

Module Title: Leadership and Management Theory and Practice

**Group work presentation
Presented by**

Module code: LCBB6003

Assignment 2

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Leadership Qualities of Jeff Bezos at Amazon

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TEODOR Angelov

Introduction

- Jeff Bezos has had many successes in his career.
- From founding Amazon, he has grown on to buying The Washington Post among other notable investments.
- Since he remains one of the most unique CEOs and leaders in the world, Bezos is often among the leaders referred to when analyzing global economic issues.
- Sometimes he is a fairly controversial figure too.



- Jeff Bezos has had many successes in his career, from founding Amazon to buying The Washington Post, but he remains one of the most unique CEOs and leaders in the world.
- He has been described as stingy and known to fire those who don't meet his expectations, but at the same time, he was named Time Magazine's Person of the Year in 1999, and then again in 2007, 2012, and 2016 (Carino, 2021).
- How do these seemingly opposite traits work together?
- This presentation briefly covers Bezos' leadership style through the leadership skills he uses to run Amazon successfully.

Leadership quality: Transparency

- One of the most important leadership skills that Jeff Bezos has is transparency.
- He believes that it's essential for leaders to be open and honest with their teams, and he lives by this principle himself.
- This allows everyone to understand the company's situation and makes them feel like they are part of the team.



- Bezo's success as a CEO has a lot to do with this leadership quality. For example, he regularly shares Amazon's financial results with employees, even when they are not as good as the company would expect (Stone, 2021).
- Transparency and honesty are two qualities that are vital to being an effective leader, as they promote trust between you and your followers.
- While transparency and honesty might sound like similar concepts, they're actually quite different, as transparency requires revealing all relevant details about a situation or issue, while honesty merely means speaking honestly without any intent to deceive others.
- Followers who know that their leaders are operating with these two qualities will be able to trust them more, which will help the leader lead more effectively because the followers will be more willing to follow his or her instructions and suggestions.

Leadership quality: Candor

- Jeff Bezos is known for his candid communication style.
- His passion and dedication is evident in Amazon's customer-centric culture.
- Jeff ensures that he and his team are always focused on the customer first by encouraging open and honest feedback (Sadq, Sabir and Saeed, 2018).



- Candor is the quality of being open and honest with people when communicating and leading them. In business, candid communication is vital as it enhances all the stakeholders' understanding of the existing conditions and, in return, that makes it more likely that they will be more engaged in their roles to make the company better.
- He has been quoted as saying, *"The only way to do great work is to love what you do."* Which is a great way to tell people to be passionate about their roles in the company.
- Candidness in communication also indicates to the company's stakeholders that the leader cares about their roles, and that their contribution is valued, hence the honest reviews are meant to highlight areas where improvements are needed.

Leadership quality: Anticipating change

- In business, the ability to anticipate change is critical for success and few people do this better than Jeff Bezos.
- Here are five ways he anticipates change and uses it to his advantage (Furgang, 2018).
 - Hiring people with different backgrounds
 - Investing in innovation
 - Making informed decisions
 - Supporting non-profit programs in communities.
 - Exhibiting all -round leadership.



- In business, the ability to anticipate change is critical for success. And there's no one who does this better than Jeff Bezos, the founder and CEO of Amazon. Here are five ways he anticipates change and uses it to his advantage (Furgang, 2018)
- He hires people with different backgrounds. For example, Bezos hired company chief financial officer Allan A. Seligman after seeing him present at a conference on supply chain management in 2003.
- He invests in innovation through new initiatives and acquisitions.
- He doesn't let others' opinions influence decisions.
- His businesses have non-profit work programs.
- He approaches leadership from all angles-being both encouraging and tough when needed

**Desislava
Zhelyazkova**

Listening Carefully and Often

- Bezos has mastered the skill of listening carefully to what the company's stakeholders need.
- Jeff Bezos listens carefully to the needs of their employees for a number of reasons which include:
 - To get a pulse on what is going on within the company and identify any potential problems early on.
 - To keep their employees more engaged and productive.
 - To be able to make better decisions about things like budgeting and resource allocation.

A photograph of Jeff Bezos speaking, with a blue-bordered text box overlaid on the right side of the image.

"We've had three big ideas at Amazon that we've stuck with for 18 years, and they're the reason we're successful: Put the customer first. Invent. And be patient."

