

Example of managers and leaders:are they different critical thinking

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Zaleznik (1977) asserts that there is an inherent difference between managers and leaders, which lies in the conceptions, deep within their own psyches, of order and chaos. Managers embrace process and desire both stability and control, with the need to resolve problems expeditiously being a key priority. On the other hand, leaders thrive on chaos and structural vacuums, and are happy to delay closure in order to develop a deeper understanding of the issues (p. 74). With regard to attitudes towards goals, work, relationships with others and oneself, there are fourfold differences between leaders and managers. To begin with, managers perceive goals as necessities, while leaders perceive as a reflection of their own beliefs and visions.

On the other hand, while managers tend towards flexibility and practicality in order to ensure an acceptable balance in daily activities, leaders have a radically different approach. Leaders prefer inspiration and innovation, which in turn necessitates risk-taking to secure people's support, not least because such support is critical to the effective and efficient implementation of any experimental ideas that may arise (Zaleznik, 1977, p. 77). These distinctions are strong and in many ways, intuitive in the very definition of leadership and management, and thus a key strength of this article.

In addition, Zaleznik (1977) argues that managers tend to create relationships dependent on their formal positions within the organization, which means that they have a robotic tendency to work with other people but generally avoid any emotional engagement. They very much prefer processes and bureaucracies. On the other hand, leaders thrive in creating personal, empathetic and emotionally-involved relationships, by which they

can understand relationships and the wider context in which those relationships occur (Zaleznik, 1977, p. 78). This concept is easily one of the strongest arguments in this article and has had a far-reaching influence in modern organizational culture and leadership. For instance, Goleman (2004) refined the concept of emotional engagement that comes through in Zaleznik (1977), arguing that effective leadership requires emotional intelligence (empathy, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation and social skill) in order to recognize and leverage power towards setting and achieving the set goals.

Unlike managers, who do not feel separated from their respective environments, leaders are conscious of this possibility. In this way, the article argues that leaders are capable of abstracting themselves in order to understand the immediate and broader contexts (Zaleznik, 1977). It is clear from Zaleznik (1977)'s categorizations of leaders and managers define clear differences between leaders and managers. While this article was written four decades ago, it still captures leadership and management as concepts, as well as the fact that successful organizations require a combination of both abilities.

However, while Zaleznik (1977) show puts a finger on the possible misleading understanding of leadership, as possibly stemming from a developmental dependence on strong parents, this article appears to reinforce this perception. The fact that Zaleznik (1977) argues that the difference between managers and leaders are deeply-ingrained seems to rule out the possibility that a single individual can be both a leader and a manager. This is an overly sweeping generalization that cannot possibly be

true. Similar generalizations come through in Zaleznik (1977)'s assertions that leaders tolerate and even encourage chaos. This is appealing enough in theory, but it is difficult to believe there are leaders out there using colleagues as lab rats to understand organizational problems.

References

Goleman, D. (2004). What Makes a Leader? Harvard Business Review, <http://hbr.org/2004/01/what-makes-a-leader/ar/1>.

Zaleznik, A. (1977). Managers and leaders: are they different? Harvard Business Review, 55(May-June), 67-78.