

MASTERING LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES OF 21ST CENTURY

***Ms. Shivani Gupta**
****Ms. Parul Sethi,**
*****Mrs. Sandhya Singh**

Abstract

Leadership can be defined as the art of guiding an individual, a group or an organization towards predefined goals. Leadership is generally touted as an art, meaning that it is largely a reflection of the character and style of its possessors. However it must also be remembered that every leader or manager does use a combination of theory and practice in guiding the organization towards achieving its goals. In that context, leadership reflects the leader's values, experience and capabilities in dealing with situations where the outcome is unpredictable and dependent on a host of changing factors and circumstances. Success as a leader would therefore depend on individual responses to a situation that may be novel for the organization. Effective leadership would therefore be a combination of the intellect, energy, courage, temperament and other core values of the leader. However it would be foolish to ignore the distilled wisdom and thoughts of management scientists and practitioners of the discipline in our culture. Leadership is not static but dynamic- it must continually evolve, as the world must keep learning. Managers have a significant role in the leadership in their organization. In increasingly competitive and fast changing times Managers have a major responsibility to ensure that teams deliver quality services and products. The paper is a synthesis of the description, roles, attributes and challenges faced by the leaders of today. Starting with the role of the manager/leader in today's business world, it looks at theories explaining the nature and role of leadership, the attributes of a leader and how these can be learned and developed. It looks at the manager/ leader operating under different constraints with the boundaries of organizational cultures.

Introduction:

The business organizations of today are increasingly affected by the rapid pace of technological, commercial and managerial changes, hitherto incomparable in terms of pace, magnitude, complexity and the absence of certainty. Effective leadership requires a paradigm shift in thinking- the ability to manage (a) overcoming the fear of failure (b) moving out of traditional comfort zones (c) risk taking (d) breaking the mould (e) testing and busting the boundaries and (f) recognizing the need for learning and continual updating of knowledge and understanding. Leadership is a mass of different skills than can be learned, the leader-in-training passes through four different stages in picking up a skill: (1) unconscious incompetence (2) conscious incompetence (3) conscious competence and (4) unconscious competence.

Mastery in leadership is a synthesis of IQ, emotional intelligence, experience, acquired competence and a good fortune. It is also about being able to trigger and mobilize willing synergy and commitment among others in the collective pursuit of changing goals in conditions of uncertainty, insecurity and contradiction. Wisdom in leadership probably begins with the recognition that there is no one 'right' of doing things. Leadership is about balancing the demands of the task with the needs and expectations of the people involved.' In the realm of leadership activity, we move along a continuum from Doing to Improving to Changing and Developing to

Integrating and Synthesizing to Mastery. In terms of communication and leadership level, becoming a Master Leader is characterized by peak communication. The leader's 'political' maturity and acumen, ability to influence others and make things happen, within networks of complex organizational and power relationships, is very important. Caroline Egri of the Simon Fraser University, Canada, identifies eight actions, or behaviors, to ensure political survival: 1. Enhance your personal power and influence. 2. Increase your centrality and criticality within the business. 3. Raise your visibility around the place. 4. Strengthen and reinforce your relevance in the organization. 5. Increase your flexibility, but preserve your integrity as a person and as a member of the organization. 6. Use reason, reciprocity and retribution wisely. 7. Learn how to counter them effectively. 8. Empower your people and draw on the strength of your team as an organizational entity. The effectiveness of the leader also depends upon the environment or organizational culture in which he operates. In contrast to the closed 'domain management' culture that characterize older organizations, there is today a move towards an open culture, which is characterized by I) Continually changing, renewing and re-organizing II) Open culture, with the major focus on 'what', not 'who' needs changing III) Interdependent and cross-functionally oriented with high emphasis upon 'networking' communication styles and multidisciplinary working and, thus outputs IV) 'Outwards', as well as 'inwards' leadership and role focus, aimed at seeking coalitions, partnerships