Jeff Bezos

leanCXScore.com

- Jeff Bezos is a good leader because he has mastered the skill of listening carefully to what the company's stakeholders need.
- As the saying goes, you have two ears and one mouth for a reason. This is especially true for leaders. In order to be an effective leader, you need to listen more than you talk.
- Listening allows you to gather information and get a better understanding of the situation before making decisions.
- It also shows that you respect others and are interested in hearing what they have to say.
- Listening often improves your communication skills because it forces you to think about how your words will impact others (Lisdorf, 2021).
- When listening well, people are much more likely to open up and share their thoughts with you when they feel like their opinion matters. You will find that listening pays off not only in relationships but also with business deals, as many times people will tell you what they want or need if you just listen first.

Putting Others First

- One key leadership skill that Jeff Bezos uses is putting others first.
- By putting customers first, he has made Amazon one of the most successful companies in the world.
- The two keys to this strategy are trust and transparency.
- By trusting employees with their tasks, they feel more invested in them which increases productivity and decreases turnover rates.

BE CUSTOMER-ORIENTED

“

Many companies describe themselves as customer-focused, but few walk the walk. Most big technology companies are competitor-focused. They see what others are doing, and then work to quickly follow.



Jeff Bezos
Amazon CEO

- Transparency also keeps everyone accountable for their work which leads to increased customer satisfaction because problems can be solved faster when they arise (Bezos and Isaacson, 2020).
- Jeff Bezos is on record for having said that, “We see our customers as invited guests to a party, and we are the hosts. It’s our job every day to make every important aspect of the customer experience a little bit better.”
- In order to be a good leader, CEOs should always put others first. This means being transparent and honest with their team, being clear about expectations, and delegating tasks accordingly. Additionally, leaders should provide employees with regular feedback and opportunities for growth. By doing so, employees will feel valued and motivated to do their best work.

Have a Mission, Vision and Strategy That's Clear to Everyone

- Jeff Bezos started Amazon in 1994 with the mission to be the world's most customer-centric company, where customers can find and discover anything they might want to buy online.
- This mission has led Amazon to become one of the largest online retailers in the world.
- Under his leadership, Amazon has a clear vision and strategy that is communicated effectively to everyone in the company (Desai, n.d.).



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- This mission has led Amazon to become one of the largest online retailers in the world.
- Under his leadership, Amazon has a clear vision and strategy that is communicated effectively to everyone in the company (Desai, n.d.).
- The company is also tackling the grocery market by acquiring Whole Foods Market for \$13.7 billion in 2017 and are developing artificial intelligence systems such as Alexa, Echo Show and Dash Wand that have improved user experiences.
- When you're the leader of a company, it's important that your team knows where the company is going and what its goals are. Jeff Bezos, the founder and CEO of Amazon, is a big proponent of this idea – he makes sure that his mission, vision and strategy are clear to everyone at Amazon. It may sound simple, but having a clear sense of direction can help employees know how they fit into the larger picture and make better decisions about their work day-to-day.
- This clarity has been pivotal in Amazon's success over the years.

Celebrate Success Regularly

- One of Bezos' leadership skills is celebrating success regularly.
- This helps keep employees motivated and focused on the company's goals.
- Amazon uses non-monetary incentives to motivate and reward its employees.
- It also has sign-on bonuses that amount to \$3,000.

“ Quality is more important than quantity. One home run is much better than two doubles.
– Steve Jobs



- As the CEO of Amazon, Jeff Bezos knows a thing or two about running a successful business. One of his leadership skills is celebrating success regularly.
- This helps keep employees motivated and focused on the company's goals.
- This would also make for a fun work environment, especially with the employees feeling that the company and their managers are keen to appreciate their efforts and combined achievements.
- Regularly celebrating the success of the organization also has the effect of pooling the employees together and making them feel that in addition to being a part of the organisation, they are counted by the leadership as part of its growth and achievements (Hammer, 2021).
- Transparency is a key quality for any leader. It allows employees to trust their leaders, and feel like they are part of a team working towards a common goal. Leaders who are open and honest with their employees create an environment of trust and respect. This mutual respect is essential for a successful team. When employees feel valued and respected, they are more likely to be motivated and invested in their work. Celebrating successes together is one way to show employees that their efforts are appreciated.
- Non-monetary programs such as “Swag bucks” which entails redeemable branded merchandise for the employees on merit bases makes employees work better, and the company is the main beneficiary.

**Petya
Niklenova**

Treat Every Customer as an Important Advocate

- One of the leadership skills that Jeff Bezos uses is treating every customer as an important advocate.
- This means always putting the customer first and doing whatever it takes to make them happy.
- By making customer service a priority, Amazon has been able to build a loyal customer base that keeps coming back.
- In turn, this has helped them grow into the ecommerce giant they are today.



One of the leadership skills that Jeff Bezos uses is treating every customer as an important advocate. This means always putting the customer first and doing whatever it takes to make them happy.

