

10. Task Oriented Leadership

Task-oriented (or task-focused) leadership is a behavioral approach in which the leader focuses on the tasks that need to be performed in order to meet certain goals, or to achieve a certain performance standard. Relationship-oriented (or relationship-focused) leadership is a behavioral approach in which the leader focuses on the satisfaction, motivation and the general well-being of the team members.

Task-oriented and relationship-oriented leadership are two models that are often compared, as they are known to produce varying outcomes under different circumstances.

Qualities of task-oriented leadership

Task-oriented leaders focus on getting the necessary task, or series of tasks, at hand in order to achieve a goal. These leaders are typically less concerned with the idea of catering to employees, and more concerned with finding the step-by-step solution required to meet specific goals. They will often actively define the work and the roles required, put structures in place, and plan, organize, and monitor progress within the team.

The advantages of task-oriented leadership is that it ensures that deadlines are met and jobs are completed, and it's especially useful for team members who don't manage their time well. Additionally, these types of leaders will tend to exemplify strong understanding of how to get the job done by focusing on the necessary workplace procedures, thus can delegate work accordingly in order to ensure that everything gets done in a timely and productive manner.

However, because task-oriented leaders don't tend to think much about their team's well-being, this approach can suffer many of the flaws of autocratic leadership, including causing motivation and retention problems.

Qualities of relationship-oriented leadership

Relationship-oriented leaders are focused on supporting, motivating and developing the people on their teams and the relationships within. This style of leadership encourages good teamwork and collaboration, through fostering positive

relationships and good communication. Relationship-oriented leaders prioritize the welfare of everyone in the group, and will place time and effort in meeting the individual needs of everyone involved. This may involve offering incentives like bonuses, providing mediation to deal with workplace or classroom conflicts, having more casual interactions with team members to learn about their strengths and weaknesses, creating a non-competitive and transparent work environment, or just leading in a personable or encouraging manner.

The benefits of relationship-oriented leadership is that team members are in a setting where the leader cares about their well-being. Relationship-oriented leaders understand that building positive productivity requires a positive environment where individuals feel driven. Personal conflicts, dissatisfaction with a job, resentment and even boredom can severely drive down productivity, so these types of leaders put people first to ensure that such problems stay at a minimum. Additionally, team members may be more willing to take risks, because they know that the leader will provide the support if needed.

The downside of relationship-oriented leadership is that, if taken too far, the development of team chemistry may detract from the actual tasks and goals at hand.

The term “people-oriented” is used synonymously, whilst in a business setting, this approach may also be referred to as “employee-oriented”.

10.1 Core Leadership theories

Why are some leaders successful, while others fail? The truth is that there is no "magic combination" of characteristics that makes a leader successful, and different characteristics matter in different circumstances. This doesn't mean, however, that you can't learn to be an effective leader. You just need to understand the various approaches to leadership, so that you can use the right approach for your own situation. One way of doing this is to learn about the core leadership theories that provide the backbone of our current understanding of leadership. Since the early 20th century, four main groups of theories have emerged. We look at these core leadership theories in this article.

The Four Core Theory Groups Let's look at each of the four core groups of theory, and explore some of the tools and models that apply with each. (Keep in mind that there are many other theories out there.)

1. Trait Theories – What Type of Person Makes a Good Leader? Trait theories argue that effective leaders share a number of common personality characteristics, or "traits." Early trait theories said that leadership is an innate, instinctive quality that you do or don't have. Thankfully, we've moved on from this idea, and we're learning more about what we can do to develop leadership qualities within ourselves and others. Trait theories help us identify traits and qualities (for example, integrity, empathy, assertiveness, good decision-making skills, and likability) that are helpful when leading others. However, none of these traits, nor any specific combination of them, will guarantee success as a leader. Traits are external behaviors that emerge from the things going on within our minds – and it's these internal beliefs and processes that are important for effective leadership.

