leader and follow him. For example, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, “ When three are on a journey, they should appoint one of them as their commander. According to the Prophet (saw), Muslims must appoint a leader during a trip, select a leader (imam) to lead the prayer, and choose a leader for other group activities. The husband is the leader of his family. In the absence of her husband, the wife assumes the

role of leader of the house. As Islam is a comprehensive system of life, its roots of leadership generally exist in the primary and secondary resources of the Shari'ah in addition to the early practices of the early Muslims.

With this concept, a leader in Islam is said to be not free to act as he chooses, nor must he submit to the desires of others — he must act in accordance to Allah's laws like how Prophet Mohammad (saw) exemplified his kind of leadership. Allah said in the Qur'an, " And We made them leaders guidingmen by Our Command and We sent inspiration to do good deeds, to establishprayers and to practice charity; and they constantly served Us only"(Qur'an 21: 37).

It is a trust both guardianship and service-oriented that denotes doing what's best for your people/organization's member, protect them and treat them in a just manner. The main focus of leadership in Islam is doing positive actions for the sake of Allah and the whole of humanity — as a man and a woman go along the journey of life, they both begin tohold an ideal of selflessness centered on faith and service of humanity. One of the main principles, which Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) taught Muslims, is the principle of leadership through service.

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) said, " A ruler who has been entrusted with the affairs of the Muslims, but makes no endeavor for their material and moral upliftment and is not sincerely concerned or their welfare will not enter Paradise along with them" (Al Bukhari, 1997). Leadership is about sacrifice and paradigm shifts. Prophet Muhammad challenged the world view of jahiliyyah (ignorant period) and encountered many obstacles. Jesus, Noah,

Moses, Lot, Abraham (peace be upon all of them) were beloved by God, but this did not make them immune to suffering.

Sayed Qutb and Malcolm X paid with their lives, but never backed out. Muhammad Ali lost his world boxing title, even though his conviction was eventually overturned by the U. S. Supreme Court. Anwar Ibrahim spent years in jail and paid with his reputation and health. Challenging the status quo is never easy, but reaching the vision outlined by your strategic plan may demand no less of you. Prophet Muhammad said: “ No fatigue or disease, no sorrow or sadness, no hurt or distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that Allah expiates some of his sins for that. (Muslim)

The Holy Quran is the primary source of leadership and success principles. Revealed by a Supreme author, God, its message has universal and eternal relevance. It is a complete Code of Life which contains guidelines on spiritual, social, economic and political aspects of human life. It is the last and complete edition of divine guidance and teaches the success and leadership principles which can guide life towards success and highest attainment. The beauty of the Quran lies in the universality of its use and completeness of its message.

It is meant for everyone and in its following lie the success and prosperity of not this or that nation, but the entire human race. There are 6346 verses in the Quran which deal with various aspects of human life and offer advice and guidance. In some of these verses lie key attributes and qualities which if acquired will make one successful in any human endeavour. Faith, struggle, knowledge seeking, piety, charity, decision making etc. and identical <https://assignbuster.com/aislamic-leadership-a-spiritual-leadership-paradigm/>

concepts which form the core of leadership principles are contained in this book. It is through the understanding and application of these principles that one can perfect his/her leadership and achieve mega results.

As representatives of God Himself human beings are very privileged to strive for excellence in every field of their endeavors and make things happen for themselves and those they lead. The leadership lessons contained in the holy Quran which will be detailed in the subsequent chapters offer keys to success and advancement. These concepts about leadership are either directly communicated or reflected in stories about earlier prophets and wise persons in the Quran. For example in one of the verses the Qur'an highlights an important aspect of Islam's concept of leadership.

After successfully completing a number of tests, Prophet Ibrahim is given the glad tidings that he has been appointed a leader of all the people. "What about my progeny?" asks Ibrahim. "My covenant does not include the dhalimeen (oppressors)", comes the divine reply (Al-Qur'an 2: 124). An important point emerges from this dialogue: an oppressor is not fit to be the leader of people. This is just a single example of how leadership is dealt with in the Quran. There are many more lessons and guidelines in the Quran which provide exemplary leadership principles for everyone to follow.

In essence going through the Quran and understanding its contents one will be delighted to discover timeless wisdom based principles which are as relevant today as they were yesterday or thousands of years ago. Quranic wisdom, the life of Prophet Muhammad(pbuh) and his sayings, the deeds of the Caliphs and traits of pious followers offer the most beautiful and marvelous principles. Principles which can unlock success, sayings which can

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unite the hearts of humanity, deeds which if replicated will help anyone achieve almost anything in life. Why is it so? And why are they so powerful?

Because they are divine and powerful laws which are time-tested and immortal, models which are bound to succeed, and methods which have worked again and again. Everything in this universe operates by certain laws and principles. Scientific laws such as the law of gravity, the laws of thermodynamics and other laws provide sound models on which scientific discoveries and inventions took place and the system of universe smoothly operates. Human lives also need laws and principles, specifically if one wants success, then Divine principles are needed which can be derived from the sources discussed above.

Leadership in Islam is considered as an amanah (a trust) and a responsibility. A leader is required to meet his obligations to God , the Supreme Power as well as to discharge his duties towards the people (Makhluq) or his followers to the best of his abilities. It says to the rulers that the authority vested in them is not their private property but is a trust and that they should discharge the obligations of that trust to the utmost, like upright and honest people, and should carry on government in consultation with the people.

It says to the ruled, the power to choose your rulers has been bestowed upon you as a gift from God and you should, therefore, be careful to invest only such persons with governing authority as fully deserve it, and after vesting this authority in them, you should give them your fullest cooperation and should not rebel against them, for if you do so, you are merely seeking to demolish that which your own hands have built.

Failure in any one of the aspects will be a total leadership and followership failure and both the leader as well as the followers will be held responsible and answerable. Meeting these duties will not only earn one the blessing of God the Almighty but will also fulfill his duty towards his fellow beings be they leaders or followers.