***Ms. Shivani Gupta, Asstt. Professor ,**
****Ms. Parul Sethi, Asstt. Professor**
*****Mrs. Sandhya Singh, Asstt. Professor**
VIT, Meerut

and alliances. V) High adaptability and flex in organizational response, work roles and goals and availability of contributive competence as situations and demands change, with consequent multiplicity of transient 'We's' and 'us's' as teams organically arise, live and 'die' VI) Effective use of systems as stabilizing, consistency ensuring processes VII) Consequent proactive and reactive versatility and innovation VIII) Shared vision and values largely replace traditional role structures, as 'like minds', and 'kindred spirits' articulate and synthesize new common purpose, missions and goals IX) Leader concentrates upon energizing, facilitating and coaching the process. There is thus a need for at least two different, but complementary leadership roles: 'Inwards' focused leadership, which concentrates upon the 'internal life' of the team. Fulfilling the three functions of leadership identified in John Adair's action-centered leadership model. Focusing on follower functional maturity (Hersey-Blanchard parameters) and therefore the levels of 'skill and will' of team members. 'Outwards' focused leadership, which relates the team (or business) to its wider operating environment and network of external relationships. Operating within organizational boundaries, there is a tension or mistrust that needs to be addressed if the new thinking is to be implemented effectively in the organization. Change is more readily accepted if we take the following steps: 1. Confirm pressure/need for change. 2. Communicate vision, 3. Confirm goals, strategies and competencies to bring about transformation. 4. Win and mobilize key 'hearts and minds'. 5. Implement strategies with sequential action. 6. Follow-up and follow through.

The Details of Mastering Leadership:

You've been a leader for years. You've learned a lot. And yet you may sense that there is much more to learn. The skills described on the following pages are learnable skills those skills that make up the human side of executive performance. . . leadership. If you are actually going to master leadership, you need these four things.

The Description You need a description of the set of skills that make up leadership. This includes both the outer dimensions of behavior and the inner dimensions of thinking . . . the deep structure.

The Experts Words, theories and concepts are insufficient. You need experts to demonstrate each set of skills. With an expert model you see and hear precisely what to practice.

The Attitude Envisioning the process you are engaged in - your path of mastery - gives you both the awareness of the goal and knowledge of the journey. A central requirement for mastering complex skills is loving the plateau. The path of mastery is a journey of practicing the details, engaging in what master dog-sled racer Susan Butcher calls "a labor of love" . . . practicing for the sake of practicing.

The Learning Technology You need to know how to practice the details. An advanced learning technology brings out the whole range of your inner and outer capacities for learning the skills that you are practicing. Systematic disciplined practice of the detailed, fundamental skills is as necessary for mastering leadership as it is for mastering golf,

tennis, a musical instrument, marriage or any other complex human endeavor - even life itself.

Thinking Skills:-

To master leadership, you must first master your thinking skills. The inner skills of thinking the deep structures are few in number yet they exert a profound influence on attitudes, non-verbal behavior, and decision making.

Through years of research we have developed specific exercises which will allow you to gain awareness of many facets of the deep structure and ultimately to achieve mastery of them. Here's just one of the deep structure thinking skills you can master: An "Other Position" Shift. Master leaders develop the capacity to use imagination and the whole nervous system to temporarily become someone else - that is, to adopt the specific point of view, feelings, perceptions, beliefs, desires and needs of another person. Federal Express Chairman, Fred Smith said in a recent interview: "One of the big things about getting employees involved is to make them kind of have an "out of body" experience to help them look at the world as a consumer as opposed to a producer."

This flight of imagination, when sufficiently detailed, allows top leaders to gain a deep body-based knowledge of the other's whole experience. Images, feelings, beliefs, values, identity, objectives and more are subject to your first-hand internal evaluation. And once you have this knowledge, you know intuitively what it takes to lead that person for optimum results. This particular part of the deep structure is one of many learnable thinking skills that you'll use daily after attending our Mastering Leadership program for senior executives.

