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According to McKinsey leadership is ‘’a set of behaviors used to help people align their collective direction, to execute strategic plans, and to continually renew an organization (...) is about guiding and impacting outcomes, enabling groups of people to work together to accomplish what they couldn’t do working individually.” (McKinsey & Company, 2022).
The importance of the above-cited sentence is given by the keyword ‘’behavior”, as leadership requires skills that can be learnt, not an innate skill: people can learn how to become a successful leader: leadership is all about mindset and behavior. In fact, there are four types of leadership behavior addressed as most effective:

- Being supportive.
- Strong results orientation.
- Seeking different perspectives.
- Problem solving. (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Effective leaders have the awareness that the same attitude or strategy might not result in effectiveness in every context, for instance they have to be open-minded and seek for different perspectives when needed in order to enable organizations to grow and succeed.
Since leadership is often mistaken for management, it is also important to state the main difference between them: according to Duggal, leadership is ‘’more like a process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others toward the achievement of a common goal. It stems from social influence and requires human resources to achieve the intended outcomes” while management on the other hand is ‘’all about performing pre-planned tasks on a regular basis with the help of subordinates”. (Duggal, N. 2022).
In simple words, leadership is about empowering and inspiring people as well as leading changes and sharing a vision, while management is about planning, organizing and controlling tasks: as a matter of fact, a manager might become a leader only if willing to carry out the specific leadership responsibilities.
When speaking about modern leadership models it is important to consider different external factors that affect it: culture, which is one of the most influential, followed by globalization phenomenon and technological development. Indeed, nowadays a more effective approach in leadership is emerging as a result of these changes: in fact, according to McKinsey ‘’ Leaders today are beginning to focus on building agile, human-centered, and digitally enabled organizations able to thrive in today’s unprecedented environment and meet the needs of a broader range of stakeholders.” (McKinsey & Company, 2022).
As a matter of fact, according to Hazari, modern leadership is all about empowerment, as it aims to better exploit employees’ skills and potentialities in order to obtain optimal results, while also introducing a new point of view of weaknesses as these are not considered as a limit anymore, on the other hand weaknesses are perceived as a resource. In addition, the focus of this new approach is based on how leaders can make the lives of their employees easier, either emotionally by improving listening and communication skills, cognitively or physically: research affirmed that this approach enhances team performance and satisfaction as it is based on empathy, compassion, vulnerability, gratitude, self-awareness and self-care, empowering human connections. In conclusion, this new approach is considered as far more effective as ‘’countless studies show empirical links among effective leadership, employee satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profitability.”
On the other hand, technology has an effect on leadership approaches as well: modern technological tools enable leaders to facilitate real-time communication thanks to emails or apps, additionally it

‘’allows leaders to facilitate collaborative work environments and provide their team members with more flexibility to do their jobs’’. (Hazari, S. 2020).

Equally the phenomenon of globalization has affected leadership roles in many ways and for many reasons. According to Ganly: ‘’Globalization has affected management and leadership through market and customer base, international employee transfer rates, competition, and an increase in opportunities’’ (Ganly, S. 2019). In fact, this phenomenon has changed companies’ point of view regarding the market, as before the customer based and the market of a company were related strictly to their native country: with the beginning of the globalization this point of view has changed resulting in an expansion of the market at worldwide level, increasing competition and opening up lot of opportunities.

‘’Before globalization services and products did not have such a wide range of customers, and this causes a decrease in their value, but a larger customer base will increase the profitability of a business.’’ (Ganly, S. 2019). As the nomenclature suggests, globalization is a worldwide phenomenon, and as a result nowadays companies profess values of inclusiveness and equality as the workforce is a result of a mix of different cultures and this is the reason why leadership enters the scene. Ganly (2019) affirms that ‘’A good leader may be deemed so by certain characteristics that are favored in a particular country, and these characteristics or habits may not be appreciated or held so highly in another country.’’ It is mandatory that leaders consider cultures and social standards as well as ethics, beliefs and religions if they want to be successful, as these are different in each country. Therefore global leaders should have specific skills, such as business knowledge, awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences and standards, integrity and commitment.

