Growing Leading Minds

The Pursuit of Leadership

A current dilemma for organizations

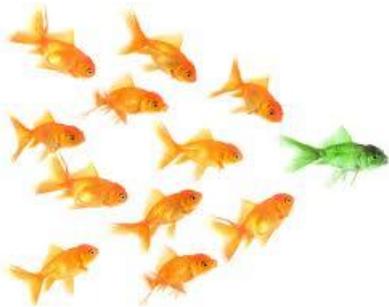# What is your idea of Leadership?

What Leadership is

- ❖ "The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers" – P. Drucker
- ❖ "As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others" – B. Gates
- ❖ "Leadership is influence. Nothing more, nothing less" – J. Maxwell

What Leadership is not

- ❖ It is not seniority in a position / role
- ❖ It is not a plaque on your desk
- ❖ It is not just about personal attitudes
- ❖ It is not management

"A leader sees greatness in other people. You can't be much of a leader if all you see is yourself."
–Maya Angelou

Leadership is a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal

Leadership is everyone's business

"…leadership is not about position or title. It's not about organizational power or authority. It's not about fame or wealth. It's not about the family you are born into. It's not about being a CEO, President, General, or Prime Minister. And it's definitely not about being a hero. Leadership is about relationships, about credibility, and about what you do. And everything you will ever do as a leader is based on one audacious assumption: that you matter.

You don't have to look up for leadership. You don't have to look out for leadership. You only have to look inward. You have the potential to lead others to places they have never been. But before you can lead others, you have to believe that you can have a positive impact on others. You have to believe that what you do counts. You have to believe that your words can inspire and that your actions can move others. And you have to be able to convince others that the same is true for them.

In these turbulent times, there is no shortage of opportunities to lead, and the world need more people who believe they can make a difference and who are willing to act on that belief.".

Chapter 12, "The leadership challenge" (Kouzes, J. Posnes, B.) Fifth edition (2012)
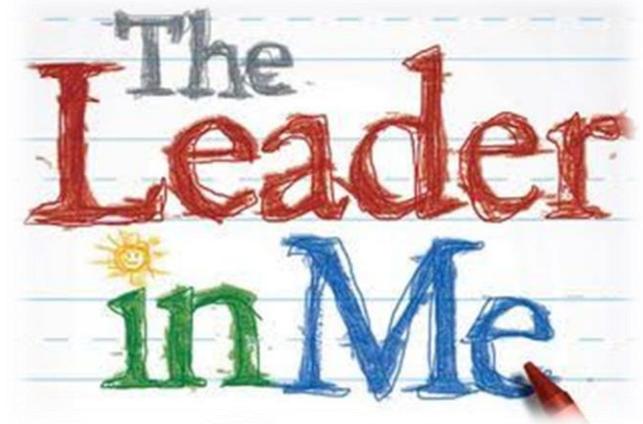
❖ Functional Leadership: the leader's main job is to see that whatever is necessary to group needs is taken care of; thus, a leader can be said to have done their job well when they have contributed to group effectiveness and cohesion. Leadership does not rest with one person but rests on a set of behaviors by the group that gets things done. Any member of the group can perform these behaviors, so any member can participate in leadership

❖ Situational Leadership (Hersey and Blanchard) : there is no single "best" style of leadership. Effective leadership is task-relevant, and the most successful leaders are those that adapt their leadership style to the maturity ("the capacity to set high but attainable goals, willingness and ability to take responsibility for the task, and relevant education and/or experience of an individual or a group for the task") of the individual or group they are attempting to lead or influence

These two theories, although often criticized as old-fashioned, should be always taken into consideration for their ability to be simple yet useful also now

❖ Many factors have led to a growing importance of Leadership nowadays in the US

- Globalization needs to be managed differently
  - The "Stars & Stripes" perspective is out of date in a hyper connected world
  - Great market opportunities in new developing countries, and associated great risks
- Generational Turnover - say goodbye to Boomers!
- Managing change in transitional times
  - Uncertain future and ever-changing context, more than ever
- Mastering technology is necessary yet insufficient with digital natives

❖ Leaders have always been there. Let's have a look at the traits of 5 past great leaders

- Caesar
- Ambrosius
- Matilde of Canossa
- Francis of Assisi
- Saladdin

Caesar

- Rome, either 7/13/101 a.c. or 7/12/100 a.c.; Rome, 3/14/44
- A military, a dictator, a conqueror, a writer
- As a matter of fact, the real first Roman Emperor

❖ He loved staying among his soldiers and sharing food, rumors, thoughts and opinions