The complexity in our minds must mirror the increasing complexity of our outer world. Practicing the many detailed patterns within the deep structure helps to achieve this inner complexity. The following categories represent the Mastering Leadership core competencies, the learning process a participant would go through and the model of inner and outer skills of top leaders from around the world.

Deep thinking modes:

Learn how to master problem-solving, planning and decision-making.

Learn to fine-tune your internal feelings, sounds and images as easily as turning the knobs on a stereo system.

Learn how "special effects" in the visual, auditory or feeling realm can enhance your thinking and performance.

Anchoring - Reproduce feeling states of excellence and transfer them to situations where those feelings are desired.

Circuitry sensing - Learn to recognize and respond to subtle body cues from the inner wisdom of your deep structure.

Focused states - Reproduce the periods of focused concentration that all master leaders have in common.

Beliefs: understand deeply-held beliefs that may be hindering your performance and learn how to change them.

Deep Rules:

- Achieve clarity . . . create peace of mind in a world of chaos.
- Create alignment between thinking modes and perceptual positions.
- Mission Alignment: Create alignment between your organizational mission, your personal mission and your deeply held values.
- Make sure your desired state of mind is present now, as a means to achieve accomplishments rather than having such a state happen later, as a reward for achieving accomplishments.
- Neuro-logical levels use the natural, multilayered architecture of the deep structure.
- Develop an almost unnaturally powerful memory through a keen knowledge of "logical levels".
- Create a harmonious relationship between your conscious mind and your deep structure.
- Learn how to fully internalize the rules you believe in . . . and how to decide about the exceptions to those rules.

Deep Metaphors:

- Gain an understanding of the "inner architecture" of human beings . . . what makes us tick, how we make meaning and therefore how to create profound change, including the work of George Lakoff, Mark Johnson and Charles Faulkner.
- Learn to choose the underlying structures of your values and beliefs to better serve you.
- Learn to organize your inner world into levels and categories that greatly expand your thinking capacities
- Recognize and choose the metaphors you use to increase the complexity of your thinking.
- Determine your personal mission and how to live that mission.

Deep Self:

- Discover the origin of your hidden definitions of self and how to change them.
- Learn to fully experience the five different perceptual positions used by master leaders to gain intuition about people (and themselves).
- Learn the deep structure pattern that makes master entrepreneurs like Stew Leonard so intensely concerned with customers . . . and learn how it can boost your business.
- Differentiate between those qualities of a person that are learned and those that are part of each person's inherent nature.
- Determine your deep goals . . . and know, perhaps for the first time, exactly how to reach them.
- Discover the state of mind and body that is the deep essence of many of the worlds religions . . . and great organizations.
- Learn to sub-consciously adjust your self-boundaries and to expand (or shrink) your "circle of leadership" whenever you choose.
- Optimization of a system through shifts in perceptual positions and selfboundaries. The resulting profound knowledge and deep wisdom contrasts sharply with the thinking that maximizes a single or limited set of objectives (MBO).

Conclusion:

Below are five steps organizations can take to help bridge the gap between current leadership CHALLENGES and future leadership needs:

Perform a needs assessment. Identify the capabilities managers need now and in the future to execute and sustain the organization's strategy. CCL's (Centre for Creative leadership) Leadership Gap Indicator is one way to determine organizational needs and leadership gaps.

Create a leadership strategy. A clear understanding of the leadership behaviors and skills that are required to implement the organization's business strategy allows executives to develop a leadership strategy. In turn, development initiatives can be aligned with operational needs.

Develop clear, specific goals and strategies for individual leadership development. Assess managers' strengths and weaknesses as leaders against the core competencies identified in the needs assessment. Other assessments, including 360-degree feedback tools, can be helpful in evaluating individuals' areas of strength and development needs. Be sure to factor in feedback, coaching, and assessment toward goal attainment.

Create systems. Excel at recruiting, identifying, and developing talent as well as performance management and retention.

Evaluate. Build in systems for measuring how these efforts are paying off across the organization