

Leadership approach



Leadership Approach Paper Ruben Vasquez University of Phoenix LDR/531
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2012 Leadership Approach Paper Overview The trait model of leadership is
based on the characteristics of many leaders - both successful and
unsuccessful - and is used to predict leadership effectiveness. The resulting
lists of traits are then compared to those of potential leaders to assess their
likelihood of success or failure.

Scholars taking the trait approach attempted to identify physiological
(appearance, height, and weight), demographic (age, education and
socioeconomic background), personality, self-confidence, and
aggressiveness), intellective (intelligence, decisiveness, judgment, and
knowledge), task-related (achievement drive, initiative, and persistence),
and social characteristics (sociability and cooperativeness) with leader
emergence and leader effectiveness. Among the core traits identified are:
Achievement drive: High level of effort, high levels of ambition, energy and
initiative • Leadership motivation: an intense desire to lead others to reach
shared goals • Honesty and integrity: trustworthy, reliable, and open • Self-
confidence: Belief in one's self, ideas, and ability • Cognitive ability: Capable
of exercising good judgment, strong analytical abilities, and conceptually
skilled • Knowledge of business: Knowledge of industry and other technical
matters • Emotional Maturity: well adjusted, does not suffer from severe
psychological disorders. Others: charisma, creativity and flexibility
Strengths/Advantages of Trait Theory • It is naturally pleasing theory. • It is
valid, as lot of research has validated the foundation and basis of the theory.
• It serves as a yardstick against which the leadership traits of an individual

can be assessed. • It gives a detailed knowledge and understanding of the leader element in the leadership process. Limitations / Weakness of The Trait Theory Leadership Approach Paper • There is bound to be some subjective judgment in determining who is regarded as a ‘ good’ or ‘ successful’ leader. The list of possible traits tends to be very long. More than 100 different traits of successful leaders in various leadership positions have been identified. These descriptions are simply generalities. • There is also a disagreement over which traits are the most important for an effective leader • The model attempts to relate physical traits such as, height and weight, to effective leadership. Most of these factors relate to situational factors. For example, a minimum weight and height might be necessary to perform the tasks efficiently in a military leadership position.

In business organizations, these are not the requirements to be an effective leader. • The theory is very complex Conclusion The traits approach gives rise to questions: whether leaders are born or made; and whether leadership is an art or science. The organizational level of analysis describes leadership as a process that occurs in a larger “ open system” in which groups are subsystems (Fleishman et al. , 1991; Katz & Kahn, 1978; Mumford, 1986). However, these are not mutually exclusive alternatives. Leadership may be something of an art; it still requires the application of special skills and techniques. Leadership is “ the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization. ” (House et al. , 1999, pg. 184). Even if there are certain inborn qualities that make one a good leader, these natural talents need encouragement and development. A person is not born with self-confidence.

Self-confidence is developed; honesty and integrity are a matter of personal choice, motivation to lead comes from within the individual, and the knowledge of business can be acquired. While cognitive ability has its origin partly in genes; it still needs to be developed. None of these ingredients are acquired overnight. References Karmel, B. (1978). Leadership: A challenge to traditional research methods and assumptions. *Academy of Management Review*, 3, 475–482. Aladwani, A. M. (2001). Change management strategies for successful ERP implementation. *Business Process Management Journal*, 7(3), 266 – 275. Yongbeom Kim, Zoonky Lee, Sanjay Gosain, (2005) "Impediments to successful ERP implementation process", *Business Process Management Journal*, 11 (2), 158 – 170.