❖ He had a vision that would have been considered impossible before he put it in place

Ambrosius

- Trier, either 339 or 340; Milan, 397
- A politician, a bishop, a counsellor
- Able to inspire other great Leaders such as Theodosius and Saint Augustine

❖ Not baptized, he was chosen as Milanese Bishop by crowd praise – nevertheless he immediately played a part as an orthodox Catholic to stop Arians

❖ He was a revolutionary for the Church and for the Roman Empire although he always kept a low profile

Matilde of Canossa

- Mantua, March 1046; Bondeno di Roncore, 7/24/1115
- A feudatory, a Vicar of the Empire and a strong supporter of the Papacy, a soldier and an intellectual
- A woman of incredible power in particularly tough times, famous in history for having humiliated Henry the Fourth, Holy Roman Emperor

❖With her ability and strengths, she was able to dominate a vast territory for almost 40 years and was nominated Queen of Italy by the son of his major opponent

❖She was a legend in the eyes of her people yet fragile and human to those that were closest to her

Francis of Assisi

- Assisi, 1181/1182; Assisi, 10/3/1226
- A saint, a poet, a revolutionary man of peace, hope and dogma
- After 800 years, he is still inspiring and motivating people around the Globe

❖ With his true faith, his communication skills and his ideas, he has been disruptive in times when the Papacy was everything but religion

❖ He perfectly understood how to stay within the Church while simultaneously staying outside of it, something that all other "heretics" weren't capable of

Saladdin

- Tikrit, 1137/1138; Damascus, 3/4/1193
- A Sultan, a man of Literacy, a soldier
- One of the most important strategists in history

❖ The Arabic knight who was used to sharing everything with his soldiers, while at the same time being a living legend for his allies and foes

❖ Known as being of extreme ferocity, he was actually loyal and a great man of honor, especially with his enemies. And as men of honor are, he had no mercy with those who took advantage of his loyalty and honor

❖ What is common among them and what differentiates them?

❖ 10 common traits of Leaders, from past to current times
- Ability to inspire
- Confidence
- Commitment
- Intuition
- Positivity
- Creativity
- Communication
- Ethics
- Sense of humor
- Ability to delegate

Leadership traits

	Ability to inspire	Confidence	Committment	intuition	Positivity	Creativity	Communication	Ethics	Sense of Humor	Delegation
Cesar	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OO	OO	O
Ambrosius	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OO	O	O
Matilde	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OO	OO	OOO	OO	O
Frances	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OO
Saladdin	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OOO	OO	OO	OO	O

From traditional to contemporary traits

O   sufficient
OO   proficient
OOO   master

❖ Are traits the same now? History teaches…

❖ The most traditional leadership traits are still necessary, but play a less important role in today's leadership challenges.

❖ In the past, social and communication skills were less critical than they are now.

❖ There are pillars that a Leader cannot avoid, and there are characteristics which depend on the situation, the time and the purpose.

❖ **Authoritarian**

- I tell you what to do, when to do it and how to do it!

❖ **Paternalistic**

- It would be better to do it this way. I would recommend that you do the same…

❖ **Democratic**

- We could do this that way, but please let me know what you think and maybe we can find a way that is good for all of us…

❖ **Advisory**

- In my opinion you should do it that way. Is that ok?

❖ **Pacesetting**

- Lets' do it this way! And let's do it now!

Traditional Leadership Styles

- ❖ **Authoritarian.** This is classic model of "military" style leadership – probably the most often used, but the least often effective. Because it rarely involves praise and frequently employs criticism, it undercuts morale and job satisfaction. It might be effective in a crisis, when an urgent turnaround is needed. But nowadays even the modern military has come to recognize its limited usefulness.

- ❖ **Advisory.** This style focuses on developing individuals, showing them how to improve their performance, and helping connect their goals to the goals of the organization. Advisory usually works well in environments where employees show initiative and want more professional development. But it can backfire if it's perceived as "micromanaging" an employee, and could undermine self-confidence.

- ❖ **Paternalistic.** This is a softer form of authoritarian leadership, which often results in better employee motivation and lower staff turnover, but yet with very little delegation. It is the Leader who decides what is best for employees. Akin to a parent/child relationship – where the leader is seen as a "father-figure", a typical paternalistic leader explains the specific reason as to why he has taken certain actions.

- ❖ **Democratic.** This style draws on people's knowledge and skills, and creates a group commitment to the resulting goals. It works best when the direction the organization should take is unclear, and the leader needs to tap the collective wisdom of the group. It is based on a consensus-building approach which can turn into a huge hurdle in times of crisis, when urgent events demand quick decisions.

