

# Evolution of leadership



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## An Evolution of Leadership

In order to thrive in the realm of leadership, companies and individual departments have started to recognize that leadership must be adaptable, continuous, and be able to play various roles to create synergy in the work place. Quantum leadership and the path-goal leadership theory are discussed in this paper, as well as, the benefits and limitations of both theories in an organizational environment. A real workplace scenario is presented with a discussion of the type of conflict presented, in addition to, strategies that could be used in addressing the issue at hand.

## Quantum Leadership

Quantum leadership is chaotic and is based on principles of physics and constant change and transformation. It is always changing and evolving. Therefore, the leader's role is focused on understanding the intricacy of the change and then transforming it into a way that can be understood by those it affects (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). By evaluating a change and anticipating change, a quantum leader can project to see where the change is going (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). The theory focuses on adaptation, integration, interaction, and prediction (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). Quantum leadership is not based on a hierarchy. It views an organization and its members as interrelated team members that is better served through collaboration (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). Quantum leadership emphasizes the importance of the relationships between individuals in the organization rather than focusing on solely the individual. Leaders and the

people they lead have to be comfortable with ambiguity and the challenges brought forth by continuous change (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009).

Quantum leaders must be vulnerable and open to different realities but also be aware of their limitations (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009).

Quantum leadership also embraces values for individuals and groups within the organization. There is an emotional investment that is important because it provides a perspective of ownership and integrity and should be visible because values stand out by a person's actions every day (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). Also, shared basic underlying assumptions in quantum leadership define the invisible culture and determine what makes the organization function every day (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). Yet, these are basic and highly influential in a group's behavior. This often goes overlooked until someone oversteps on one and then it usually comes out as frustration expressed by a team member that identifies the violation (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). The artifacts in the culture address the things someone first comes into contact with an organization and therefore it is easy to see what one encounters but it is hard to decipher the true meaning of the culture (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). Another assumption includes beliefs and values including the goals, identified goals and spoken values (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). These assumptions can be driven by groups or by individuals who have influence inside the institute. However, it can be challenging to make these underlying assumptions visible and used to add value.

Quantum leadership focuses on the process and embraces that it is indefinite and limitless and does not place emphasis solely on the results and

how one gets there. Quantum leadership embraces finding potential. It is not always controllable or predictable and that is a good thing because a leader should become worried once everything becomes predictable (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). Quantum leadership lets go of control and opens up the opportunity for various leadership styles to emerge to align the motivation between team members (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). It emphasizes collaboration between members and building upon others strengths but knowing their weaknesses and limitations. Quantum leadership instills meaning into leadership but it does have its own action plans. The action plans within the organization, however, do focus on accomplishing goals appropriately and meaningfully (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009). The group must have good communication and interaction within the organization to accelerate success which can be aligned by the leader. The individual's interest in the organization is also taken into account (Malloch & Porter O'Grady, 2009).

### Path-Goal Theory

The path-goal theory is based on identifying a leader's motivation or style that best suits the employee to facilitate goal achievement. This theory focuses on three main aspects of leadership which include the leader, the subordinate or the secondary, and the environment (Alanazi & Rasli, 2013). The characteristics of the subordinate include their own perception of their abilities and control and leaders can adapt to this perception by approaching the leadership from different angles based on their understanding.

Characteristics of the environment focus on the structure of the task and the work group. This behavior enables the employee to become empowered, it

increases their motivation, and improves employee satisfaction which assists the employee in being a productive member of the institute (Wofford & Liska, 1993).

A main concept of the path-goal theory is that the leaders will make rewards available in order to motivate their subordinates (Wofford & Liska, 1993).

These rewards can be adaptable and dependent on the situation at hand which makes the leader vulnerable to opening up to acclimation. In this theory, various different styles of leadership are used for different situations. There are four original types of leadership behaviors in the path-goal theory which include directive, supportive, participative, and achievement oriented. In directive leadership, the leader is specific and gives directions to the followers about what needs to be done and includes details on how it should be done, the expectations, and when it needs to be done (Alanazi & Rasli, 2013). The leader will still provide guidance along the way. This style of leadership can be used when dealing with a complex or unstructured task of if the subordinate is inexperienced (Alanazi & Rasli, 2013).