2. Behavioral Theories – What Does a Good Leader Do? Behavioral theories focus on how leaders behave. For instance, do leaders dictate what needs to be done and expect cooperation? Or do they involve their teams in decision-making to encourage acceptance and support? In the 1930s, Kurt Lewin developed a framework based on a leader's behavior. He argued that there are three types of leaders: Autocratic leaders make decisions without consulting their teams. This style of leadership is considered appropriate when decisions need to be made quickly, when there's no need for input, and when team agreement isn't necessary for a successful outcome. Democratic leaders allow the team to provide input before making a decision, although the degree of input can vary from leader to leader. This style is important when team agreement matters, but it can be difficult to manage when there are lots of different perspectives and ideas. Laissez-faire leaders don't interfere; they allow people within the team to make many of the decisions. This works well when the team is highly capable, is motivated, and doesn't need close supervision. However, this behavior can arise because the leader is lazy or distracted; and this is where this style of leadership can fail. Clearly, how leaders behave affects their performance. Researchers have realized, though, that many of these leadership behaviors are appropriate at different times. The best leaders are those who can use many different behavioral styles, and choose the right style for each situation.

3. Contingency Theories – How Does the Situation Influence Good Leadership?

The realization that there is no one correct type of leader led to theories that the best leadership style depends on the situation. These theories try to predict which style is best in which circumstance. For instance, when you need to make quick decisions, which style is best? When you need the full support of your team, is there a more effective way to lead? Should a leader be more people-oriented or task-oriented? These are all questions that contingency leadership theories try to address.

4. Power and Influence Theories – What is the Source of the Leader's Power?

Power and influence theories of leadership take an entirely different approach – these are based on the different ways that leaders use power and influence to get things done, and they look at the leadership styles that emerge as a result.

Perhaps the best-known of these theories is French and Raven's Five Forms of Power . This model highlights three types of positional power – legitimate, reward, and coercive – and two sources of personal power – expert and referent (your personal appeal and charm). The model suggests that using personal power is the better alternative, and that you should work on building expert power (the power that comes with being a real expert in the job) because this is the most legitimate source of personal power.

Another leadership style that uses power and influence is transactional leadership. This approach assumes that people do things for reward and for no other reason. Therefore, it focuses on designing tasks and reward structures. While this may not be the most appealing leadership strategy in terms of building relationships and developing a highly motivating work environment, it often works, and leaders in most organizations use it on a daily basis to get things done.

10.2 Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership is an approach to leadership that emphasizes building the leader's legitimacy through honest relationships with followers which value their input and are built on an ethical foundation. Generally, authentic leaders are positive people with truthful self-concepts who promote openness. By building trust and generating enthusiastic support from their subordinates, authentic leaders

are able to improve individual and team performance. This approach has been fully embraced by many leaders and leadership coaches who view authentic leadership as an alternative to leaders who emphasize profit and share price over people and ethics, with occasionally disastrous results for themselves, their employees, and their organizations. Authentic leadership is a growing area of study in academic research on leadership which has recently grown from obscurity to the beginnings of a fully mature concept.

Authenticity and ethics

Some have suggested authentic leadership need not include a moral component. Proponents of this point of view emphasize the word “authentic” in authentic leadership and suggest that one can be true to a corrupt value system and still be an authentic leader. Faking a set of ethical constraints to which a leader does not personally prescribe would be a sign of inauthenticity. Others reject the idea that a leader can truly exhibit the other components of the construct – self-awareness, relational transparency, and balanced processing – without the moral maturity associated with a positive personal value system.

Patterns of behavior

Authentic leadership should be understood as a pattern of behaviors through which leaders exhibit the components of authentic leadership. Thus, it is insufficient for the leader to be self-aware, etc. without also conducting him or herself in such a way that others, particularly subordinates, view the leader as authentic.

Becoming an authentic leader

The basis of authentic leadership comes from the leader’s personal history, including life-events (often called trigger events) that direct the flow of leadership formation. How leaders interpret these personal histories and trigger events will inform their self-identity as leaders and influence their moral development and values, two essential components in the development of authentic leaders. Because authenticity in leadership is rooted in being true to one’s own ideals of leadership and ethical values, authentic leadership is brought about through a lifetime of experiences and is resistant to traditional training programs. Development of authentic leaders involves guided self-reflection, building self-awareness through

the use of a life-stories approach. It may also be facilitated by the intervention of developmental trigger events coupled with directed self-reflection. Recognizing leadership contingency theory, which suggest that leaders must adapt their styles and behaviors to be effective across different situations, some leadership development theorists have pointed out that only the most expert of leaders can incorporate the needs of varying situations and different followers into their own underlying value system so as to remain authentic while also being effective across diverse leadership contexts.

