

# Leadership assignment



January 2014 This assignment is in two sections. In the first section I will critically analyse and reflect on how I have contributed to leadership within my organization. I will discuss and provide examples of personal leadership capabilities and analyse my personal strengths and weaknesses as identified by a self-analysis emotional intelligence tool. In the second section I will critically analyse the various approaches to leadership and leadership styles adopted within my organization.

To support my analysis I will be using the work of various researchers and authors including Mullion's (2013) work on Management and Organizational Behavior; Harrier and Diction's (2004) Skilled Interpersonal Communication and Earner and Adam-Smith (2005) Managing and Leading People The ADS is a tri-service organization that employs over 1000 personnel from the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and civil service who are trained Dentists, Hygienists, Technicians and Dental Nurses providing dental treatment to service personnel.

The ADS headquarters are located at Defense Medical Services Each regional headquarters is led by a Principal Dental Officer (POD) who is commissioned officer in the rank of Colonel and is effectively the Commanding Officer and has authority over all military and civilian dental staff employed by the ADS in his region of responsibility. For the purpose of this paper I will be writing about my previous position as the Regional Headquarters Warrant Officer (ARQ WOO) in the Regional Headquarters Defense Dental Services Northern England (ARQ ADS EN).

ADS EN region comprises of 20 Dental Centers with a patient population of approximately 22, 000 service personnel. Its mission directed from WHQL ADS is “ to deliver effective military oral healthcare and health advice in order to maximize the fighting power of the Armed Forces”. This is an immense task pursued by 125 employees, which form the multidisciplinary dental teams established within the facilities throughout the ADS EN region.

My role as the ARQ WOO within the region was to provide administrative support to the POD for the provision of primary dental care and dental health, maintaining close liaisons with Dental Centers to ensure practices ran to maximum efficiency to achieve the Key Performance Indicators (KIP) of dental fitness outputs set as part of the Army strategic medical plan. Alongside ensuring dental fitness outputs were achieved and maintained I was also responsible for the professional and personal development including mandatory training of all personnel within the region.

ARQ ADS EN is a small management team that comprises of a POD, ARQ WOO, Sergeant and 2 civilian administration assistants, when I joined the team the POD and Sergeant had only been in post for 2 months and my position had been vacant for 3 months. After 2 weeks in post I carried out a regional governance inspection, this inspection was carried out using the ADS common assurance framework. The analysis of the report showed an unsatisfactory red grading due to the lack of training and development for all staff. This was a serious concern.

This report gave me the unequivocal evidence I required to address this deficiency in training and development. All dental professionals are

registered with the General Dental Council and in order to maintain registration individuals have a duty to keep their skills and knowledge up to date by undertaking continuing professional development. As an employer the ADS also has a responsibility to provide appropriate training to ensure competencies remain up to date that ultimately ensures patient safety, which is paramount.

My immediate priority was to formulate a strategic plan that detailed the immediate and long term mandatory training requirements and levels of training required, established the objectives of the training, how the training was to be implemented and resources required. I formed and led a training team, which consisted off The presence of military and civilian employees ensured that there was input from ACH professional and reducing the potential for any conflict or resistance.

McKenna and Master cited in Mullions (2013) describes “ the Job of the group leader it to encourage people to earn the trust of others in their group and then show them how it can translate into greater commitment, greater creativity, greater professional satisfaction and better performance” therefore the particular leadership traits and competencies that I drew upon to lead the team and meet ours goals were social skills, communication, flexibility and Judgment.

This ensured that there was a high bevel of trust and cooperation with the group. The secondary benefit of these traits was to set a leadership example to my peer group and subordinates. Accordingly, the team was briefed regarding the vision, which was to achieve a satisfactory level of mandatory

training for all staff and as team we devised an action plan/framework to follow, which provided clear concise responsibilities.

A total of 7 regional training days were held for all staff, achieving a total of 28 hours of verifiable continuing professional development was also awarded to each member of staff this mounted towards maintaining EGG registration. The results of this task were clearly demonstrated when 12 months later the governance inspection process was repeated and the training and development section achieved a satisfactory green grade.

House describes leadership as “ the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization” (House et al, 1999). I believe that my leadership of the team and the tasks contributed directly to the successful re-inspection of a satisfactory green grade and importantly the region received the accessory training and development that was required. I have analysed my leadership style through the use of appraisals, self analysis and informal feedback from my line managers and peer group.

Analysis from the emotional intelligence questionnaire highlighted that my self awareness in particular the self-esteem competency scored priority 1 I consider this is fairly accurate with regards to capabilities especially my undertaking this course. The self-control competency that details keeping emotions and impulses in check is a known trait of mine, and comes as no surprise as I have discussed this with my peers. In respect of leadership this sometimes can have a detrimental effect and it is defiantly an area for me to address.

However in the same category for trustworthiness: maintaining standards of honesty and integrity I scored high which again as above has been discussed with my peers prior to taking the questionnaire. In the social skill section under the competency leadership: inspiring and guiding individuals and groups I scored high and consider this a true reflection of one of my strengths. In the competency developing diversity: cultivating opportunities through different kinds of avian served in the military for 20 years, which may be perceived, as resulting in institutionalizing and attachment to similar groups of people.

