Contemporary leader

Contemporary Leader MGT 274 Dr. Gerald G. GeRue Assignment: Contemporary Leader Paper March 5, 2013 In this paper the chosen leader is Bill Gates. Bill Gates is an entrepreneur that co-founded Microsoft. Microsoft is the world's largest software business. (Gates-web) Born in Seattle, Washington on October 28, 1955 Bill Gates showed interest in computer programming at the age of 13. Now Bill Gates is one of the richest men in the world. In this paper the traits and characteristics of Bill Gates will be discussed. This paper will also show how Bill Gates has impacted society through his practice of leadership along with his leadership style and philosophy. As well as how Bill Gates integrates his relationships in a leadership role through the foundation that was formed by Mr. and Mrs. Gates. The paper will then go on to describe how Bill Gates considers the three types of leadership skills. Concluding with Bill Gates vision and how Bill Gates has implemented his vision. Some of the traits and characteristics of Bill Gates include being intelligent, scoring 1590 out of 1600 on his college SAT, a risk taker in his junior year of college at Harvard University Gates dropped out to pursue his interests in forming Microsoft with his friend and colleague Paul Allen. Bill Gates is also a visionary; at the age of 13 Gates started working on computer programs and by high school Gates at the age of 15 and Allen who was 17 received $20, 000 for developing the Traf-o-Data program that monitored traffic patterns. Gates is also a passionate and innovated person. In 1977 Gates and Allen released a language for microcomputers called Fortran. By 1978, Gates and Allen introduced COBOL, which is around the time that Microsoft emerged as a leader grossing around $2. 5 million dollars in sales. (Gates-Web) By 1983 Microsoft went global with

offices in Japan and Great Britain. Gates is also a compassionate man along with his wife, Melinda developing the William H. Gates Foundation in 1994. The foundation was built to support education, world health and investment in low income communities. Bill Gates is a man that believes in asking questions. Gates has stated in several articles that the best way to learn is to continuously ask questions. The best way Bill Gates shows how his leadership has impacted society is in the mere number of people that have been impacted by Microsoft. Just about every computer nowadays has Microsoft as operating system software. Gates also shows his leadership impact through the philanthropic efforts Bill and Melinda have made through the Gates Foundation. Bill Gates has a numerous amount of accolades to also support his success. Some of his accolades include being on Forbes Magazine's World's Richest People list from 1995-2007, in 1999 Gates was on the Sunday Times Power List and Gates was knighted the Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II for his contribution to the economy in Great Britain in 2005. From 2004-2006 Bill Gates was named by Time Magazine as one of the 100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century. Bill Gates has also received doctorates from both Harvard and The Royal Institute of Technology. In Mexico, Bill and his wife, Melinda has also received the award of Order of the Aztec Eagle. In comparison to our textbook, Gates is definitely a theory X leader because Gates generally believes that people need to be directed and controlled and that people want security from their jobs. Like the theory X attributes Gates' leadership style is best described as autocratic with a delegate style. Gates is a man that pays attention to detail and likes to have control over decisions

regarding whatever business venture that is entered. Gates delegated style shows through in the hiring process that is used. Gates believes in hiring the best talent Microsoft could by having the human resource department look for the talent, knowing that talented programmers would not be looking for employment. Gates wanted to be surrounded by the best programmers that could be found. As our textbook states an " authoritarian leader needs to control subordinates and what they do (Northouse 53). " Bill Gates does need to have that control over the people that work at Microsoft and at the Gates Foundation. Gates uses his control in the form of power in the position Gates has at Microsoft although gates does not threaten employees but asks employees to legitimately work within the scope of their job. Gates rewards his employees well when a goal is accomplished. Gates philosophy for business is simple; hard work, passion and give back. Gates believes that years of hard work precede success. Gates worked with programming and computers for years before starting Microsoft. Starting a business was not just a whim for Gates. Gates also believes that everyone should follow their passion and then make money doing it. Gates believes money will find you naturally if you are doing whatever your passion is. Giving back is something Bill Gates believes defines your character. The attitude one has on giving back determines whether they are a person of success or a person of significance. Bill and his wife, Melinda both show how they integrate relationships through leadership in the Gates Foundation. After starting the William H Gates foundation in 1994, Bill and Melinda in 2000, decided to combine several family charities to form the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This is also the time that Bill decided it was time to step down