According to Moe organizational leadership ‘’is the ability to lead groups of individuals toward fulfilling an organization's mission (..)’’ in addition, ‘’Organizational leadership communicates the mission and vision, establishes the strategic plan, and inspires individuals to put forth their talents to fulfill the goals aligned with the strategic plan and, ultimately, the leader’s vision.‘’ (Moe, K. 2021) The importance of organizational leadership is given by the fact that it motivates team members, allows problem-solving and decision making mindset, promotes communications, ethics, inclusion and respect, finally allows leaders to remain goal-oriented. Since leadership is about behavior, during the years different theories and models of leadership have been developed: the Great Man Theory for instance states that some people are natural leaders, the Trait Theory states that leaders must develop specific traits in order to be successful, finally the Situational and Behaviour Theories state that different approaches are required based on the given situation and circumstances. (O’Donovan, G. 2018)

Leadership models are shaped based on theories and leaders traits and are continually evolving. Must be said that social-culture is the main factor that affects leadership styles, as according to Forgeard ‘’Leadership can be defined as a process in which one person influences a group to achieve a goal (...) Since this process is about influencing others, it’s also about cultural influence’’ (Forgeard, V. 2021). In addition, as above-cited with the phenomenon of globalization cross-cultural leadership is increasing: ‘’Cross-cultural leadership development continues to be analyzed by researchers around the world. In recent years, the field has expanded dramatically with the influx of cross-cultural studies and research into global business practices.’’ Cross-cultural leaders should demonstrate to understand the key difference between cultural values and cultural norms, in order to do that they can take advantage of Hofstede's Cultural dimension theory. As a matter of fact, Hofstede identified four dimensions that could distinguish different cultures firstly, then he added two more as follows:

- Power Distance Index (high versus low). ‘’This refers to the degree of inequality that exists, and is accepted, between people with and without power.’’ As a consequence, a high score on this index points out that the society admits an unequal and hierarchical distribution of power.
- Individualism Versus Collectivism. ‘’This refers to the strength of the ties that people have to others within their community.’’ High score in this case indicates low interpersonal connections between those people that are not considered as ‘’family’’: in simple words, people tend to take less responsibilities for others actions while, on the other hand, in a collectivist society people are loyal to their belonging group and conversely the group take care of the individual.
- Masculinity Versus Femininity. ‘’This refers to the distribution of roles between men and women.’’ In a masculine society for instance ‘’men score highly for exhibiting "tough," masculine values and behaviors’’ while in feminine society ‘’there is a great deal of overlap between male and female roles, and modesty is perceived as a virtue.’’
- Uncertainty Avoidance Index (high versus low). ‘’This dimension describes how well people can cope with anxiety. In societies that score highly for Uncertainty Avoidance, people attempt to make life as predictable and controllable as possible.’’
- Long- Versus Short-Term Orientation. ‘’It refers to the time horizon people in society display. Countries with a long-term orientation tend to be pragmatic, modest, and more thrifty. In short-term oriented countries, people tend to place more emphasis on principles, consistency and truth.’’
- Indulgence Versus Restraint. ‘’Countries with a high IVR score allow or encourage relatively free gratification of people's own drives and emotions, such as enjoying life and having fun. In a society with a low IVR score, there is more emphasis on suppressing gratification’’. (Mind Tools Content Team, 2022).

Examples of leadership styles in different cultures are offered by Forgeard, according to which Western culture is based on individualism and on personal achievement: ‘’Western leaders believe that people should be rewarded for their efforts, and they emphasize competition as the best motivator’’, in addition ‘’Western leaders are more task-oriented and focus on measurable results. (Forgeard, V. 2021) The same article offers examples about

Asian culture, that is based on collectivism, cooperation and harmony: they believe that people should work together and leaders are perceived as a ‘’prism of collectivism’’.

