

# What makes a charismatic leader essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Charisma is a trait that is mainly found in leaders whose personalities are basically characterized by magnetism or attractiveness, personal charm, innate and sophisticated abilities of persuasion and interpersonal communication. A charismatic leader is therefore an individual leader who demonstrates a high level of charisma. They have the ability to influence people because of their high level of competence, skills, ability and knowledge. A charismatic leader's exceptional personal qualities enable their employees to be loyal and obedient to them.

They use a range of methods to maintain their image and to win trust from the followers. Some of the methods include; self-sacrifice- having great confidence in the employees and taking personal risks on what they believe in; they can also win trust from the followers by paying more attention to them at particular moments. This is to make the people appreciate the level of concern the respective leader has towards them; another way in which the charismatic leaders build a rapport with the public is by paying more attention to the environment surrounding them by investigating and by understanding the moods and concerns of the public. They then act according to those needs if it is possible or make a promise of quick action towards the situation. This is to suit the situation at that particular time (Laurie, 2005). The values of a charismatic leader are very significant as they can both elevate and transform their employees and the entire organization. They can as well manipulate their followers by taking advantage of their position and the trust people have in them. Some selfish charismatic leaders never accept defeat or challenge from others.

The following are some of the distinguishable characteristics of a charismatic leader, their disadvantages and advantages as well as examples of these leaders that had existed before. Some of the qualities and characteristics of a charismatic leader are; a charismatic leader should have a vision. As a leader they should know where they are heading to and where they are leading the company. The vision should be in line with their interests, values and desires. They should have a strong passion for that vision so that the staff and the employees come to love and approve of it. The vision should be powerful to enable a charismatic leader have self confidence.

This is to give them the strength to overcome the challenges they might face in trying to achieve the vision. They are expected to “ walk the talk” by doing whatever they say; they should neither fear anybody nor any condition or circumstance. Another quality of a charismatic leader is that they should be self promoters. They are expected to have a strong inner strength and personality. It is this strong personality that will attract people in the organization and make them believe in whatever they are saying. People will see the passion they have in whatever they are doing and become inspired and thus start admiring them and this creates trust and passion to work. They should also make the employees to understand the vision they have by using simple language that everyone can understand.

A charismatic leader should allow the followers to see clearly the benefits that the vision will bring to them so that in case of any disagreement from opponents, they can support him (Adair-Toteff, 2000). A charismatic leader is a great communicator. Their speech should be simple, clear and straightforward. They should also be confident and persuasive whenever

they are addressing the people. Most charismatic leaders use stories and metaphors.

This is to enable the people audience relate with them much easily. Relating with the audience makes them lively and eases their address thus enable them hear their views on the point they are addressing. When there is easy relation, a charismatic leader can easily learn about the environment by reading the minds of the people. When they are with the audience, they are expected to smile cheerfully and interact with the people freely by getting involved in the activities to show them the direction. When the employees see their leader doing a great job, they will be challenged and develop a heart of doing a better job. They are also expected to treat the employees with respect so as to gain respect from them also. They should remember the names of the employees and know their roles and positions in the organization.

This can only be achieved through proper interaction and being close and free to the workers which will actually create closure. A charismatic leader should try as much as possible to please the followers and they should have a strong passion to serve them. They should also be sensitive to the needs of the employees by responding to them early enough without delays. This will make the employees trust them with their problems and believe in their leadership. A good charismatic leader is expected to develop their employees by correcting them in a right and legal way whenever they do wrong. The leader should also appreciate and reward them whenever they produce outstanding results.

The employees can be motivated and appreciated by the leader especially when the leader organizes a party for them to celebrate the victory or by taking them on a trip or giving them gifts. Another characteristic of a charismatic leader is that they are expected to be available all the time. They should always be on the front stage to lead and guide the people, and through that they can get fame and properly get more followers especially if the company is successful. The following are some of the advantages (pros) of a charismatic leader: Most of charismatic leaders are able to transform people by getting them to understand their visions and goals. Through the use of kind, emotional speech and simple stories, most people become encouraged and begin to develop a spirit of hard work. This makes the organization and the employees to be successful. Charismatic leaders promote unity among the people by joining them together to share ideas.

