Makes an effective leader

Leadership is involved within everything around the world. In order for that specific thing to be successful, good leadership must be An effective leader is an essential component to any business wishing to be successful. " Leading is the use of influence to motivate employees to achieve organizational goals. Leading means creating a shared culture and values, communicating goals to employees throughout the organization, and infusing employees with the desire to perform at a high level" (Sambajee, P. 2012). There are a lot of personal qualities within a leader that in turn make them effective.

This essay will explore the different elements that create an effective leader with reference to various journal articles, academic books and websites and also lead to a conclusion of whether or not good leadership means being morally good. " We are living in an era when leadership is needed more than ever. The environment today is turbulent, and organizations have had to reconceptualize almost every aspect of how they do business to meet the needs of increasingly demanding customers, keep employees motivated and satisfied, and remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment." A main quality of an effective leader is to be able to motivate people. Motivation can be defined as different internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested and committed to a job, role or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal. It results from the interaction of both conscious and unconscious factors such as the intensity of desire or need, the incentive or reward value and the expectations of the individual and of his or her peers.

Examples of these unconscious and conscious factors within a business environment are such like a pay bonus or an increased holiday allowance. The beneficial factors of using such motivational strategies help to boost the morale of staff and the quality of work that they exert within the business. Inevitably this will lead to a boost in productivity and create a higher chance of the business being a success within its market. Previous studies have helped create the understanding that the ability of an effective leader is the result of their own personal traits under the categories of personality, and more recently, physical, social and work related characteristics. " Traits are the distinguishing personal characteristics of a leader such as intelligence, values, self-confidence and appearance. The early research focused on leaders who had achieved a level of greatness, and hence was reffered as the ' great man' approach.

Generally early research found only a weak relationship between personal traits and leader success". A reason for this may be because most of the men chosen were political or religious leaders from centuries ago such as Napoleon and therefore does not give quite as accurate analysis of today's business environment. More recent studies have used new physical, social and work related characteristics in order to create a more accurate investigation as to what distinguishes effective leadership and stress that not all traits are appropriate to every organization or situation. Literature about this, written by Bernard M. Bass breaks down the personal characteristics or traits of leaders. First of all the physical characteristics of a leader are to be energetic and hold a good physical stamina which correlates well with the work-related characteristics of having a drive to achieve or excel at a specific

task. The personality of a leader is very adaptable would be one that is independent, self-confident, honest, enthusiastic and has a desire to lead. From this compliant personality, strong social skills also come from this meaning that an effective leader as a person is easy to get along with and is very co-operative.

As mentioned before, some earlier studies were sometimes considered inaccurate as different environments require different forms of leadership, so in order for all of these characteristics to be able to come together, an effective leader must be educated and intelligent in their specific environment (Bass, B. 1990). Leading on from studies regarding if leaders were born to have adopted these specific traits sparked interest into whether people could be educated or trained with specific skills in order to become a leader. These were called behavioural approaches. One behavioural approach is ' task-orientated' in which the leader helps subordinates figure out what is expected of them and manages the daily activities of a group toward accomplishing a task. In some style theories, this is referred to as transactional leadership, or management (as a contrast to leadership). The other set of behaviors is referred to as people-oriented style, where the leader provides a more supportive role in providing a positive work environment in which the workers can maximize their productivity. This is sometimes referred to as participative leadership, and is also more closely related to transformational leadership theories. These two examples of behavioral approaches to leadership are not the only theories in this category, however they are used as a base for further research into effective leadership. One specific university that carried out research on leader

behaviour was Ohio State University. Their research came to the conclusion of identifying two main behaviours that were ' consideration' and ' initiating structure'. " Consideration falls in the category of people-orientated behaviour and is the extent to which the leader is mindful of subordinates, respects their ideas and feelings, and establishes mutual trust. Considerate leaders are friendly, provide open communication, develop teamwork, and are oriented toward their subordinates' welfare". This can be related to a democratic or laissez-faire style of management. A democratic management or leadership style allows subordinates to contribute with their own feedback to their leader that can be considered when making a managerial decision. This style of management creates good working relationships throughout the hierarchy of businesses and therefore is a motivational factor for employees to exert their greatest quality of work. ' Initiating structure' is the other behavioral approach to leaders that was found by Ohio State University, which is defined as " the degree of task behaviour, that is, the extent to which the leader is task oriented and directs subordinate work activities toward goal attainment.

