

Theories & Models of Leadership

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Theories & Models of Leadership

Introduction:

Leadership is a mysterious and elusive concept. What we read as history is really the creation of myths. From an ordinary person, society creates a Napoleon or Gandhi, a Martin Luther King Jr. or Joan of Arc, someone who acquires mythic status as a shaper of destiny.

We know the first steps of how this transformation occurs. Every group naturally gives rise to leaders who guide their followers to a shared goal. Yet some leaders fail while others succeed. Some are destroyed by flawed strategy or by the overwhelming stress of their role. And when a crisis arises that calls for great leaders, there is a constant fear that such a figure will not appear, leaving the infamous “leadership vacuum” that has become a chronic problem in modern society.

Description:

Leaders emerge from ordinary lives. In the deeper reality, a company without vision, a school without heart or a nation struggling toward a new level of freedom need to respond to hidden spiritual drives. Once this is understood, leaders can be made who rise to the highest levels of greatness. Any person, man or woman, can begin on the same road, not by being born a leader but by looking inward.

Our souls offer the highest inspiration at every moment. We see chaos, but the soul knows that order is more powerful than disorder. Until we get that message, we fall back on old habits and stale answers to new challenges. We become stuck in pointless struggles and confusion. Yet someone who has set out to become a leader will succeed by cutting through the fog using fundamental spiritual rules. (1)

In any group members act out two basic themes in life (need and response) if we could see ourselves clearly each of us would realize that every day there is:

Something we need, ranging from the primitive need for food and shelter to the higher needs of self worth, love and spiritual meaning; and some response to fill that need, ranging from struggle and competition to creative discovery and divine inspiration. (2)

These two themes dominate our inner life. They override all external goals, and they are not random.

Analysis:

Some basic models and Principles of leadership that seem to come into play include the following:

1. Leaders and followers co-create each other. They form an invisible spiritual bond.

2. A leader is the symbolic soul of the group. The soul is an expression of who we are.

3. Inner qualities determine results. The outcome of any situation is defined in advance by the vision that goes into solving it.

4. A leader must understand the hierarchy of needs.

5. Understanding need and response leads to success. The leader who understands the hierarchy of need and response will succeed. (4)

Additional models of leadership include simple concepts such as:

1. look and listen
2. empowerment
3. awareness
4. doing
5. responsibility

As we look further into models of leadership Bolman and Deals Theory of Four – Frame Leadership styles apply: (5)

The four models are The Structural Frame, Human Resource Frame, Political Frame, and Symbolic Frame.

The Structural Frame emphasizes efficiency and effectiveness. Structural leaders make the rational decision over personal and strive to achieve organizational goals and objectives through coordination and control. They value accountability and critical analyses.

The Human Resource Frame emphasizes the individual. Human resource leaders value comaderie and harmony within the work environment, and strive to achieve organizational goals through meaningful and satisfying work.

The Political Frame emphasizes meaning. Symbolic leaders value the subjective and strive to achieve organizational goals through negotiation and compromise.

The Symbolic Frame emphasizes meaning. Symbolic leaders value the subjective and strive to achieve organizational goals through rituals & ceremonies.

Source Bolman and Deal (1992 – 1997). (6)

Additional models of leadership include the Quinns competing Values Model. (7)

Human Relations Model:

The motivator (commitment) Facilitator: Facilitators emphasize a concern for morale and cohesion. They value interpersonal skills and strive to achieve organizational goals through process. Facilitators are adept at mediation and problem solving. (alpha. 85)

Mentor: Mentors emphasize a concern for sensitivity and consideration. They value the development of individuals and strive to achieve organizational goals by being open and fair.

Internal Process Model: The Analyzer monitor: emphasize rules and quotes. They value measurement and documentation, and strive to achieve organizational goals through rational & technical analysis.

Coordinator: Coordinators emphasize structure and stability. They value reliability and continuity and strive to achieve the goals of the organization through control evaluation.

Rational Goal Model – The task master producer: Produces emphasize focus and accomplishment. They value motivation and productivity and strive to achieve organizational goals through stimulating workers to accomplish directives.

Director: Directors emphasize direction and planning. They value goal clarification and decisiveness and strive to achieve organizational goals through establishing and defining roles and tasks.

Innovator: Innovators emphasize expansion and adaptation. They value image and reputation and strive to achieve organizational goals through influence and through creativity and vision. (8)

Strategic Leadership: The common usage of the term strategic is related to the concept of strategy, simply a plan of action for accomplishing a goal.

A strategy is a plan whose aim is to link ends, ways, and means. The difficult part involves the thinking required to develop the plan based on uncertain, complex or volatile knowledge information, and data. Strategic leadership entails making decisions across different cultures, agencies, agendas, personalities, and desires. It requires the devising of plans that are feasible, desirable, and acceptable to one's organizations and partners—whether joint integrating or multi-national. Strategic leadership demands the ability to make sound reasoned decisions specifically consequential decisions with grave implications. Since the aim of strategy is to link ends, ways, and means, the aim of strategic leadership is to determine the ends, choose the best ways, and apply the most effective means. The strategy is the plan; strategic leadership is to determine the ends, choose the best ways, and apply the most effective means. The strategy is the plan. Strategic

leadership is the thinking and decision making required to develop and effect the plan. Skills for leading at the strategic level are more complex than those for leading at the operational levels, with skills for leading at the strategic level.

