

# Strategic leadership of sheikh zayed bin sultan



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Leadership is an internal power of convincing people and the world knows many of leaders. But only extraordinary leader with a strong belief could be able to create a miracle transforming a desert into a modern state which is a real pride of the world now. This leader is Sheix Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan who was the principal architect of United Arab Emirates and the president of UAE for over 30 years. He was considered one of the wealthiest men in the world but he used to live a relatively humble and traditional lifestyle.

The key success of his leadership was wisdom. According to Aristotle, people have a purpose and they try to fulfill it. According to Amartya Sen, people desire freedom of choice. According to Sheix Zayed a human being can reach results through hard work, generosity and strong belief to God.

Sheix Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan was born in around 1918 in Abu Dhabi. He received only basic education of Islam in the emirate and then after his return from abroad, he told about his visits that motivated him to start a project which would give a possibility to the people to enjoy good living in their own country by utilizing the possible discovery of oil.

Sheix Zayed was an effective leader who catalyzed a vigorous pursuit of a clear vision and the biggest guarantee of his effectiveness was the country during his governance. His success became the success of the country which was a transformation of the vision into a reality that the whole world enjoys now.

Sheix Zayed was a highly capable individual as he made productive contributions through his strong belief and hard work. As a president of the UAE, he showed his negotiating abilities by building consensus both

internally and externally in order to gain support for creating the new state. As a strong charismatic individualist and a real leader, he could convince others with the idea of building a new state in a desert and encouraged the people to express their opinions, to put all together in order to extract from them a single point of view. This was Sheix Zayed who unified seven tribal and made his productive contribution to build democracy in the country.

Sheix Zayed has gained the respect and the love of the people due to his unique leadership style of wisdom. He has adopted important principles of far-sightedness for Islamic nations and could earn international recognition as well. His charisma helped him to create a policy to maintain close relationship with the people.

Sheix Zayed was a man of religion and his leadership style was based on a philosophy according to which everything in this life depends on God's will. As a real Muslim, he was inspired by Quran and realized that it is not just a simple book of religion but it is a system of discipline for all facts of life including economic, social, political and moral principles.

As a generous leader Sheix Zayed honestly utilized oil resources which he considered as a gift of Allah in the best interests of his people being deeply concerned by the poor social and economic situation of the country. He was concerned by the well-being of every individual citizen stating that all those resources belong to the people who could catch up with the procession civilization. That was his clearly defined vision and the way of governance which ensured progress.

Sheikh Zayed is considered to be one of the wise leaders of the history. Making wise utilization of the oil revenues that had begun to flow only several years ago, Sheikh Zayed made enormous plans of development focusing on the creation of the infrastructure initially and on the needs of all the emirates. Then he built a federation which was a lesson from history over ages and became a unifying force for his success. The federation was his objective to provide his country with a good standard of living and to build a modern state as he considered that unity was a tool for attaining the well-being of the people and to provide generations with a better living. The result of the federation was transformation of the UAE and the lifestyle of its people which was just a dream before. Sheikh Zayed's vision was to see the UAE as a developed country, however all the accomplishments were beyond his imagination. It was due to his strategic leadership and ability to utilize natural resources.

Sheikh Zayed's style of leadership was characterized by his personality as a leader and his belief in the principle of "Shura," which is an Islamic value according to which he who does not obey Allah is the loser. This helped him to create a strategic leadership which was based on promoting ethical, religious and responsible practices. He felt everyone in should a full member of the society with a full right of expressing his opinion. He strengthened the religious principle within the people in order to spread justice, generosity and strong belief.

The clear stated vision of Sheikh Zayed could build winning competencies in the world in every field starting from the educational sector and ending with the supply chain management. The UAE today attracts everyone and finds

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ways for developing and retaining the best talents of the world in terms of contribution. And the result of the motivation of the best human ideas is that the highest buildings, the biggest airport, the most luxurious hotels of the world are situated in the UAE.