In the coming year I have a number of opportunities and experiences to develop as a leader and address my leadership weaknesses. These opportunities demand the highest standards of leadership and I must be able to demonstrate that I have an academic and practical understanding of leadership. In the coming months I will be appointed to the position of Royal Army Dental Corps Regimental Sergeant Major (CARS) this is a highly prestigious honorary appointment ND is reserved for the most senior soldier in the Corps.

The appointment is primarily responsible for maintaining values & standards, discipline, matters of custom and also acts as a parental figure to subordinates. This appointment conveys considerable emphasis on integrity and ethical leadership as cited by Leonard and Elegant (2012) “ as emphasizing honesty and consistency between a person’s espoused values and behavior” As the CARS I am perceived to be a leader of Soldiers and my peer group therefore will lead by example to adhere by the values

emphasized in theories of Ethical Leadership described by Burns (1978)

Integrity

Altruism Humility Empathy and healing Personal growth Fairness and Justice Empowerment All these theories form the building blocks for the British Army's Values and Standards that are inculcated in all soldiers, driven by superior leadership such as leading by example and setting high standards. Values and Standards are also developed and reinforced through annual training. I am also to take up a new post of Warrant Officer Assurance – seeking a more challenging Job to develop and test leadership styles and principals.

I will be working alongside leaders and managers of a much higher rank my immediate period officer is the Inspector General who is a member of the Surgeon Generals higher management team in the Defense Medical Services. In way of conclusion, my leadership skills were tested having Joined what was perceived as a failing region within our organization. In completing this section I have conducted self-analysis of my leadership style and taken the opportunity to reflect and develop my leadership style for the future and differing scenarios.

The leadership styles that I adapted in order to address the issues within my region was proven to work and is one that I will SE if I find myself in a similar situation. Leadership and leadership styles within ADS EN region.

Additionally I will discuss why effective leadership in ADS EN is critical to the success of the region and how a leadership style can ensure a committed and central focus on generating high performance and commitment.

Leadership can be examined in terms of styles qualities or approaches it is not limited solely within a hierarchical structure of an organization as leadership can transpire at differing levels and can be observed in different ways. Mullions (2013) ascribes Leadership style is the way in which the functions of leadership are carried out, the way in which the manager typically behaves towards members of the group. As previously mentioned the performance of Dental Centers is measured through Key Performance Indicators (KIP).

The intent of Kips is to measure and monitor the dental fitness outputs of the patient population; the most important KIP for all ADS Dental Centers is that 75% of the patient population are to have had all their dental treatment needs met and deemed to be dentally fit (no active oral disease). Kips are set and monitored at a strategic level by the Directorate of Army Medical Services. All Dental Regions have responsibility for the dental fitness of deployable Brigade or unit. The Kips for a region that has a Brigade or unit deploying for example to Afghanistan are increased to 85%.

Failure on a Regions part to ensure that they meet the deployment dental fitness Kips could lead to a Brigade or unit deploying with less personnel than is required to carry out their task. I would describe strategic leadership as the process of using well- considered methods to build on a vision for an organization. This style of leadership happily manages, motivates and persuades staff to share the same vision, which can be an important tool for implementing change within an organization.



Decisions and actions are based on their beliefs and values enabling and inspiring staff to contribute and make decisions. One would find strategic leadership in business organizations where change management is required and a strategic vision is necessary for the business to grow. The military is going through a period of major change and is currently restructuring in order to meet the strategic requirements and vision for the military set out by the Government. Strategic leadership is demonstrated by the military hierarchy in order to manage and communicate the large scale changes.

A failure to demonstrate strategic leadership could have an adverse effect on morale and retention, which would put the change programmer in Earner and Adam-Smith (2005) defined strategic leadership “ as being the way in which an organization seeks to pursue its purpose, or achieve its objectives”. It was the strategic leadership that ADS EN required in order to meet the deployment KIP of dental fitness. On arrival at ADS EN it was obvious that the region’s fitness figures were 16% below the ADS KIP.

The failure of the Region to meet their KIP was having a detrimental effect upon the Dental Centre staff, Regional WHQL team and patients. Additionally the pressure that was being brought to bear from a strategic level was impacting on the morale, well-being and output of the region’s staff. The Regional management team adopted a number of varying styles of leadership in order to address the issues and many of the subsequent underlying issues that soon became apparent.

The initial style was autocratic, this is not a popular style of leadership as it removes ND denies any direct influence on decisions from the staff. The

autocratic leader tends to determine tasks and procedures for their subordinates and will probably remain aloof from participating in discussions and meetings. Extreme autocratic leaders can be totally unapproachable and appear to lack personality, which according to Corroboratory (1995) is needed in effective leadership.

However the work of Tantalum and Schmidt (1958) cited in Mullions (2013) using the continuum of manager non manager model distinguish two varieties of autocratic decisions: one in which the leader merely announces and autocratic decision (“tell” Tyler) and the other in which the leader makes the decision alone but uses influence tactics such as rational persuasion (“sell” style) to gain support for it. The military hierarchical structure lends it’s self in certain situations to the autocratic style of leadership when direction needs to be given and followed in order to ensure short term goals and targets are met.

The autocratic style used by the Region WHQL management team was “sell”. A number of staff meetings and training days were held where the failure to meet Kips and other internal issues were discussed. The Regional leader allowed all personnel to nutrient to the debate on how to address all the Region’s issues. He listened and at the appropriate time delivered his plan as to how the issues were to be addressed. A democratic leadership style is in the opposite spectrum of the autocratic leadership style.

Also known as the participative leadership style, this type of leaders people oriented and the feelings and thoughts of their followers matter to them. Adder’s (1993) functional model of leadership for tasks and projects

demonstrates the inter-relationship between balancing the task with the team and the needs of the individuals. And ensuring the leader is aware of the dynamics of the team and trying to involve everyone in the decision making process lends it's self to a democratic style of leadership.

This style of leadership is currently very rarely used within the military as consensus can take time to be reached and on many occasions time is a commodity that is not always available to the military leadership. I believe that the democratic style of leadership will be adopted more often by the military in the future. One facet of the strategic changes that are taking place in the military is the employment of civilians in military roles.

Government departments are also deploying personnel on operations alongside the military.

As the number of civilian employees employed by and attached to the military increases the autocratic style of leadership may prove to be unsuitable. Throughout my career in the Military my leadership skills have and are continually developing as Adair stresses cited in Porter, Smith and Fagan (2006) " Leadership is something that individuals must develop within themselves, through experience and self-reflection as well as training and education". Taking this into account leadership manifests through identified behavioral traits such as enthusiasm, robustness, integrity and fairness, humility, self-confidence and concern.

In comparison French and Raven (1968) cited in Earner and Adam-Smith (2005) states ' if authority and ' position power' no longer works, what are the alternatives? One approach is to bargain: in other words to sell. During

my tenure in the region the Brigade was preparing to deploy to Afghanistan. When units are preparing to deploy the patient population are tied into a strict training regime and therefore it becomes increasingly difficult and frustrating for the mental centre staff to access and manage the patient and for the patient to gain their required dental treatment and ensure that they were fit for deployment.

I believe that a dynamic style of leadership was required to achieve the task of meeting the strategic deployment KIP. This was the ideal time to adopt the Transformational leadership style. In order to accomplish the task of treating a mobile population it involved change of work patterns extra hours and weekend working, a change in location all this needed to be “ sold” to the staff. This required the regional management leadership team to monster their leadership capabilities by appealing to the higher ideal and values of followers and creating a feeling of righteousness, allegiance and trust.

The Regional leader adopted the Transactional leadership style. He used this style to articulate his vision, to set tasks and goals, and motivate his teams and subordinates. His leadership style gained high levels of motivation, commitment from the staff. The leadership style he adopted was proven to be the correct one for this situation as the deployment KIP was achieved and the Brigade deployed dentally fit. Adhering. Mullions (2013) believes that transactional leadership ” is based on a relationship of mutual dependence and an exchange process of – I will give you this, if you do that.

This is the style of leadership that I have witnessed on a number of occasions I believe it is based around the principal of “ stick and carrot” It also suggests to me that some personnel are not intrinsically motivated and require a clearly defined reward in order to achieve tasks. I believe this to be a lazy style of leadership that seeks to motive personnel by short-term reward and can lead to a ultra that expects tangible rewards rather than having pride in the organization.

An area of leadership that requires significant improvement within my organization is communication. As the military goes through significant change one way of facilitating change is through effective communication. Stage 4 of Cotter’s eight-stage process of creating change suggests that every vehicle possible is used to constantly communicate the new vision and strategies. My organization has been unable to effectively communicate an area of major change - a redundancy programmer. The military is currently conducting a major redundancy programmer.

This affects all branches of the military in particular Dental Hygienists, as they no longer have a military role subsequently they will able be made redundant by 2015. The hygienist redundancy programmer was articulated in a Defense Medical Services Review in late 2012. Little attempt was made by ADS leadership to inform the hygienists of the redundancy plan prior to the publication of the report. Armstrong (2003) states “ change can be managed only by ensuring that the reasons for and the implications of change are communicated to those affected in terms which they can understand and accept”.

In my current role I have a large amount of contact with hygienists as I am responsible for their professional development. It has become clear to me that the hygienists are demoralized and feel let down by the leadership in the organization. They are particularly upset by the manner and means in which they were informed of the redundancy programmer. It can be argued that any psychological contract that existed between our organizations leadership and the hygienists has been broken. Rousseau and Wade – Benzene (1994) cited in

Armstrong 2003 state that “ psychological contracts represent how people interpret promises and commitments, both parties in the same employment relationship (employer and employee) can have different views regarding specific terms”. This is particularly relevant to the relationship between our leadership and subordinates as there has always been an expectation that contracts and the associated long term benefits would be honored. It is now apparent that our leadership and subordinates views on specific terms are very different.