- ❖ **Pacesetting.** In this style, the leader sets high standards for performance. The Leader pushes the whole Team towards doing things always better and faster, setting him/herself as a Champion. While at the beginning this approach can be really motivational, in the long term it can undercut morale and make people feel as if they are failing, with a bad impact on the Team climate which could be poisoned by internal conflicts and competition.

Leadership Styles – still working?

❖ The 5 Leadership styles may be perceived as better suited to traditional environments where people are used to receiving either firm indications or advice on how to perform tasks.

❖ The traditional model of Leaders who were used to relying upon their own unique strengths is not working anymore. People now are seeking engagement and not just guidance, recognition and not just reward, team awareness and not just self-fulfillment. People want to share their opinions, thoughts and beliefs, they are keen to play a significant part in the organization's success.

What usually misses in these leadership style patterns:

❖ The employee is rarely really engaged

❖ The discussion always opens with the Leader's opinion

❖ Since it is the Leader who makes every decision, real definitive agreement and engagement are harder to achieve

❖ The Democratic style is more involving than the others, but it results in a longer and less effective decision making process

Let's try to reverse the situation… What would you do?

"Coaching becomes the way to lead people, and not a tool of management"

Instead of giving orders, advice or recommendations, the Leader Coach asks thought-provoking questions to the Team members with the aim of getting a shared and effective action plan towards a given goal and timeframe

In this way, all agree and are aligned to the plan, conscious of hurdles and resources, have a clear path owned by each individual – to achieve the target, and share how to measure success

The **Leader Coach** approach aims to:

❖ Improve performance

❖ Transform culture "from push to pull"

❖ Empower people

❖ Manage change as the norm

❖ Increase Leader's reputation

Figure out what the result of such a process could be in terms of:

❖ Goal and Timeframe sharing

❖ Control and performance check

❖ Ownership and engagement

❖ Empowerment and development

❖ Self consciousness

❖ Sense of achievement / satisfaction

❖ Leader's reputation

Developing Leadership, nurturing Leaders

Some examples of tools and programs to recognize, assess, develop and sustain Leadership

Organizational development tools

- ❖ **Assessment centers** – to recognize leadership traits, attitude and behaviors. It helps identify those who are already informal leader
- ❖ **Talent review** – ongoing process to assess the talent bench strength and monitor skill gaps for development needs. It's paramount to invest on the leadership skills that help be successful both in the short and in the long run.
- ❖ **Job enrichment / enlargement, international assignments, High Flyer development programs** – stretch those who have been identified as naturally talented in leadership traits, attitude and behaviors by assigning real life business challenges in which they can experiment their leadership, and assign mentors who will help them succeed. And in the meantime keep on investing on all your team members to strengthen their skill- sets.
- ❖ **Training on Leadership** – key in the development process of a true leader, but to be powerful they must be linked to the real work-related context, and brought into life in daily real-life experiences.

Developing Leadership, nurturing Leaders

❖ Mentoring. It's crucial to clarify missions, values – and related expected behaviors – strategies, and products/ services that are within the organization; train your team members on what's going on in your market place, on what your competitors are doing, on changes and future trends.

❖ Coaching. It's powerful to help people figure out how and where find resources, potential new ways and solutions on their own. Don't provide the solution, because people are resourceful and have what it takes to successfully face challenges. They just need to be supported and positively spur.

- **Standing** - *Feel like a Leader*, first!

- **Situation** – adapt yourself and your behavior to the context, *adaptability is the key to survival*

- **Function** - actually contribute to group effectiveness and cohesion. *Leadership with no purpose does not make sense*

- **Feedback and communication** – *listen! and be clear in your communication, ask for feedback and provide feedback*. You have two ears, and just one mouth…

- **Recognition** – *give acknowledgment, appreciation, respect*, in ways that matter to people and are not uselessly widespread

- **Leadership traits** – *recognize your strengths and work to develop* those traits that are functional for being a good Leader now

- **Coaching** – adopt the *Leader Coach* as a new leadership style to navigate these rough waters

- **Keep running!** – a Leader is always a Leader, *no rest is tolerated*

Leadership is not about changing others, Leadership is about changing ourselves

Leadership is unleashing potential and igniting change

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Need a solutions for your challenges?

❖ If you aim to master leadership…

❖ If you want your organization to get more and spend less…

❖ If you strive for saving time, efforts, money…

❖ If you are searching for a solution that is perfectly aligned with your needs, your aspirations, your goals and your organization…

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