Sheix Zayed succeeded in combining leadership with management; as an inspiration-oriented and effectiveness-oriented leader, he could not only set the directions for his country and people and open up options for the future, but as an efficiency-oriented and control-oriented manager, he could stay on course with his people involving himself in project implementation process and sustain the present for his country. This way he could maintain a helicopter view combining effectiveness and efficiency; on the one hand, he was sure of the realization of his vision to build a new and modern state and he was fully convinced that he made a right decision. On the other hand, he used all the useful information from the history and the holy Quran adding his own and other ideas and struggled for fulfilling his main goal of transforming the desert into a modern country. In result, he succeeded in the implementation of his project due to clever utilization of the natural resources and the good strategic leadership and management of stabilizing the budget created by Sheix Zayed. He was an intelligent leader and he proved that the intelligence is not only in the academic degrees and prestigious universities, but it is just an internal willingness to be an intelligent. Sheix Zayed grew up with Bedouin traditions, but he reached to the wise style of leadership through knowing others" experiences, reading the holy Quran and mastering the lessons of history.

Sheix Zayed was an authentic leader. Moreover, he managed to establish his authenticity through getting to know his origins better by getting honest feedback. He always remembered his origin and the hard times he passed in a poor and undeveloped country. He was always ready to meet with the people all over the Emirates and to listen to their ideas and to discuss important issues with them. He improved his steps by getting to know others better by building a rich picture of his environment and removing barriers between himself and others. He chose a style of leadership which allowed the people to be involved in the decision making process as well as set priorities and delegate certain tasks being well informed about the objective of the leader. He involved the people in the sharing of national responsibilities stating that they all had the same goal to achieve justice and right in a developed country with unified society. He strengthened the belief in Islam which was the teacher of the responsibility of governance and called the people for hard work. He advised them not to follow a routine way to work but to maintain close contact with ordinary people whom they serve. He believed that the people are the main motive for development. His focus was on the educational sector believing that human resources are the real wealth of the country and then on the conservation of the environment and using the natural resources of the country. He found the way to preserve them for the future generations. It was in the result of people involvement in the implementation of the projects that Sheix Zayed realized that the harsh climate threatened the land with desertification and the agriculture was not practical in such conditions. And in a very short of time he could transform the desert into green areas with millions of palm trees and fruit trees. And he

succeeded in achieving those unbelievable results while constructing new towns and villages in the sands.

Enjoying the natural resources in his country, Sheix Zayed behaved as a great humanist and generous leader in his decisions to make contribution of moral and political support and financial aid to other countries with the aim of bringing stable situation and organizing charity programs. This approach has characterized the style of leadership of Sheix Zayed and remained essential to his role as a leader providing the basis of the way in which he managed to bring progress to his country.

The strategy of Sheix Zayed had a performance culture in terms of providing clear, challenging goals. Sheix Zayed was born in Al Nahyan family that emerged as leaders of the emirate which was poor and undeveloped. At that time the economy of the emirate was based on agriculture and fishing and the education was generally confined to lessons in reading and writing along with instruction in Islam. Camels and boats were the means of transportation in the emirate and the survival itself there was a major concern. But the basic education was not sufficient for Sheix Zayed, because he displayed a huge interest for knowledge and curiosity for knowing about the way of life of other people and the environment in which they lived. He had a vision according to which everyone should freely express his ideas and viewpoints without difficulties. That would allow the one to know about other" problems and perceive their views properly in order to be able to help and improve their situation. He was a transformational leader with a new vision which led to extraordinary performance in future. As a transformational leader, he was engaged in inspirational motivation led by his vision which later made others

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follow him. His passion and vision of living in a modern state as well as his drive to make the Emirates one nation gave him a power to start that revolution. As a hard working leader, he had the ability to challenge the status-quo; the reason of living in desert has historical roots, because he was born in this poor part of the world, but he thought that it made no sense any more, because it was possible to create better conditions for the people.

Sheix Zayed lived very hard life and that's why he realized that taking the responsibility of future generations was a serious task that needed a strong type of leader. He devoted great efforts to building the state and nation and could earn the respect of the population for his wisdom, generosity and his achievements in building a prosperous economy. His wisdom, strong belief in diplomacy and generous assistance to developing countries made him respectful in the world. His life and achievements were characterized by his deep religious faith, his vision, his determination and hard work, his generosity and the way in which he devoted his life to the service of his people. Using the country's enormous oil revenues, Sheix Zayed built up institutions such as hospitals, schools and universities and made it possible for UAE citizens to enjoy free access to them. After his death, his son continues his honest work to improve the country and the standard of living of the UAE citizens.