Relationship to other leadership theories

The end of the twentieth century saw a rise of new theories of leadership that attempt to understand how leaders not only direct and manage, but also inspire their followers in unique ways. The construct of charismatic leadership was introduced in Max Weber in the 1920's but greatly expanded upon by leadership theorists beginning in the 1970's and continuing to today. Charismatic leadership theories attempt to capture the attributes and behaviors of extraordinary leaders in extraordinary situations (including variances of either dimension) in order to understand unusual or unique responses of followers. A short time later, transformational leadership theory was developed extensively. This theory differentiated "transformational" leadership behaviors from "transactional" leadership behaviors; transformational leaders inspire extraordinary action by providing insight to followers regarding the importance of their work and its outcomes, by calling on followers to subordinate their self-interest to that of the organization, and by motivating followers through activation of higher-order needs. More recent examples of what have been called neo-charismatic leadership theories include servant leadership, ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, and visionary leadership.

Authentic leadership proponents and scholars suggest that authentic leadership is conceptually distinct from these other approaches leadership. There is empirical support for this position, as studies have shown that authentic leadership can explain variance in leadership performance over and above that explained by other leadership theories, such as transformational leadership and ethical leadership. At the same time, some theorists have suggested that authentic leadership is but one (albeit important) aspect of other forms of leadership. Still others have suggested

that authentic leadership is a root construct that underpins positive leadership in general. This ambiguous understanding of what distinguishes authentic leadership theory from other leadership theories may be considered a signal that, despite growing research into authentic leadership, the theory remains at the beginning stages of construct development; more research will be required to draw distinctions among these various leadership theories. It should also be noted, however, that many of these theories are also underdeveloped; thus the differentiation problem cannot be strictly attributed to authentic leadership theory development.

10.3 The Transformation of a Leader

Transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the project and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them and makes them interested; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that enhance their performance.

Development of concept

James MacGregor Burns (1978) first introduced the concept of transforming leadership in his descriptive research on political leaders, but this term is now used in organizational psychology as well (Bass & Riggio, 2006). According to Burns, transforming leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation". Burns related to the difficulty in differentiation between management and leadership and claimed that the differences are in characteristics and behaviors. He established two concepts: "transforming leadership" and "transactional leadership". According to Burns, the transforming approach creates significant change in the life of people and organizations. It redesigns perceptions and values, and changes expectations and aspirations of employees. Unlike in the transactional approach, it is not based on a "give and take" relationship, but on the leader's personality, traits and ability to make a change through example, articulation of an energizing vision and challenging goals. Transforming leaders are idealized in the sense that they are a

moral exemplar of working towards the benefit of the team, organization and/or community. Burns theorized that transforming and transactional leadership were mutually exclusive styles.

Bernard M. Bass (1985), extended the work of Burns (1978) by explaining the psychological mechanisms that underlie transforming and transactional leadership. Bass introduced the term "transformational" in place of "transforming." Bass added to the initial concepts of Burns (1978) to help explain how transformational leadership could be measured, as well as how it impacts follower motivation and performance. The extent to which a leader is transformational, is measured first, in terms of his influence on the followers. The followers of such a leader feel trust, admiration, loyalty and respect for the leader and because of the qualities of the transformational leader are willing to work harder than originally expected. These outcomes occur because the transformational leader offers followers something more than just working for self gain; they provide followers with an inspiring mission and vision and give them an identity. The leader transforms and motivates followers through his or her idealized influence (earlier referred to as charisma), intellectual stimulation and individual consideration. In addition, this leader encourages followers to come up with new and unique ways to challenge the status quo and to alter the environment to support being successful. Finally, in contrast to Burns, Bass suggested that leadership can simultaneously display both transformational and transactional leadership.

Now 30 years of research and a number of meta-analyses have shown that transformational and transactional leadership positively predicts a wide variety of performance outcomes including individual, group and organizational level variables.

