

Nothing changes without leadership

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



Leadership Assignment - 1, 500 words " Leadership is a skill that anyone can learn and successfully apply" Discuss. Nothing happens without leadership. Nothing changes without leadership. Nothing develops without leadership. Nothing improves without leadership. Nothing is corrected without leadership. Everyone, everywhere, every time is always being led. Leadership is perpetually exercised daily whether by a politician, priest, parent, boss or teacher. Leaders are not born. They are made through a never ending process of self study, education, training and experience backed up with a strong desire and willpower.

They grow out of opportunities and projects. What is leadership? Leadership is therefore a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs a group in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leadership is also the capacity to influence others through inspiration generated by a passion, motivated by a vision, birthed by conviction and produced by a purpose. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills.

There are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders; they are: a) Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. This is called trait theory b) A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. This is the great events theory. c) People can choose to become leaders through the learning of leadership skills. This is the transformational leadership theory. In this theory, the leader his team to be effective and efficient.

Usually, communication is the base for goal achievement focusing the group on the final desired outcome. The leader is highly visible and uses a chain of command to get things done. Transformational leaders focus on the big picture, needing to be surrounded by people who take care of details; the leader is always looking for ideas that move the group to reach their vision.

Factors of leadership: There are four major factors in leadership, they are:

a) Follower: Without followership, there is no leadership. It is through the followers that the leader gets his vision/s accomplished.

The leader must know his/her people. The fundamental starting point is having a good understanding of human nature, such as needs, emotions and motivation.

b) Leader: The leader must have an honest understanding of who he is, what he knows and what he can do. Since it is the followers, not the leader who determines if a leader is successful. ; if they don't trust or lack confidence in their leader, then they will be uninspired. To be successful as a leader, you have to convince your followers, not yourself or superiors, that you are worthy of being followed.)

Communication: leadership is through a two way communication system, much of which is non verbal. For instance, when the leader " sets the example" that communicates to his team that he would not ask them to perform anything that he would not ask them to do. What and how he communicates either builds or harms the relationship between him and his team.

d) Situation: All are different. What is done in one situation will not always work in another. The leader must use his judgement to decide the best course of action and the leadership style needed for each situation.

For example, you may need to confront a team member for inappropriate behaviour, but if the confrontation is too late or too early, too harsh or too weak, then the results may prove ineffective. Various forces will affect these factors. Examples of forces are relationship with seniors, the skill of your team, the informal leaders within the team and how the team is organised. Skill is the ability coming from one's knowledge, practice or aptitude to do something well; since leadership is a skill, there is therefore the need to learn and grow in the application of leadership abilities.

Good leadership is a result of the active practice and application of the right skills which can become a part of the leader's style over time. Below are some essential leadership skills that should be learnt and practised for optimum performance, they are: a) Setting an example: This is the most persuasive leadership skill. A good leader sets a positive example in these ways: Following instructions: following instructions, obeying the law and carrying out tasks in the recommended manner points out that rules and procedures are important.

Showing initiative: A good leader must do what has to be done without waiting to be told or forced to act. An effective leader respects the good suggestions of the group member and encourages each person to show initiative. Acting with maturity: An effective leader shows good judgement. The group members see that the leader's personal behaviour is directed towards accomplishing the task. Knowing the job: Generally, a leader should have a mastery of the skills to be used. If not, the leader must apply the resources of the group towards achieving the task.

Keeping a positive attitude: a positive attitude is vital as an example to group members. The leader's personal frustration or discouragement should never be apparent. Failure should be considered a potential learning process. Enthusiasm is contagious. b) Counselling: counselling in one form or another goes on constantly as the leader works with the members of the group. It can be used to encourage or reassure an individual, to develop a more effective member of the group or help solve a specific problem.

Counselling is helpful when a person needs encouragement, should have more information bearing on his or her tasks, needs helping in interpreting facts or is uncertain about what to do or the leader feels the need to correct a situation. There are six keys to good counselling: Listen carefully. Give undivided attention to what the person is saying. Ask yourself " Do I understand what the person is trying to say Summarize frequently to assure understanding , keep on track and check what is being told Additional information might be all that is needed.

The person might not have all the facts or might not know all the resources available. The counsellor must be sure to give information, not advice The person must be encouraged to think of different ways of handling the problem. Above all, the counsellor must not give advice. The objective of counselling is to lead the individual to his or her own solution.

c) Communication: This involves several factors such as receiving, storing, retrieving, giving and interpreting information. It is important that members of a group communicate freely with each other.

To improve one's skills in communicating as a leader, the following needs to be done; Pay attention and listen carefully. Make notes and sketches Ask questions and repeat your understanding of what was said Be sure others are listening before you speak Speak slowly and clearly Draw diagrams, if needed. Ask those receiving information to take notes Have the listeners repeat their understanding of what was said. Encourage questions.

d)Controlling group performance: A leader influences the performance of the group and individual members through his/her actions.

A group needs control as an engine needs a throttle to keep it from running itself into the ground. A group works together best when everybody is headed in same direction. If a plan is to be properly carried out, someone must lead the effort. Control is a function that the group assigns to the leader to get the job done. Control happens as a result of recognising the difference between where the group is and where the group is going. The leader is responsible for developing a plan to help the group get to its goal.

Setting the example is the most effective way of controlling the group.

e)Evaluation: The skill of evaluation helps leaders to measure the performance of a group/team in getting a job done and working together. It suggests ways in which the group/leader can improve its performance. There are two basics categories of evaluation questions. After any event or activity, these questions should be asked: Was the job done? Was the job done right? Was the job done on time? Were relationships between group participant helped or hurt?

Was participation equally distributed among group participants? Did the group enjoy the activity? Did the group handle conflicts well? f) Planning: This is a very essential skill that must be learnt by any leader striving to succeed on his/her assignment. The following is a simple process for developing planning skills: Consider the task and objectives. What do you want to accomplish? Consider the resources- equipment, knowledge, skills and attitude Consider the alternatives. Brainstorm Reach a decision, evaluating each option. Write the plan down and review accordingly

Execute the plan Evaluate the plan g) Effective teaching: Effective teaching is a process to increase the knowledge, skills and attitude of the group. The focus is on learning, not teaching. Therefore, for teaching to be effective, learning must take place. The following steps are necessary for effective teaching to take place; they include; Choosing the learning objective Providing a discovery experience that helps the learner understand the need for the skill Demonstrating or explaining the skill Allowing the learner to practice the skill Evaluating the process