

Contrast leadership and power

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



Contrast Leadership and Power Introduction Leadership and power are closely intertwined but not synonymous. The purpose of this paper is to contrast the inextricable two. Power can be defined as the ability to influence and affect the behaviors of others to get the results that the powerful want. This can be through threats, inducement or attraction as it is based on the ability of the powerful to give or deny the much valued resources to those deemed powerless. The powerful may and may not be in leadership positions but effective leaders have some power. (Nye, 2 and Ciulla, et al, 284)

When a powerful person rewards or pays the cooperative followers, he/she encourages goal-directed behavior and when such rewards are withdrawn or threats and intimidations are issued, the unwanted behaviors are discouraged while the desirable ones are encouraged. (Nye, 2-3) The powerful are influential over their powerless dependants and the greater the follower's dependency, the greater the power of the powerful. Dependency rises with the rise of the scarcity, importance and the non-substitutability of the resources that the powerful controls. In contrast, leadership is mutual and aims at everyone's autonomy as opposed to dependency. (Prentice Hall inc, 2-5)

Leadership can be defined as the ability to influence and motivate followers towards achievement of a common goal or purpose. Leaders are people of integrity, visions and charisma – they inspire and not coerce. Unlike power that operates from being in control over valued resources, leadership motivates without necessarily being in control of resources. Leadership is set on a common goal and requires the compatibility of the goal with the followers for common good. Power on the other hand is a means of achieving

personal goals and requires the followers to be dependent thus to work in compliance with their leaders. Power is therefore egocentric while leadership is exercised to the benefit of all. A leader puts others first before self while the vice versa is true with the powerful (Prentice Hall inc, 5 and Ciulla, et al, 285)

Leadership influences intrinsically as opposed to power that is used to attain lateral and extrinsic influence. Power uses rewards and punishment which makes followers feel that their behavior is externally demanded i. e. extrinsic motivation. When such rewards are absent, the powerful loses control and direction of behavior. This is contrary to leadership that transforms the feelings and thoughts persuasively and intrinsically devoid of rewards, promises or threats and intimidations. Hence, success in leadership is not dependent on carrots and sticks as is the case of power. (Ciulla, et al, 286)

Whereas the powerful may not be impressive on their followers and/or observers, leaders are revered as persons of status who command respect. It is by venturing on people's intrinsic motivation that transformative leaders gain admiration and esteem which do not go along with power. Leadership, as an opportunity to better the lives of others, aims at brooding new leaders who will take up leadership positions after the incumbent. In contrast, power aims at retaining that control and influence whilst unmindful of others and unwilling to relinquish. (Ciulla, et al, 286)

Conclusion

Apparently, though closely tied up, power and leadership are two distinct entities. However it is anomalous to talk of leadership without power thus the need to harness the two.

Works Cited

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