The full range of leadership introduces four elements of transformational leadership:

1. Individualized Consideration – the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower and listens to the follower's concerns and needs. The leader gives empathy and support, keeps communication open and places challenges before the followers. This also encompasses the need for respect and celebrates the individual contribution that

each follower can make to the team. The followers have a will and aspirations for self development and have intrinsic motivation for their tasks.

2. Intellectual Stimulation – the degree to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks and solicits followers' ideas. Leaders with this style stimulate and encourage creativity in their followers. They nurture and develop people who think independently. For such a leader, learning is a value and unexpected situations are seen as opportunities to learn. The followers ask questions, think deeply about things and figure out better ways to execute their tasks. This type of challenge is not made to hurt or limit the follower, but intended to encourage change and maturity of their skills. As long as progress is being made, the leader's want for improvement and change will enhance the experiences of the followers and their quality of work will improve immensely.

3. Inspirational Motivation – the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers. Leaders with inspirational motivation challenge followers to leave their comfort zones, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Followers need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act. Purpose and meaning provide the energy that drives a group forward. The visionary aspects of leadership are supported by communication skills that make the vision understandable, precise, powerful and engaging. The followers are willing to invest more effort in their tasks, they are encouraged and optimistic about the future and believe in their abilities.

4. Idealized Influence – the degree to which the leader acts as a role model for their followers. Transformational leaders must embody the values that the followers should be learning and mimicking back to others. If the leader gives respect and encourages others to be better, those influenced will then go to others and repeat the positive behavior, passing on the leadership qualities for other followers to learn. This will earn the leader more respect and admiration from the followers, putting them at a higher level of influence and importance.

Each element is connected because there is a basis of respect, encouragement, and influence that is involved in transformational leadership. The personality of the

leader has to be genuine because any chance of inconsistency for the followers and all trust is gone, and the leader has failed.

As a development tool, transformational leadership has spread already in all sectors of western societies, including governmental organizations. As an example, the Finnish Defense Forces is widely using Deep Lead© Model as basic solution of its leadership training and development. The Deep Lead© Model is based on the theory of transformational leadership.

10.4 Developing Self-Awareness

Research in the area

Earlier research on transformational leadership was limited, because the knowledge in this area was too primitive for finding good examples for the items in the questionnaire. Another weakness in the first version of the MLQ related to the wording of items. Most items in the scale of charismatic leadership described the result of leadership, instead of specific actions of the leader that can be observed and that, in turn, lead to the results. In response to the critics, Bass and Avolio (1990) included in the revised and now subsequent versions many more items that describe leadership actions that are observed directly. They also split out attributions of leadership associated with Idealized Influence and behaviors and actions into two separate scales.

The current version of the MLQ Form 5X includes 36 items that are broken down into 9 scales with 4 items measuring each scale. Subsequent validation work by John Antonakis and his colleagues provided strong evidence supporting the validity and reliability of the MLQ5X. Indeed, Antonakis et al. (2003) confirmed the viability of the proposed nine-factor model MLQ model, using two very large samples (Study 1: N=3368; Study 2: N=6525). Although other researchers have still been critical of the MLQ model, since 2003 none has been able to provide disconfirming evidence of the theorized nine-factor model with such large sample sizes at those published by Antonakis et al. (2003).

Implications for managers

Yukl (1994) draws some tips for transformational leadership:

1. Develop a challenging and attractive vision, together with the employees.
2. Tie the vision to a strategy for its achievement.
3. Develop the vision, specify and translate it to actions.
4. Express confidence, decisiveness and optimism about the vision and its implementation.
5. Realize the vision through small planned steps and small successes in the path for its full implementation.

Test if you are a Transformational Leader

Ronald E. Riggio, Ph.D (2009) lists a few traits of a transformational leader to test individuals:

1. I would not assign a task that I wouldn't do myself.
2. I have clear goals for my team.
3. I find it comes natural to inspire others.
4. I celebrate the talents and successes of my followers.
5. I am attentive when it comes to the personal needs of my followers.
6. I challenge my followers to get out of their comfort zones.
7. I believe that team work is the way to success.
8. I promote change and allow my followers to learn from their mistakes.