Strategic leaders when considering the international environment should first explore the context specifically the history, culture, religion, geography, politics, and foreign security. Who are our allies? Do we have any alliances in place, or do we need to build consensus. What resources are involved? (9)

There are components that make-up the strategic environment:

Nature of Strategic Environment:

The strategic leadership environment differs from the climate at lower levels of leadership. We should view the nature of this both broadly examining consequential decisions and changes in performance requirements.

Consequential Decisions:

By nature, strategic leadership requires heavy decision making. All decisions have consequences. but in the strategic context they take on a different character specifically they are aimed for the long term. (10)

Actualization:

The First Ladies' Character - A case study on Presidential Spouses

Why concern ourselves with the character of first ladies? It should be remembered that spouses of presidents have fulfilled a variety of important and politically significant roles including: Chairing presidential task force; testifying before congress; championing critical issues; supervising historic restorations of the White House; participating as key players in presidential campaigns; and most have served as a trusted political confidante to the president.

The First lady has emerged as a powerful institution in the White House, owe complete with an office, staff and financial resources. The size prominence, and scope of functions associated with her office often surpass that of even the president's most senior aides. Moreover, her character might manifest itself in ways not easily measurable or typically considered by scholars. For instance, it is hard to assess the extent of her influence behind the scenes as the wife of the president. But, it cannot be denied that the spousal relationship has the potential to impact presidential decision making in a way much more profound than the influence wielded by even the most senior White House Advisor.

The First Lady brings to the study of professional decision making a level of access and influence beyond that of any staffer or cabinet member and her understanding of not only the president's deepest personal character traits but of his political agenda, ideology, and career is second to none. Research on the first ladyship has chronicled the social and political influence she

wields within and beyond the White House and has made a case for the study of the office. (11) Indeed, it would seem incumbent upon presidential scholars to consider the character of the person closet to the president.

In spite of a history of contributions to the presidency, serious scholarship on the first ladies is a relatively recent phenomenon. Prior to the 1980's most discussion of the first ladies was social in nature, focusing on such matters as her marriage and choice of inaugural gown. Little serious consideration of the spouse of the president existed and the first lady was largely ignored in mainstream scholarship.(12) By the late eighties, however, scholars began to approach the topic in a more systematic and serious manner. Books by Myra Gatin (1990 & 1991) ushered in a new way of looking at first ladies. The dawn of a new century finds scholarship on first ladies slowly gaining acceptance as a sub-field of presidential studies. (13)

Abraham Lincoln suggested that the president “appeals to the better angels within us” and Franklin D. Roosevelt saw his office as a place of moral leadership.

As has so often been stated, even the presidents see the office as an institution suited for moral leadership and one that assumes the character of the individual occupying the oval office.

President's character remains a key issue in presidential campaigns, especially in 1992, 1996, and 2000 campaigns. Scholars have followed suit, devoting attention to presidential character with a flurry of books published on the topic. The fall 1998 issue of the presidential studies quarterly

highlighted this trend in a special issue on “The Clinton Presidency in Crisis.” With several articles focused on the president’s character. (14)

Two advocates of the study of presidential character and their wives George and George (15) feel it is important to consider character because of its impact on policymaking and political outcomes, and state that a broad criterion is needed in assessing character. But they caution that identifying, developing and applying this broad criterion are difficult. This is agreed by Cronian and Genovese, who maintain that the relationship of character to a president’s performance as well as the character of their wives remains unclear.

Assumptions have been made attempting to define and assess character. Betty Glad maintains that there are especially two differing perspectives on the matter. The one approach, as Stephen Carter suggests, the candidate examining his or her moral virtue, making it known to the public, and acting on it in a consistent and integrated manner. On the other hand, Reinhold Niehbur argues that virtues vary according to the realm in which one finds oneself. Such an approach accepts, for instance that there is a difference between public and private virtues.

So how is character defined and how measurable is the character of the first lady in relation to the president his performance and overall success? History will be the judge.

Recommendations:

Careers unfold in wonderful and unanticipated ways allowing our gifts to be well used. But there is a condition that I have found along with many other noted executives: the flow is smooth only when we focus on service to others and forget ambition.

The inner joy associated with creative work is said to be where true motivation lies. Self interest and moving ahead for financial gain can never bring true joy.

Truly important contributions do not come from ambition or over-reaching. Instead, they flow from “gentle callings” to service that arrived unexpectedly.

Preparing is always necessary but the important stream of teaching and every leadership action that matters has to come by way of invitation.

The leadership models and theories that I have presented in this paper reflect both the inner and outer sides of true leadership.

It is my utmost belief that leaders lead from who they are. Character counts and will ultimately shape the followers direction of the business.

Many say that leadership can be learned. I disagree. You need to be born with it. Distinctly in studies it has been proven that leaders immerges even in the toddler stage. Early in life, it is not difficult to observe toddlers as they play. The observations usually show the dominate leaders as more assertive in this playgroup.

Reflecting on true leadership studies one cannot recommend one or two models that are proven the best. Leadership is personal, unique and subjective to each individual.

Most would commend leaders who take a stand and are not willing to compromise their convictions. This unique quality is most admirals with the political realm. As it is commonly practiced, politics and politicians conceal their hidden agendas and compromise on a regular basis. How refreshing when a political leader stands for the common good and does the right thing even it costs him or her.

Whatever platform of leadership you are in it is proven that character counts. That is the result of this study. Mostly from the inside out approach as Steven Covey, author of the First Things First advocates.

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