The second leadership behavior is supportive leadership. In this style, the needs and well-being of the subordinate is taken into consideration, as well as, creating an approachable work environment (Alanazi & Rasli, 2013). This is a larger focus than completing the task at hand. This style may be used when the task is boring or puts the subordinate at risk for physical or psychological distress. The third style of leader behavior is participative. In this style, the subordinates are consulted in the process and those ideas can be used when making decisions (Alanazi & Rasli, 2013). The subordinate's opinion is highly respected in this style and often this can be used when the

subordinates are the experts of the content matter. The fourth style of leader behavior is the achievement oriented leader. In this behavior, high expectations are set for the subordinates and challenging goals are set. A high level of performance is expected from the subordinates is expected while the leader instills confidence in their abilities (Wofford & Liska, 1993).

The path-goal theory is flexible in that the leader adapts to the subordinate, taking into consideration the environment and task at hand. This situational framework is strength for understanding how various leader behaviors affect the efficiency and satisfaction of the workers. It also incorporates motivation principles of the expectancy theory (Alanazi & Rasli, 2013). However, it can also be complex to try to integrate many different aspects of leadership.

#### Comparing Quantum Leadership and Path-Goal Theory

One major difference between quantum leadership and the Path-Goal theory is control. The quantum leader is about aligning motivation between team members and is open to different views on a subject. The path-goal theory focuses on discovering the best behaviors for subordinates and attempts to control subordinates behavior with incentives. Also, the path-goal theory refers to subordinates indicating a hierarchal system where the quantum leader focuses on horizontal communication (). Yet, a similarity is that the leader in the path-goal theory works to facilitate task achievement for the followers and in quantum leadership the leader is focusing on aligning motivation between other team members which results in task achievement. However, quantum leadership is always continuously evolving and is a

process, whereas in the path-goal theory there is a specific goal and expectancies on how to get from point a to b.

### Conflict Scenario

In 2010, I started working as a radiographer at Nationwide Children's hospital. Before starting my new position, I had worked as a student assistant in the radiology department and I was now a peer to those who had been over me. While running images for a fellow co-worker, I noticed she would withhold images to "run" them herself. As I observed my co-worker and her method, I noticed she was deleting images when there was likely potential for motion. One day, an image was deleted after the wrong radiograph had been taken. A forearm was taken instead of an elbow and the forearm radiograph was deleted. After the elbow came back negative, the physician ordered a forearm and therefore the patient was exposed twice for the same picture unnecessarily. I found this odd, since in every other aspect my co-worker upheld patient safety and often advocated for it. The reject image rate which is calculated for patient safety is based off the images rejected in the computer system. Since there were images not being accounted for, an inaccurate portrayal of data occurred. When my co-worker was confronted, she stated that the information from those images was not beneficial for the department and claimed she was unaware that it held any wrongdoing.

In my opinion, this is a data-based conflict due to the lack of information and limited access to information. There is some value based conflict components presented in the scenario but the big picture is that data is not

being collected and therefore it is affecting patient safety. Since that information would be extremely important for the effectiveness of the department and patient safety, certain measures or in-services were not being implemented based upon false information. The clinical work suffers as a result of not acquiring the appropriate information (54). The information and how it is generated, as well as, how it is distributed and the importance of it all have an impact on the effectiveness of the organization, as well as, its integrity (55). As a quantum leader in this situation, one would need to ensure that proper processes and generation of information are set in place and appropriately structured within the organization.

To address the issue presented in the scenario, as a quantum leader I would want to get a basic understanding of the issues at hand and hear from the co-worker their issue with the process put into play, ask her to clarify her reasoning for why the information is not beneficial to the department, and what her feelings are on the issue. I would want to know if she has fear about running images that have " mistakes" on them and why. I would bring up patient safety with the co-worker for common ground. I would discuss with the co-worker how I praise her advocacy of patient safety in all other aspects and ask her to reflect on the situation to determine if there were patient safety issues involved.

Also, this conversation would need to be done in a safe place so she felt open to discussing the conflict at hand. Throughout the conversation, I would discuss expectations for patient safety and assure the co-worker that the data collection system put in place is for the patient safety and for the employees. That information is not used to get employees into trouble, but



to help determine in a non-blame way, what could be done in the future to prevent unnecessary exposures to patients. Agreements would need to be made on the process of data collection and a plan to follow-up on the agreement action ().

## References

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