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CI 893
Instructional Leadership:
Professionalism and Collaboration

February 12, 2016

Leadership Styles and Its Impact

According to the business dictionary (2016), leadership is "the act of inspiring subordinants

[sic] to perform and engage in achieving a goal." Leadership, while a very valuable aspect of all

workplaces and daily life, and a seemingly simple concept, is actually very complex. It has many

different facets. In this paper, we are going to dig into the concept of leadership and analyze its

different styles, theories, and models to help us better understand leaders and how they lead.

Leadership Styles

Leaders aren't born, rather they acquire attributes (starting at an early age), which help develop

them into good leaders. (Blanken, 2016) Leaders then adapt their style of leadership to help them

achieve goals. While working in different situations, leaders should consider their surroundings to

decide which leadership style best fits their current situation. "...choosing the right style, at the right

time in the right situation is a key element of leader effectiveness." (Johannsen, 2014)

Leadership styles vary in forms. Charismatic leaders, for example, motivate their followers by

using their personality to inspire passion. (Blanken, 2016) An affiliative leader puts people first; he is

concerned with the emotional and physical well-being of his followers and leads through nurturing.

(Benincasa, 2012) Laissez Faire leaders "minimize the amount of direction and face time required."

(Johannsen, 2014) Servant leaders put themselves before others and include the entire team in making

decisions. (Blanken, 2016) These are simply a few of the many leadership styles.

"...the best leaders don't create followers; they create more leaders." (Benincasa, 2012) A great

leader works himself out of a job. With this being a risky statement, let me clarify. Leaders rarely

remain at their place of employment their entire lives. Because of this, new leaders must be created

who could step in to take that leader's place in the event he moves on. If the organization is in shambles after a leader leaves, that leader has done that organization a disservice. These new leaders will also bring different strengths to the leadership team, helping them to better face unknown challenges in the future.

Leadership Theories

According to the article, "Core Leadership Theories: Learning the Foundations of Leadership," (1996-2016), there are four core theory groups: Trait, Behavioral, Contingency, and Power and Influence Theories. "Trait theories help us identify traits and qualities (for example, integrity, empathy, assertiveness, good decision-making skills, and likability) that are helpful with leading others." (MindTools.com, 1996-2016) While these are all great qualities, there is not a specific combination that can guarantee successful leadership. Behavioral theories center around the behaviors of the leaders. For example, does the leader consult his team before making decisions, or does he simply make the decision and expect his team to follow his lead? Contingency Theories are based on situational leadership, and Power and Influence Theories use their "power and influence" to accomplish tasks.

Leadership Models

As with leadership theories, there are many different leadership models. An article by Donald Clark (2015), shows that leader behaviors can be categorized into two main components: concern for people and concern for tasks. In his leadership grid, four quadrants are shown with the titles: authoritarian, country club, impoverished, and team leader. Ideally, a leader would fall in the "team leader" quadrant, which was strong in both their concern for people and their concern for results. Along with being a team leader, it is important to not ignore the other three quadrants. Situations will sometimes call for the leader to lead in a different manner to achieve results.

Like the managerial grid, the four framework approach to leadership suggests leaders should assess the situation to gauge when one approach is appropriate and times when it would not be. In this

model, the four categories are: political framework, human resource framework, structural framework, and symbolic framework. This model also states that, as leaders, we need to understand ourselves and find which approach we prefer. (Clark, 2015)

In his article, "10 Essential Leadership Models," Dan McCarthy (2012) summarizes 10 models of leadership. Of these models, he is particularly fond of Situational Leadership. Situational Leadership is "all about adapting your leadership style to the developmental needs, or 'maturity level', of your employees." (McCarthy, 2012) He also states that this model can be used on a daily basis.

Leadership is about more than simply producing results. It's about caring about the people whom you are leading. "If you don't care, aren't collaborative, can't communicate, fail to take input and feedback, and allow your hubris to overshadow your humility, you might be intelligent, but in my book you're not very bright." (Myatt, 2013) Leaders need to show a strong sense of who they are as a leader, but they also need to have humility and to truly care about and respect the people they are leading.

In conclusion, experts agree that leadership is many things. The most important thing to remember, however, is that good leaders are adaptable. They can look at the big picture and see what needs to change, both in the situation and in how they are leading. A strong leader also considers those in which he is leading. His approach to his followers can range from a strong, authoritarian figure to a nurturing leader. Circumstances are constantly changing; a good leader can recognize this and change his methods of leadership accordingly.

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