According to the University of St. Augustine for Health Science, the most popular leadership models are:

- Transformational: ‘’Integrity and vision are core qualities of transformational leaders’’. As a matter of fact, these leaders aim to achieve objectives through communication proving integrity and respect for employees’ knowledge, as a consequence ‘’This mutual respect leads to gains in staff satisfaction and employee retention.’’ They inspire change and motivation.
- Transactional: ‘’Transactional leadership is a straightforward rewards-based model.’’ These leaders will set up performance goals and promise rewards upon success, in order to motivate employees to successfully perform. In fact, this model of leadership is considered effective in terms of effectiveness of goals achievements,but it is criticized as it won’t leave space for building relationships and inspire employees to come up with new proposals. Complete task to receive a reward.
- Servant: As cited previously, this model is based on ‘’mix selflessness with a focus on the higher needs of others as staff work toward achieving your vision.’’ Servant leaders advise employees and reinforce morale through self-awareness.
- Autocratic: As the etymology of autocracy suggests, ‘’Autocratic leaders do not consult with or consider the opinions of others when making decisions.’’ In simple words, autocratic leaders will expect employees to fulfill tasks and expectations that are set up without questions, as it happens in healthcare professions. Since the core of this model does not accept questioning, these leaders should be aware that employees might feel invisible and neglected, as they do not have a word on it.
- Democratic: This leadership model might be addressed as the opposite of the above-cited, since ‘’As a democratic leader, you will seek out the input and perspectives of your staff, although the final decision belongs to you.’’ The bases of this model are collaboration and discussion, as these are perceived as a spark that can increase creativity and innovation.

- Laissez-Faire: ‘’It represents a political, economic, and leadership model that involves passivity.’’ This leadership model involves a hands-off approach, which is a demonstration of trust: in fact, these leaders provide the tools needed to employees in order to let them complete the tasks, and then step back. This approach might not result effectively in certain environments as without proper coordination it can lead to chaos.

That said, each country in the world has its own cultural background, beliefs and religions that affect, as also stated in Hofstede theory, the leadership style and model across the world. The phenomenon of globalization though has made it simple for countries to create connections and communication, while enabling global companies to collaborate. Elizabeth Christopher, (Christopher, E. 2012), has analyzed the impact of cultures in leadership, based on the Hofstede theory dimensions. The following example is indeed based on culture-based differences in the leadership style of the US and China, within the automotive industry. In 2007 GM’s LaCrosse sedan was redesigned in China for the Chinese market by the idea of Joe Qiu: his design attracted the attention of GM Detroit’s managers and moved Shanghai forward into the global design market. The sedan was entirely designed in the PATAC (Pan Asia Technical Automotive Center, which is co-owned by GM: the original idea for the LaCrosse style was meant to appeal to traditionals US consumers. Joe Qiu and his boss, who was a Chinese American who learnt his profession at Nissan and Toyota, knew that Chinese consumers on the other hand would sneer at this old-fashioned appearance and as a consequence they decided to choose a glamorous, elegant and fashion design for both the outside and the interior. The result was a glamour and much better-looking and comfortable car, and as a matter of fact, over 10,000 vehicles were sold in China, considerably more than the sales in the US. Due to the success, in 2008 Shanghai MG introduced the first Eco-Hybrid LaCrosse, in order to meet the green requirements of the European standards. Additional diversity can be perceived by the Design Centers located in the US and China: the first site has been designed by an architect, with a lobby featuring a floating staircase hung over a reflecting pool, water tower rising out of a lake, bright white walls displaying photos of famous cars, by contrast the Chinese site is located inside PATAC’s utilitarian offices, with the landscape of an iron fence. Despite these differences and the more than 6,000 miles distance between the two sites, the work inside these sites reflects the new reality in which China is the GM’s second biggest market, and is leading a creative strategy in environmental sustainability. The pioneers of the idea that GM cars

could have been designed aboard were Bob Lutz, who was GM's vice chairman and Ed Walburn who was the design leader: this happened back to 2003, as they decided to introduce an international design competitions, based on the idea that just because the cars were sold in the US it didn't mean that they had to be designed in the same country. Their idea has a significant impact for future GM's global purchasing as in 2011 Autocar-MG India announced that the company was looking for people with passion for design to join the design team in order to come up with something new: the aim was to design a car that would appeal to Indian tastes and preferences, considering the driving conditions and the Indian environment. This real-life example offers food for thought in terms of cultural differences that affect leadership: in fact, it wasn't easy to deal with one global team made of Chinese and US workforce, despite both of the employees being skilled, as there was no communication between them. A more in-depth analysis of this case highlights more intricate cultural differences between the countries and in leadership styles. In fact, this case not only illustrates cultural differences within both organizations, also it strongly highlights differences in behaviors and even in buildings: despite it, collaboration has been possible and even successful. This can be perceived as a paradox of globalization: ''on the one hand cultural divergences become more obvious, but on the other cultural convergence can rescue even the most ethnocentric organizations from financial ruin." (Christopher, E. 2012. *International Management.* P43).

Apart from the differences between the two head offices, or the cultural background, there is a significant difference between the Chinese designer and the GM's American designer as a reflection of collectivism versus individualism: according to Hofstede's late 20th century researches, Chinese rank extremely low on the cultural dimension identified as individualism, while US rank highest in the world. In addition, cultural differences between these two countries can be perceived in the way they build up human relationships, specific-oriented cultures (US) versus diffuse-oriented cultures (China), achievement versus ascription, achievement-oriented countries as per the US versus ascription-oriented cultures as per China. These are all cultural influences that affect the way people work and perceive the work environment: US workers will tend to keep their private lives separated from work, while Chinese on the other hand, extend work hierarchies beyond workplace, workers are valued based on what they can do rather than what they are as human being in US culture, while Chines are more likely to respect hierarchies of authority. Western cultures have a different

perspective as to the idea that the course of events can be changed in a profitable way, while non-Westerners have a more complicated perception of life control and events and are more inclined to rely on either religions or governments. In addition, this case is an example of expansionism and nationalism: in fact, it is interesting to compare the respective attitudes regarding expansion and nationalism as the American designer recognised that the design phase for the LaCrosse could have been done aboard and identified China as a strong partner, on the other hand, the head of the Chinese team indulged this proposal, but proudly insisted that his team was more than able to effectively complete the work on their own. Last but not least, there is an interesting dimension of Hofstede's Theory that can be applied in the above case, if the reader ‘’reads between the lines’’. China rank on power distance is 80, while the world average is 55, with US at 40 (Hofstede Insights,2022): in fact, there is a significant inequality regarding the distribution of wealth, as the country has experienced a substantial growth in terms of power and influence, resulting into huge consumer culture and luxury that is reflected into the design and style of PATAC.

The example above is based on the cultural differences between China and US: the following case study is based on the differences between leadership styles of Japan and US, within the same industry. In 2009 Toyota recalled over a million vehicles worldwide due to security and system problems, and suffered with a significant economic crisis, and the recall was then expanded until 2010, forcing the company to add another two million of vehicles to be recalled and suspended all US sales. This global safety recall has cost the company around $2bn in extra costs,and by June 2011 the company was prepared to lose its strong and established position: Toyota’s chief financial officer stated that the company was ready to step up production once its supply chain recovered and, in addition, ho pointed out that it is more important to create a stable business base rather than being the largest automaker in the world. In order to understand why the leadership and management failed for Toyota, analysts had to go back to when a new way of making things started: lean production has replaced mass production. The Toyota Production System incorporated the concept of TQM (total quality management) also known as ‘’just in time’’ that is based on the recognition of the central role of inventory and that factory workers had much more to contribute than their actual labour. Additionally it is important to understand the organizational culture of Japan as its work ethic: Japan as a nation is strongly influenced by Shintoism, Buddhism and Confucianism, and the effect of these influences can be perceived on the way they tend to pay attention to details as virtutes, as well as a strong group-oriented culture with an emphasis on avoiding conflicts, respect and care for people and the importance of building long-lasting relationships. Based on the facts, the reason why Toyota declined in providing high quality standards may be addressed as a change of the company's traditional culture into an expansion and production, as a result of competitions. Cultural differences between the Japanese and the US firms are easily understandable by doing a comparison between the mission statements of Toyota and GM: the first one is about ‘’deliver outstanding automotive products and

services, and enrich our community, partners and environment'', in opposition with GM ''to drive improvements in market share, revenue, brands, people, responsiveness, and cost effectiveness through the implementation of global common metrics and best practice sharing''. (Christopher, E. 2012, p57)
Both of them promise continuous improvements via innovation, the main difference is that Toyota as company wants to enrich community and be admired as a world leader while GM on the other hand clearly wants to be a world leader in sales and market share: this happens as a result of Japanese cultures that emphasizes the importance of community, harmony and mutual respect, compared to the individualism perspective of the US. In conclusion, it is not surprising that Japan scores 46 on the Individualism dimension. (Hofstede Insights. 2022)