from the day to day operations at Microsoft and focus his energy on the Foundation. On June 27, 2008, Bill Gates worked his last day at Microsoft. As a relationship-oriented person Gates finds more meaning in being a civic leader at the Foundation than in doing the day to day leading at Microsoft. In comparison to our textbook relationship-oriented style of leadership is a " person [who] finds meaning in being rather than in doing (Northouse, 71). " Bill Gates does have a consideration behavior which is shown by how Gates builds camaraderie, respect and trust with his employees and the staff that works at the Foundation. Bill Gates has a real concern for people within any organization that is affiliated with the Gates name. Bill treats others with dignity and respect, building relationships that help people to get along and encourages others to help all people wherever help is needed. The three types of leadership skills our textbook refers to are administrative, interpersonal and conceptual. Administrative skills include showing technical competence, managing resources and managing people. All of these skills Bill Gates have shown in his work at Microsoft and at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Bill Gates definitely has the technical competency for the administrative skills. Managing resources, as stated in the article Can we Teach Entrepreneurship? Mullins states that entrepreneurship begins with the pursuit of opportunity (Mullins 14). Successful entrepreneurs scrutinize the opportunity themselves first before seeking outside resources. Managing people is another administrative skill which Gates showed at a very early stage in life when he grew Microsoft so quickly in its first year. The Interpersonal skills are being socially perceptive, showing emotional intelligence and managing interpersonal conflict. Gates displays his

perception by seeing the need for personal computers to be owned by everyone and making that vision possible through Microsoft. When Gates stepped down from his day to day position at Microsoft Bill showed the emotional intelligence of following his passion, which had shifted to the Foundation more than Microsoft. This process also shows the interpersonal conflict Bill displays as well. It certainly could not have been an easy decision to step away from a business Bill grew from birth to a multimillion dollar business. The conceptual skills include creating visions, strategic planning and problem solving. These are all skills that any entrepreneur will have. Without the vision of creating computers easier for the lay person Microsoft would never have been formed. The strategic planning and problem solving that comes with starting a business and following a concept from birth to implementation has to be strategically planned. Bill Gates solved problems from not having the resources to not having people believe in what Microsoft was doing. Not to mention the problems that Bill faced in stepping down from Microsoft to head the Foundation. By starting the Foundation with a donation larger than the WHO Bill Gates realized they had to find out what challenges needed the most attention. In 2003 the first of 14 grand challenges were launched. The challenges came from a consensus of investigators all over the world. That is a great conceptual skill. The vision, the mental model of a future state that Bill Gates had was that every computer would someday have Microsoft on it on their desk. Gates' vision started " in 1975, [when] he dropped out of Harvard to co-found Microsoft based on the belief that every desktop would one day have a PC on it. " Gates also wanted those machines to have Microsoft running as the

software, which today is a reality. The status quo for people all over the world has changed due to Microsoft and Bill Gates. The value that Bill Gates has established for everyone is affordable software that makes computers more affordable and available to the majority. Having computers affordable and available for everyone has also expanded communications that normally would not have been there via the PC and the internet. Bill Gates is an excellent contemporary leader not just for the intelligence and vision that Bill had with starting Microsoft but also with the actions that were taken to see the vision through. Dropping out of Harvard when scoring 1590 out of 1600 would be a very hard interpersonal conflict anyone would face. Not knowing for sure if your vision will become a reality. Having confidence in yourself, to go for an opportunity such as Bill Gates had in Microsoft shows a true visionary at heart. May we all have that kind of leadership to provide a world with a better way of life.

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