- By making customer service a priority, Amazon has been able to build a loyal customer base that keeps coming back. This, in turn, has helped them grow into the ecommerce giant they are today.
- Bezos and the company have learned how to use feedback loops to improve their business by listening closely to what customers have to say about their products and services.
- They have also taken advantage of platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, Pinterest and others to reach out personally with responses or updates when necessary (Tou et al., 2019).
- Customers are the lifeblood of any business. It's important to remember that every customer is an advocate for your company, whether they're providing positive or negative feedback. Customers who feel heard will tell their friends about their experience and will most likely come back to you in the future. A recent study found that 64% of customers would spend more with a company if they felt like their needs were being met.

Embrace Constraints, Focus on Outcomes

- ▶ Jeff Bezos has built an empire done by thinking outside the box, embracing constraints, and focusing on outcomes.
- ▶ The success of the company today is an indication that even though he's had failures in the past, the net result was successful.
- ▶ Like it was the case with Amazon's Fire phone flopping in the market, sometimes risks do not pay off for Bezos, and the company took more time to assess the situation in the market and understand the customers more before launching another product. (Taylor, 2018).



He has been a visionary when it comes to leveraging the assets that already exist, taking risks, and committing to a culture of invention and experimentation.

While building the company into what it is today, Bezos has encountered failures and has depended on his problem-solving abilities to his advantage.

In 2009, the company had to refund customers who had purchased books, which the company later had to delete because Amazon did not have proper rights to the books.

After that, the company made sure to acquire all the proper rights to books and other intellectual property in order to avoid such mishaps. In doing so, the company found ways to grow despite the challenges.

Lead with Integrity

- ▶ Bezos stresses the need to build an emotional connection with employees.
- ▶ He understands that it's difficult to have happy employees without happy leaders.
- ▶ When an employee confides that they are struggling with something on their team or in their personal life, Amazon's managers respond thoughtfully and do not give up until they have helped them out of their dilemma.
- ▶ Such a culture helps the company's employees to further buy into its vision and mission.



- It is no secret that Jeff Bezos is a smart cookie. He is the founder and CEO of Amazon, one of the world's most successful companies.
- But how does he do it; What leadership skills does he use to run Amazon so successfully?
- Build an Emotional Connection with Employees: You can't have happy employees without happy leaders.
- When an employee tells you they're struggling with something on their team or in their personal life, respond thoughtfully and don't give up until you have helped them out of their dilemma.
- One of the most important qualities that a leader can possess is transparency. Being open and honest with your team members builds trust and respect, two key ingredients for a successful team. When leaders are transparent, they set the tone for the entire organization, creating a culture of openness and accountability. Additionally, transparency promotes communication and collaboration, as team members feel comfortable sharing their ideas and concerns.
- Leading with integrity creates a positive work environment where employees feel valued and motivated to do their best work. Given that Amazon is one of the world's largest employers, it is crucial for its leadership to ensure that it develops trust and confidence in its workforce as that is a major way for it to be successful. Jeff Bezos is the second richest man in the world, and the success of the companies he owns and manages has played a central role in his rise to that position. Being a leader with integrity makes it easier for his employees to trust him and that motivates them to become more productive.

Never Stop Learning

- ▶ Jeff Bezos is a strong leader who knows how to get the most out of his team.
- ▶ He's always learning and evolving, which has helped him grow Amazon into the ecommerce giant it is today.
- ▶ Bezos has mastered delegating tasks by giving each member of his team something they're good at doing and then taking on all other responsibilities himself (Parbat et al., 2022).
- ▶ His focus is on getting things done efficiently, not worrying about pleasing everyone in the process.

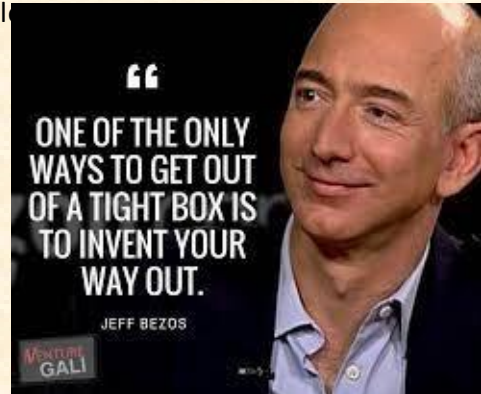


- His focus is on getting things done efficiently, not worrying about pleasing everyone in the process.
- When hiring new employees, he looks for people with unusual qualities or traits like intelligence or empathy because he believes these qualities will help them do their job better than someone without those traits would be able to do theirs.
- Also, as it was the case with the Amazon Fire phone and the case of books being deleted from the Kindle platform, which both cost the company in lost revenues and customers being refunded, Bezos and the company's management emerged wiser and such challenges have not happened again.

