

The return of michael dell



The Return of Michael Dell

The e-business environment is constantly changing and creating opportunities and challenges for business firms, so that the successful firms are those with effective leaders. No absolute leadership style works for all business firms but it is imperative that leaders exude traits and behavior that align with the needs of the specific business context.

Flexibility to change is the core quality that successful business firms should develop to succeed in the e-business environment and this is where entrepreneurial leaders such as Michael Dell come in. Having a vision is one quality of a good entrepreneurial leader. This means that the leader has a picture of the long-term direction and outcomes of the firm together with the factors that needs to be done to accomplish these goals.

Vision, which finds expression in the ability to evolve continuously, not only to respond to but also to create demand, determines success in the e-business environment. Zeal or energy constitutes another important quality of effective leaders in the e-business environment in order to exercise influence in creating change. The e-business process demands flexibility and innovativeness so that business organizations need to develop a corporate culture of change. A zealous leader is able to create a wave of change across the organization.

Michael Dell has these qualities, which also explains his return as CEO of the company with the expectation of changes in the company following the fall of Dell Computers to second place from its previous top spot in global computer sales. Dell Computers needs a revamp and Michael Dell is just the

person for the job who can introduce his new vision of the company following changes in the competitive environment and developments in business processes, as well as exert his iconic zeal to inspire or motivate managers and employees towards change.

In this sense, Michael Dell is a charismatic leader. (' The Return' 2007)

Steve Jobs, the co-founder of Apple Inc. is another entrepreneurial leader of a company operating in the e-business environment. His leadership style is personality-driven or people-oriented (Young 2005) because of his belief in the importance of focusing on the continuous flow of good ideas. To achieve this, he selects people able to contribute good ideas to drive innovation of its products and services, for the company to become a leading player in the e-business environment.

There are differences and similarities between Michael Dell and Steve Jobs. Both Dell and Jobs exercise strong influence in the organization, Jobs is more focused on establishing relationships with people comprising Apple Inc. by exercising a hands on and personal approach to leadership while Dell focuses on leadership by example without necessarily establishing close personal relations with personnel.

Bill Gates, the co-founder of Microsoft is another entrepreneurial leader of a software firm adopting the e-business framework. He exercises a function-oriented leadership style because of his stringent goal of continuous innovations. Tasks are assigned and outcomes are monitored meticulously giving Microsoft a very technical form of operation.

Precision and outcome-orientation sustains the company.

Gates' leadership style is very different from that of Dell and Jobs. Gates exercises a very formal style of leadership when compared to the informal leadership of Dell and the more formal leadership attitude of Jobs.

Although these leaders exhibit different leadership styles, they are key figures expected to sustain their respective companies through their leadership.

References

The Meaning of Bill Gates, 2008. The Economist. Available from

[http://www.economist.](http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11622119)

[com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11622119](http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=11622119) [29 August 2008]

The Return of Michael Dell, 2007. Better Investing, 56 (8): p. 26-27.

Young, J., 2005. Icon Steve Jobs: The greatest second act in the history of business. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc.