

Concepts of Leadership

Leaders are made not born. If you have the desire and willpower, you can become an effective leader. Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. This guide will help you through that process.

To inspire your workers into higher levels of teamwork, there are certain things you must be, know, and, do. These do not come naturally, but are acquired through continual work and study. Good leaders are continually working and studying to improve their leadership skills; they are NOT resting on their laurels.

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills.

Although your position as a manager, supervisor, lead, etc. gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this power does not make you a leader, it simply makes you the boss. Leadership differs in that it makes the followers want to achieve high goals, rather than simply bossing people around.

Bass' (1989 & 1990) theory of leadership states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders. The first two explain the leadership development for a small number of people. These theories are:

Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. This is the Trait Theory. A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. This is the Great Events Theory.

People can choose to become leaders. People can learn leadership skills. This is the Transformational Leadership Theory. It is the most widely accepted theory today and the premise on which this guide is based.

When a person is deciding if she respects you as a leader, she does not think about your attributes, rather, she observes what you do so that she can know who you really are. She uses this observation to tell if you are an honorable and trusted leader or a self-serving person who misuses authority to look good and get promoted. Self-serving leaders are not as effective because their employees only obey them, not follow them. They succeed in many areas because they present a good image to their seniors at the expense of their workers.

The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to your organization. In your employees' eyes, your leadership is everything you do that effects the organization's objectives and their well-being. Respected leaders concentrate on what they are [be] (such as beliefs and character), what they know (such as job, tasks, and human nature), and what they do (such as implementing, motivating, and providing direction).

What makes a person want to follow a leader? People want to be guided by those they respect and who have a clear sense of direction. To gain respect, they must be ethical. A sense of direction is achieved by conveying a strong vision of the future.

THE TWO MOST IMPORTANT KEYS TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

According to a study by the Hay Group, a global management consultancy, there are 75 key components of employee satisfaction (Lamb, McKee, 2004). They found that:

- ! Trust and confidence in top leadership was the single most reliable predictor of employee satisfaction in an organization.
- ! Effective communication by leadership in three critical areas was the key to winning organizational trust and confidence:
 - ! Helping employees understand the company's overall business strategy.
 - ! Helping employees understand how they contribute to achieving key business objectives.
 - ! Sharing information with employees on both how the company is doing and how an employee's own division is doing - relative to strategic business objectives.

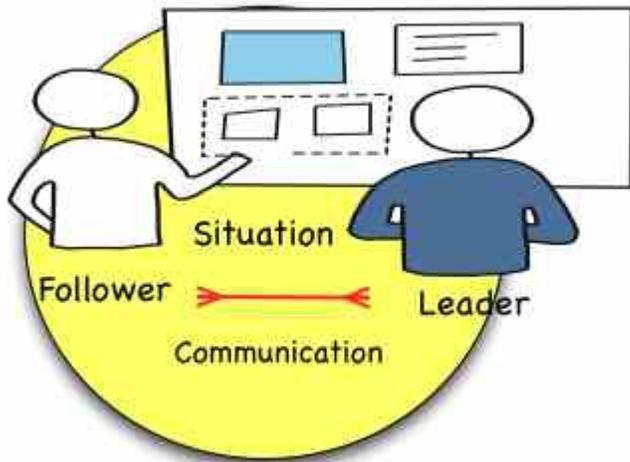
So - you must be trustworthy and you have to be able to communicate a vision of where the organization needs to go. The next section, "Principles of Leadership", ties in closely with this key concept.

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

- ! To help you be, know, and do; (U.S. Army, 1973) follow these eleven principles of leadership (later chapters in this guide expand on these and provide tools for implementing them):
- ! Know yourself and seek self-improvement - In order to know yourself, you have to understand your be, know, and do, attributes. Seeking self-improvement means continually strengthening your attributes. This can be accomplished through self-study, formal classes, reflection, and interacting with others.
- ! Be technically proficient - As a leader, you must know your job and have a solid familiarity with your employees' tasks.
- ! Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions - Search for ways to guide your organization to new heights. And when things go wrong, they always do sooner or later - do not blame others. Analyze the situation, take corrective action, and move on to the next challenge.
- ! Make sound and timely decisions - Use good problem solving, decision making, and planning tools.
- ! Set the example - Be a good role model for your employees. They must not only hear what they are expected to do, but also see. We must become the change we want to see - Mahatma Gandhi
- ! Know your people and look out for their well-being - Know human nature and the importance of sincerely caring for your workers.
- ! Keep your workers informed - Know how to communicate with not only them, but also seniors and other key people.
- ! Develop a sense of responsibility in your workers - Help to develop good character traits that will help them carry out their professional responsibilities.
- ! Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished - Communication is the key to this responsibility.
- ! Train as a team - Although many so called leaders call their organization, department, section, etc. a team; they are not really teams...they are just a group of people doing their jobs.
- ! Use the full capabilities of your organization - By developing a team spirit, you will be able to employ your organization, department, section, etc. to its fullest capabilities.

FACTORS OF LEADERSHIP

There are four major factors in leadership:



Follower:

Different people require different styles of leadership. For example, a new hire requires more supervision than an experienced employee. A person who lacks motivation requires a different approach than one with a high degree of motivation. You must know your people! The fundamental starting point is having a good understanding of human nature, such as needs, emotions, and motivation. You must come to know your employees' be, know, and do attributes.

Leader:

You must have an honest understanding of who you are, what you know, and what you can do. Also, note that it is the followers, not the leader who determines if a leader is successful. If they do not trust or lack confidence in their leader, then they will be uninspired. To be successful you have to convince your followers, not yourself or your superiors, that you are worthy of being followed.

Communication:

You lead through two-way communication. Much of it is nonverbal. For instance, when you "set the example," that communicates to your people that you would not ask them to perform anything that you would not be willing to do. What and how you communicate either builds or harms the relationship between you and your employees.

Situation:

All are different. What you do in one situation will not always work in another. You must use your judgment to decide the best course of action and the leadership style needed for each situation. For example, you may need to confront an employee for inappropriate behavior, but if the confrontation is too late or too early, too harsh or too weak, then the results may prove ineffective.

Various forces will affect these factors. Examples of forces are your relationship with your seniors, the skill of your people, the informal leaders within your organization, and how your company is organized.

Attributes:

If you are a leader who can be trusted, then those around you will grow to respect you. To be such a leader, there is a Leadership Framework to guide you: BE KNOW DO

- ! BE a professional. Examples: Be loyal to the organization, perform selfless service, take personal responsibility.
- ! BE a professional who possess good character traits. Examples: Honesty, competence, candor, commitment, integrity, courage, straightforwardness, imagination.
- ! KNOW the four factors of leadership - follower, leader, communication, situation.
- ! KNOW yourself. Examples: strengths and weakness of your character, knowledge, and skills.

- ! KNOW human nature. Examples: Human needs, emotions, and how people respond to stress.
- ! KNOW your job. Examples: be proficient and be able to train others in their tasks.
- ! KNOW your organization. Examples: where to go for help, its climate and culture, who the unofficial leaders are.
- ! DO provide direction. Examples: goal setting, problem solving, decision making, planning.
- ! DO implement. Examples: communicating, coordinating, supervising, evaluating.
- ! DO motivate. Examples: develop morale and esprit de corps in the organization, train, coach, counsel.

Environment:

Every organization has a particular work environment, which dictates to a considerable degree how its leaders respond to problems and opportunities. This is brought about by its heritage of past leaders and its present leaders. Goals, Values, and Concepts

Leaders exert influence on the environment via three types of actions:

- ! The goals and performance standards they establish.
- ! The values they establish for the organization.
- ! The business and people concepts they establish.

Successful organizations have leaders who set high standards and goals across the entire spectrum, such as strategies, market leadership, plans, meetings and presentations, productivity, quality, and reliability. Values reflect the concern the organization has for its employees, customers, investors, vendors, and surrounding community. These values define the manner in how business will be conducted. Concepts define what products or services the organization will offer and the methods and processes for conducting business.

These goals, values, and concepts make up the organization's "personality" or how the organization is observed by both outsiders and insiders. This personality defines the roles, relationships, rewards, and rites that take place.

Roles and Relationships:

Roles are the positions that are defined by a set of expectations about behavior of any job incumbent. Each role has a set of tasks and responsibilities that may or may not be spelled out. Roles have a powerful effect on behavior for several reasons, to include money being paid for the performance of the role, there is prestige attached to a role, and a sense of accomplishment or challenge.

Relationships are determined by a role's tasks. While some tasks are performed alone, most are carried out in relationship with others. The tasks will determine who the role-holder is required to interact with, how often, and towards what end. Also, normally the greater the interaction, the greater the liking. This in turn leads to more frequent interaction. In human behavior, it's hard to like someone whom we have no contact with, and we tend to seek out those we like. People tend to do what they are rewarded for, and friendship is a powerful reward. Many tasks and behaviors that are associated with a role are brought about by these relationships. That is, new task and behaviors are expected of the present role-holder because a strong relationship was developed in the past, either by that role-holder or a prior role-holder.

Culture and Climate:

There are two distinct forces that dictate how to act within an organization: culture and climate. Each organization has its own distinctive culture. It is a combination of the founders, past leadership, current leadership, crises, events, history, and size. This results in rites: the routines, rituals, and the "way we do things." These rites impact individual behavior on what it takes to be in good standing (the norm) and directs the appropriate behavior for each circumstance.

The climate is the feel of the organization, the individual and shared perceptions and attitudes of the organization's members. While the culture is the deeply rooted nature of the organization that is a result of long-held formal and informal systems, rules, traditions, and customs; climate is a short-term phenomenon created by the current leadership. Climate represents the beliefs about the "feel of the organization" by its members. This individual perception of the "feel of the organization" comes from what the people believe about the activities that occur in the organization. These activities influence both individual and team motivation and satisfaction, such as:

How well does the leader clarify the priorities and goals of the organization? What is expected of us?
What is the system of recognition, rewards, and punishments in the organization?

- ! How competent are the leaders?
- ! Are leaders free to make decisions?
- ! What will happen if I make a mistake?

Organizational climate is directly related to the leadership and management style of the leader, based on the values, attributes, skills, and actions, as well as the priorities of the leader. Compare this to "ethical climate" -- the "feel of the organization" about the activities that have ethical content or those aspects of the work environment that constitute ethical behavior. The ethical climate is the feel about whether we do things right; or the feel of whether we behave the way we ought to behave. The behavior (character) of the leader is the most important factor that impacts the climate.

On the other hand, culture is a long-term, complex phenomenon. Culture represents the shared expectations and self-image of the organization. The mature values that create "tradition" or the "way we do things here." Things are done differently in every organization. The collective vision and common folklore that define the institution are a reflection of culture. Individual leaders, cannot easily create or change culture because culture is a part of the organization. Culture influences the characteristics of the climate by its effect on the actions and thought processes of the leader. But, everything you do as a leader will affect the climate of the organization.

Leadership Models:

Leadership models help us to understand what makes leaders act the way they do. The ideal is not to lock yourself in to a type of behavior discussed in the model, but to realize that every situation calls for a different approach or behavior to be taken. Two models will be discussed, the Four Framework Approach and the Managerial Grid.

Four Framework Approach

In the Four Framework Approach, Bolman and Deal (1991) suggest that leaders display leadership behaviors in one of four types of frameworks: Structural, Human Resource, Political, or Symbolic. The style can either be effective or ineffective, depending upon the chosen behavior in certain situations.

Structural Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a social architect whose leadership style is analysis and design. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a petty tyrant whose leadership style is details. Structural Leaders focus on structure, strategy, environment, implementation, experimentation, and adaptation.

Human Resource Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a catalyst and servant whose leadership style is support, advocacy, and empowerment. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a pushover, whose leadership style is abdication and fraud. Human Resource Leaders believe in people and communicate that belief; they are visible and accessible; they empower, increase participation, support, share information, and move decision making down into the organization.

Political Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is an advocate, whose leadership style is coalition and building. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a hustler, whose leadership style is manipulation. Political leaders clarify what they want and what they can get; they assess the distribution of power and interests; they build linkages to other stakeholders, use persuasion first, then use negotiation and coercion only if necessary.

Symbolic Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a prophet, whose leadership style is inspiration. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a fanatic or fool, whose leadership style is smoke and mirrors. Symbolic leaders view organizations as a stage or theater to play certain roles and give impressions; these leaders use symbols to capture attention; they try to frame experience by providing plausible interpretations of experiences; they discover and communicate a vision.

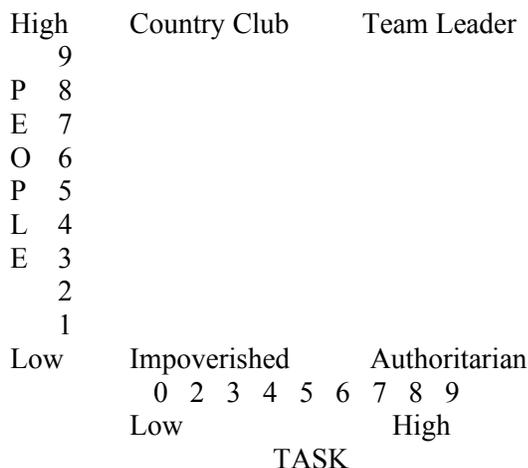
This model suggests that leaders can be put into one of these four categories and there are times when one approach is appropriate and times when it would not be. Any one of these approaches alone would be inadequate, thus we should strive to be conscious of all four approaches, and not just rely on one or two. For example, during a major organization change, a structural leadership style may be more effective than a visionary leadership style; while during a period when strong growth is needed, the visionary approach may be better. We also need to understand ourselves as each of us tends to have a preferred approach. We need to be conscious of this at all times and be aware of the limitations of our favoring just one approach. For an activity, see Bolman and Deal's Four Framework Approach.

Managerial Grid

The Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid (1985) uses two axes:

- "Concern for people" is plotted using the vertical axis
- "Concern for task" is along the horizontal axis.

They both have a range of 0 to 9. The notion that just two dimensions can describe a managerial behavior has the attraction of simplicity. These two dimensions can be drawn as a graph or grid:



Most people fall somewhere near the middle of the two axes. But, by going to the extremes, that is, people who score on the far end of the scales, we come up with four types of leaders:

- Authoritarian (9 on task, 1 on people)
- Team Leader (9 on task, 9 on people)
- Country Club (1 on task, 9 on people)
- Impoverished (1 on task, 1 on people).

Authoritarian Leader (high task, low relationship)

People who get this rating are very much task oriented and are hard on their workers (autocratic). There is little or no allowance for cooperation or collaboration. Heavily task oriented people display these characteristics: they are very strong on schedules; they expect people to do what they are told without question or debate; when something goes wrong they tend to focus on who is to blame rather than concentrate on exactly what is wrong and how to prevent it; they are intolerant of what they see as dissent (it may just be someone's creativity), so it is difficult for their subordinates to contribute or develop.

Team Leader (high task, high relationship)

This type of person leads by positive example and endeavors to foster a team environment in which all team members can reach their highest potential, both as team members and as people. They encourage the team to reach team goals as effectively as possible, while also working tirelessly to strengthen the bonds among the various members. They normally form and lead some of the most productive teams.

Country Club Leader (low task, high relationship)

This person uses predominantly reward power to maintain discipline and to encourage the team to accomplish its goals. Conversely, they are almost incapable of employing the more punitive coercive and legitimate powers. This inability results from fear that using such powers could jeopardize relationships with the other team members.

Impoverished Leader (low task, low relationship)

A leader who uses a "delegate and disappear" management style. Since they are not committed to either task accomplishment or maintenance; they essentially allow their team to do whatever it wishes and prefer to detach themselves from the team process by allowing the team to suffer from a series of power struggles.

The most desirable place for a leader to be along the two axes at most times would be a 9 on task and a 9 on people -- the Team Leader. However, do not entirely dismiss the other three. Certain situations might call for one of the other three to be used at times. For example, by playing the Impoverished Leader, you allow your team to gain self-reliance. Be an Authoritarian Leader to instill a sense of discipline in an unmotivated worker. By carefully studying the situation and the forces affecting it, you will know at what points along the axes you need to be in order to achieve the desired result.

For an activity, see The Leadership Matrix.

The Process of Great Leadership

The road to great leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 1987) that is common to successful leaders:

Challenge the process - First, find a process that you believe needs to be improved the most.

Inspire a shared vision - Next, share your vision in words that can be understood by your followers.

Enable others to act - Give them the tools and methods to solve the problem.

Model the way - When the process gets tough, get your hands dirty. A boss tells others what to do, a leader shows that it can be done.

Encourage the heart - Share the glory with your followers' hearts, while keeping the pains within your own.