

# UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN TODAY'S ENVIRONMENT

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**Abstract** *Our sense of the need for leadership is much stronger in times of change, increased competition, conflict or uncertainty about the future. But the need itself is perennial and indispensable. Today, not least because our awareness of change is so strong, many organisations are embarked upon the journey of trying to transform their managers into business leaders, while others are contemplating doing so and wondering what is the best way to go about it. In these turbulent times when the very foundations of organisations are being shaken, leaders need to move beyond the pessimistic predictions, the trendy facts, and the simplistic solutions. They need to turn to what's real and what's proven, to understand what the evidence tells us about how exemplary leaders get extraordinary things done. This paper enlightens a clear idea of understanding the leadership development and presents an idea of how individuals grow naturally as leaders in the present day atmosphere.*

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## OVERVIEW

In today's environment, employees have to deal with complexity and ambiguity at a much higher rate than before. Functions and clear roles and responsibilities have been replaced with multiple bosses, cross-functional teams, working with partners all over the world and a general sense of never quite standing still. In this brave new world, the only constant is change. And it is managers' ability to innovate, collaborate and adapt to a constantly changing environment that are the leadership skills we most need to develop. Over the last couple of years, we analysed data from over a million people around the globe to assess the practices of leaders. The numbers reveal that the behaviour of leaders explains more about why people feel engaged and positive about their workplace than any particular individual or organisational characteristic. Factors like age, gender, ethnicity, function, position, nationality, organisational size, industry, texture and education together account for less than 1% of the reason that people productive committed in their work places. The leader's behaviours, and the other hand, explain nearly 25% of the reason. According to Fulmer, R. M. (1997),

*"Leadership is not about who you are or where you come from. It's about what you do".*

## NEW WAYS OF THINKING ABOUT THE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Emerging new perspectives on the nature of leadership may profoundly affect our thinking about leadership development. Increasingly, leadership and leadership development are seen as inherently collaborative, social, and relational processes. Similarly, Vicere (2002) has noted the advent of the "networked economy" where "partnerships, strategic and tactical, customer and supplier, personal and organisational, are essential to competitive effectiveness." As a result, leadership will be understood as the collective capacity of all members of an organisation to accomplish such critical tasks as setting direction, creating alignment, and gaining commitment. Leadership development based on this paradigm is more difficult to design and implement than those that have been popular for the last several decades in which the focus was to train individual leaders. Taking this next step will require a deeper understanding of the role of organisational systems and culture in leadership development (VanVelsor and McCauley, 2004). According to Cacioppe, R. (1998),

The most common assumption about leadership is:

*“Leaders are born, not made”*

Today we do know more about the qualities that are essential in a leader, such as enthusiasm and integrity, but there is still no reason to make the qualities (or competences) approach the main basis for a training course. Some of the characteristics of admired leaders are honest, forward looking, inspiring, competent, broad minded, intelligent, straight forward, determinant, ambitious, courageous, self-controlled, loyal, independent, etc., According to Richard A. Davis in his book, *The Intangibles of Leadership & The 10 Qualities of Superior Executive Performance*, the ten qualities are 1. wisdom 2. will 3. executive maturity 4. integrity 5. social judgement 6. presence 7. self-insight 8. self-efficiency 9. fortitude 10. fallibility.

Today's leaders are besieged by activities and tasks that bear no relevance to the direction of the organisation or its impact on the community. A good leader remains focused on developing strategies, executing plans with staff and ensuring that the organisation is equipped to develop and vet new ideas, programs or opportunities. Leaders should delegate all other tasks and focus on a “dashboard” that tracks overarching strategies, programs and impact. According to Barry Z. Posner, *The 5 Practises of Exemplary Leadership*, these five practises are (not “Laws” or “Principles”) 1. model the way 2. inspire a shared vision 3. challenge the process 4. enable others to act 5. encourage the heart.

## PERCEPTION ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Today's leaders understand their limitations and do not take on initiatives and programs outside their own or the organisation's strengths. Instead, they pass opportunities on to other individuals or organisations better suited for them. Furthermore, they are candid with donors (individuals, foundations, corporations) about not accepting gifts for programs outside the scope of the organisation. What's most impressive is that they have those conversations while still maintaining – and often strengthening – their relationships with donors. Management guru, Peter Drucker reminds us that the most effective leaders know four simple things:

1. The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers.
2. An effective leader is not someone who is loved or admired. Popularity isn't leadership; results are.
3. Leaders are highly visible. They set examples.
4. Leadership is not rank, privileges, or money. It is responsibility.

To develop leadership we need to have an understanding of what leadership is; by knowing the 10 truths about

leadership. According to James M. Kouzes, in his article, he stated that 10 truths about leadership are:

1. You make a Difference.
2. Credibility is the foundation of leadership.
3. Values drive commitment.
4. Focusing on the future sets.
5. You can't do it alone.
6. Trust rules.
7. Challenge is the crucible for greatness.
8. You either lead by example/ you don't lead at all.
9. The best leaders are the best learners.
10. Leadership is an affair of the heart.

Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose and follow. In every relationship people have expectation of each other. Sometimes these expectations are clearly voiced, and at other times they are never discussed, but nonetheless expectations are present in every human relationship.

## SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The business case for developing effective leaders is simple. Change isn't going to disappear- ever. To navigate the turbulent seas of change every organisation needs leaders at all levels- team, operational and strategic. The golden key to sustained success is to have great people working for you- and great leaders' at all three levels. Just reflect for a moment on your own experience of what leader can do that someone lacking in leadership cannot.

Accordingly to ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries) is the 1980's, but many other have followed, The seven principles are:

1. A strategy for leadership development.
2. Selection.
3. Training for leadership.
4. A career development policy.
5. Line managers as leadership mentors.
6. Self-development.
7. The strategic leader.

## THE FUTURE LEADERSHIP

Several trends will have a major role in our future understanding and practice of leadership and leadership development. They represent, in different ways, the critical role changing contexts will play in leadership development.

1. Leadership competencies will still matter;
2. Globalisation/ internationalisation of leadership concepts, constructs, and development methods;
3. The role of technology;
4. Increasing interest in the integrity and character of leaders;
5. Pressure to demonstrate return on investment;
6. New ways of thinking about the nature of leadership and leadership development.

According to author and consultant Stephen Covey, leaders of the future will be the people who create cultures or value systems based on principles. Creating such cultures will be tremendously exciting for future leaders, but only if they have the vision, courage, and humility to learn and grow. He believes you can break principle-centered leadership into three basic activities: 1. pathfinding, 2. aligning, 3. empowering.

According to Martineau, J.W., and Hannum, K. M. (2003), When good leaders speak, others walk away with a visual roadmap for where the organisation is going, the steps it will take along the way and the resources needed to get there. Leaders are clear with staff and boards about challenges and strategies, and they provide staff and colleagues with a strong sense of the organisation's direction and purpose.

## CONCLUSION

The dual challenges of understanding the nature of leadership development and implementing effective leadership development practices will likely be greater than ever before. At the same time, we find ourselves guardedly optimistic about the field's future. Our optimism is directly tied to

some of the trends that make the future both challenging and interesting. For example, leadership development practices will need to become better integrated in the broader context of organisational business challenges and systems. Thus, not only will organisations need to hire and develop leaders, they will also need to be the kind of organisations that nurture and reinforce enactment of the kinds of behaviours desired in those leaders. Meeting such challenges will be one important thrust of more comprehensive efforts in the years ahead to demonstrate convincingly the strategic role of people in organisations.

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