Veselin Ivanov

Fostering Empathy

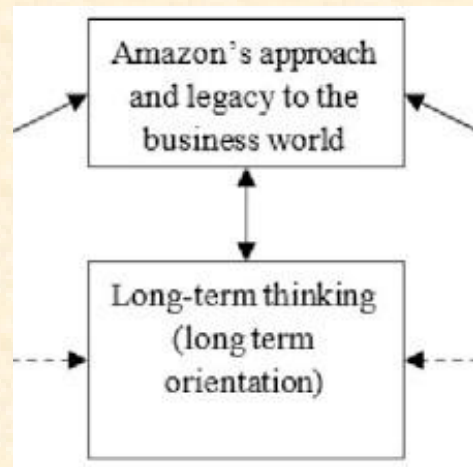
- ▶ Empathy is an essential skill for leaders, and it has been one of the key factors that have put leaders like Jeff Bezos in the positions they are today.
- ▶ In order to be a successful leader, one must be able to put themselves in other people's shoes and understand how they're feeling. This is what empathy is all about.
- ▶ By being able to empathize with those he leads, Jeff Bezos is able to better understand their needs and wants. This allows him to create a more cohesive and productive work environment.



- In today's business world, listening is more important than ever. With the vast amount of information and data available, it's easy to get overwhelmed and lost in your own thoughts (Dumaine, 2020).
- Listening is more important than talking, and if you can take a step back and really listen to what others are saying, you'll be able to make better decisions and create a more successful business.
- In order to be a successful leader, one must be able to put themselves in other people's shoes and understand how they feel.
- Jeff Bezos is an example of someone who demonstrates empathy. He encourages his employees by empowering them with high level decision-making skills, granting them the opportunity for creativity and new ideas. In addition, he often sends handwritten notes or emails to thank them for their contributions or congratulate them on their successes

Fostering Trust

- One of the most important leadership skills that Jeff Bezos practices is transparency.
- Transparency fosters trust.
- He believes that it's essential for leaders to be open and honest with their team in order to foster trust.
- This level of transparency can be difficult to maintain, but it's one of the key ingredients to Amazon's success.



- Jeff Bezos, is known for his incredible leadership skills and one thing that makes him a great leader is his willingness to make mistakes.
- He once said, "I've made plenty of mistakes, and if you're not making mistakes, you're not innovating" (Dumaine, 2020).
- Don't be afraid to make mistakes
- Being a transparent leader has a lot of benefits. For one, it builds trust between you and your team. When your team knows that they can come to you with any questions or concerns, they'll be more likely to feel comfortable working with you. Additionally, transparency breeds accountability. If you're open about your goals and expectations, your team will be more likely to meet them. Finally, transparency is a key component of effective communication. When employees at Amazon have confidence that their CEO is transparent and communicates with them candidly, they are likely to develop trust and a sense of ownership of what they do in the company, which overall contributes to the company's success.

Encourage Autonomy

- One of the leadership skills that Jeff Bezos uses is encouraging autonomy.
- He believes that giving employees the freedom to make their own decisions in line with their roles and professions leads to better results.
- This allows employees to feel empowered and motivated to do their best work.



- A culture of innovation can be created by allowing team members to work on projects they are passionate about, rather than assigning tasks or positions according to hierarchy.
- Innovation thrives when people are encouraged to take risks, try new things, and see what happens - all without fear of consequences (Warrier et al., 2021).
- When people feel like they have a say in what's going on, they're more likely to be engaged and motivated. Encouraging autonomy for companies like Amazon reduces the time needed to make some critical decisions, which would cost the company if they are allowed to take long as a result of the bureaucratic nature of large companies.

Showing Gratitude

- ▶ As the saying goes *Leadership is not a rank, it is an approach*. And that's certainly true of Jeff Bezos, who has been running Amazon successfully for over two decades.
- ▶ Leadership starts with self-awareness, he said in his most recent letter to shareholders.
- ▶ When leaders are transparent, it builds trust with their employees (Yakovenko, 2022).
- ▶ Bezos indicates to his employees that he appreciates their contributions and thus, he is both a source of motivation and an exemplary model for the workers.



Jeff Bezos is a great leader because he understands that fostering a culture of gratitude encourages the engagement of employees, which leads to more positive interactions between the company and its workforce.

Gratitude also helps the CEO to acknowledge the accomplishments of the company at large as well as those of individual employees.

Being grateful for the role played by all stakeholders encourages Bezos to focus on the successes of his brands as well as developing ways to make his products and services better.

Resultantly, the companies improve on quality and increase in sales and revenues every year to the benefit of all stakeholders, including the CEO and other shareholders.

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