Leaders with this style typically give instructions, spend time planning, emphasize deadlines and provide explicit schedules of work activities". This approach can be compared to an autocratic management style where employees thoughts and opinions are not considered in the decision making process by managerial figures and do not do anything without confirming it with their manager. Employee's must follow strict guidelines and make targets under a more intense pressure due to the harsh management and this results in employee's motivation decreasing. Therefore, an effective

leader is one that adopts more of a democratic approach towards their subordinates. An example of this is within the oil and gas industry with OPITO The Oil and Gas Academy who use the feedback from their employees throughout the hierarchy to ensure that it keeps up to date with changing or emerging needs within the workplace. The use of this information can then be further used in creating better training for employees throughout the industry.

Following on from behavioral approaches are contingency approaches to leadership. Contingency approach is a model of leadership that describes the relationship between leadership styles and specific organizational situations. One specific contingency approach is " Path-goal Theory" where effective leadership is used to help keep their subordinates focused and on task. " Path-goal theory is a dyadic theory of supervision. It concerns relationships between formally appointed superiors and subordinates in their day-to-day functioning. It is concerned with how formally appointed superiors affect the motivation and satisfaction of subordinates. It is a dyadic theory of supervisions in that it does not address the effect of leaders on groups or work units, but rather the effects of superiors on subordinates ". As mentioned before, specific types of leadership are best suited in certain situation. From the path-goal theory derives four forms of leader behaviour; supportive leadership, directive leadership, participative leadership and achievement-oriented leadership. Supportive leadership can relate to past theories such like consideration where the leader is an approachable figure and has responsibility for their subordinates' personal feelings. Directive leadership is similar to the initiating-structure theory whereby the leader

creates clear tasks and targets for subordinates to follow and is very regimented in the sense of keeping to set rules and regulations. Participative leadership involves leaders and subordinates collaborating thoughts and opinions in order to ensure good decision-making occurs and both agree on the verdict.

Achievement-oriented leaders are ones that assist in helping subordinates learn new skills so they are able to advance within their workplace and being inspired to become a leader. These leader types cannot be compared to the trait theory as any given leader is able to adopt these styles given the situation that they are in. A further theory of effective leadership is charismatic and visionary leadership. Charismatic leaders are not the same as a transactional leader who creates and sets clear goals and structures for subordinates to follow. Instead, " the charismatic leader has the ability to inspire and motivate people to do more than they would normally do, despite obstacles and personal sacrifice". The subordinates of a charismatic leader completely trust their leader as the leader trust. Because the atmosphere can be considered to be more democratic as explained previously, visionary leaders have been found to act more as a motivational drive due to their unpredictable and unique ideas. Charismatic leaders have a positive outlook or vision on situations where others may not. A vision is an attractive, ideal future that is credible yet not readily attainable.

Charismatic and visionary leaders look to utilize their subordinates and collaborate with them to help achieve their targets as a team with good working relationships and help build each other's work ethic in doing so. An example of a positive charismatic leader is Martin Luther King Jr as he looked

beyond the racist culture of the United States of America and seeked change and equality in the future for everyone. Moving on from charismatic and visionary leadership is a similar theory with the fact that leaders have a strong vision for success within their team. It is called Burns transformational leadership theory. " Transformational leaders help followers grow and develop into leaders by responding to individual followers' needs by empowering them and by aligning the objectives and goals of the individual followers, the leader, the group, and the larger organization".

A subordinate having the association with a higher morale position is motivating and will result in people following a leader who promote this. Burns also believes that working in a team is more effective than working individually like synergy. " Synergy is a state in which two or more things work together in a particularly fruitful way that produces an effect greater the sum of their individual effects. Expressed also as " the whole is greater than some of it's parts". This theory could therefore assist managers on leading their employee's through the change by emphasizing a positive attitude, which is therefore likely to influence employee's to follow in the same way. An example of a transformational leader is Jack Welch, who's leadership managed to create the General Electric Company into an organization worth around $500 billion. His belief towards his subordinates being the " pivotal force" within the company allowed him to utilize each one effectively and " drive change" throughout General Electric's vast organization. With the use of content and examples from various academic books and journal articles I have drawn the conclusion that with good

practice of the leadership theories that have been explored within this essay, they can be all being considered morally good.

That is, that they are their suitable situation or environment for the correct theory to be put into practice. Personally, the most effective leadership theories are those that follow a more democratic or laissez-faire approach such as transformational or charismatic leadership due to the good working relationships throughout the hierarchy of leaders and their subordinates. This will help lead to a more motivated team of subordinates who will in turn, be inspired to become a leader themselves eventually.