They promote unity also through working together and creating conducive environment to work in. When there is unexpected change in business which might affect the positions of the employees, a charismatic leader ensures that there is peace by promising to solve the situation as fast as possible. In situations where there is nothing that can be done to change the situation, it is the responsibility of the leader to motivate the employees so that they learn to live with the change.

Charismatic leaders have the ability to recognize a gap that exists within an organization. This will enable the leader to create a vision of the future for the organization that will basically benefit everyone. This will make the employees to see themselves in the future vision by supporting the goal. A charismatic leader makes the workers feel appreciated and this inspires

them to work harder towards achieving the company's vision thus they become more successful than they ever imagined (Usser, 1987). A charismatic leader can also be so dangerous in a company especially when they are self centered. In a situation that they may want personal satisfaction, they are able to use their abilities and power to acquire anything desirable to them as people tend to believe so much in them. They can contaminate the minds of the people with wrong information and get them to believe him because of his abilities to convince people when he addresses them.

Some of these leaders tend not to be affected by any kind of critics from anybody and thus will not accept any mistake they have done even if it is risking the company's existence. Nobody can challenge them as they believe they are perfect and can easily sway the employees by making them believe in him. A charismatic leader can also exercise poor delegation. This is due to the way he had trained the followers to be obedient and to always accept his views and proposals.

A charismatic leader can also have some bad sides such as; most of them achieve their goals through performing some personal and spiritual rites. These kinds of rites tend to diminish the integrity of their family members. This makes them to be less concerned with their family by dedicating more time at work in trying to achieve success. This always ruins their relationship with the family. When a charismatic leader finally resigns from work, to find a successor who will be so dedicated to the job will be impossible. There must be a big change brought into the company when the leader resigns. A charismatic leader can also frustrate workers by assigning them more work

with an intention of trying to achieve his vision. The workers are not in a position to complain as they believe that they will be successful by working hard (Tomas, 2003).

Some famous charismatic leaders are John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Charles Manson. John F. Kennedy's eloquent voice, wit, vigor and youthful charm endeared him to others.

He is considered one of America's most charismatic and popular presidents. He was able to enlist and arouse political activism among the young. Martin Luther King possessed self-confidence and self-assurance. He believed in his vision and was able to influence others to follow and fight for his vision they fundamentally believed in. Both of these charismatic leaders worked toward building a better society. On the other side of being a charismatic leader is Charles Manson. He used drugs, physical and psychological abuse to manipulate his followers to commit murders and crimes.

Manson had a way of speaking to people that made them feel at ease and susceptible to his crazy ideas. He attracted followers that were "lost" and looking for someone to take control of their lives. Charles Manson and several of his "family" are still serving life in prison for crimes they committed.

In brief summary, charismatic leadership can be a forceful leadership style that can be used to improve societies and organizations or it can also be used for detrimental purposes. Followers of charismatic leaders often follow their leaders blindly because the leader is so secure in his beliefs that whatever the leader says or does is accepted by all without comment or

thought. As spoken by Bass in 1985 he states that, “ Charisma is in the eye of the beholder and, therefore, is relative to the beholder. Nevertheless, the charismatic leader actively shapes and enlarges his or her audience through energy, self-confidence, assertiveness, ambition, and opportunities seized. ”

References: Laurie, T. (2005). Charismatic Cultures. Thinking Allowed.

New York: Wiley and Sons Inc. Adair-Toteff, C. (2000). Max Weber’s Charisma. Journal of Classical Sociology. Usser, S. (1987).

Determination of positive & negative charismatic leadership. Grantham: PA: Messiah College. Tomas, K. (2003). Understanding the Human Mind. London: McGraw Hill Publishers.

.