Reflection.
While exploring this module I've been introduced to different theories and examples of leadership styles and models, as well as the importance of culture as the main factor affecting leadership. As an Italian living in a foreign country, I've been experiencing myself what cultural differences are and mean especially in two contexts: academic and work environments. When I moved to Wales I had no work experience, and I remember that I was feeling so ashamed and scared as I had no work experience at all, as a consequence, in order to feel comfortable I started to work in an Italian restaurant, as I wanted to feel at home.
This was a great opportunity in terms of gaining work experience and skills, but I then realized that I had to move forward and challenge myself, starting to work in a Welsh environment. My fear was to be discriminated against and that natives would have made fun of me, due to my accent. I then realized that those fears were the results of the society I came from, that tends to judge a lot and put pressure on people's weakness. Every country has its historical background, and its own culture. Based on the Hofstede theory, Italy scored 50 for the dimension of Power Distance, 76 on Individualism, 70 on Masculinity, 75 on Uncertainty Avoidance, 61 on Long Term Orientation and 30 on Indulgence. (Hofstede Insights, 2017). I wanted to include these data in my reflection as before starting this module I had a complete perception of my native country, and I am grateful to this module as the knowledge I have acquired helped me change my point of view. Thanks to this module I had the chance to understand my strengths and weaknesses as a potential leader, thanks to online tools such as tests. In fact, I remember when I had done my first test about personalities during my undergraduate studies, and it showed that I was a ''natural leader''.
I remember that I found myself surprised as I thought that being a leader would mean delegating people and giving them tasks to complete and being commanding as a manager.
I had, and still have, not experience personally how to be a leader in the workplace, but there have been cases in which I was chosen as a group leader within the academic environment, and based on this experience I can now understand what type of leader I was, and I am, thanks to the acquired knowledge, as well as understand how my cultural background has affected, and still, my leadership traits. I consider myself as a Laissez-Faire leader: in fact, what I tend to do whenever I am leading a group is to have a discussion with them, clearly pointing out what needs to be done to complete a work, and then leave the group the chance to choose what tasks they prefer to do based on their interests or skills. I like to give people the freedom to choose how they prefer to complete a task, as long as the overall result is successful, I do not like to be authoritative or commanding. On the other hand, the reason why I find myself closer to the Laissez-Faire model is because it represents a high level of trust which doesn't mean casualness. Must be said that this type of leader is not very participating: in fact, I realized that this trait of my personality is a result of the Individualistic culture.

Hofstede Insights website perfectly states how the Italian culture is based on individualism: ‘’For Italians having their own personal ideas and objectives in life is very motivating and the route to happiness is through personal fulfillment.’’ (Hofstede Insights, 2017)
Even if individualism might be perceived as an egoistic attitude, it has helped me succeed in a foreign country, as especially during my first year in Wales, I could have relied only on myself. I am so grateful for the chance that I had as this has been a great opportunity to know another country and culture: in fact, leaving your native country and choosing to live in a foreign country offered me the chance to vary my cultural background.
By doing a comparison of the Hofstede’ dimension theory between the UK and Italy I’ve found out that Individualism scores are very close, with 89 for the UK and 76 for Italy. Other dimensions on the other hand have significant differences, and those differences affect my traits as a leader. Uncertainty Avoidance rank for Italy for example is 75 while the UK rank 35: how can this difference affect my leadership style? As stated in the Hofstede Insights website: ‘’As a low UAI country the British are comfortable in ambiguous situations, the term ‘muddling through’ is a very British way of expressing this’’, while on the other hand, ‘’At 75 Italy has a high score on Uncertainty Avoidance which means that as a nation Italians are not comfortable in ambiguous situations.’’ (Hofstede Insights, 2022).
As a matter of fact, high Uncertainty Avoidance results in a high level of stress and a detailed planning process: this is a strong trait of my personality, as I cannot stand uncertainty at all, especially when it comes to work. I have to plan things and manage my time in order to be successful, and I cannot stand careless or procrastinating people. In addition, ‘’ Due to their high score in this dimension Italians are very passionate people: emotions are so powerfully that individuals cannot keep them inside and must express them to others, especially with the use of body language’’. This is another effect of how culture influences our personality, as I consider myself very emotional, and I can tell the difference with a non-Italian person: to offer an example of this, I find it very difficult for me to leave personal emotions outside the workplace, and as it has happened more than once, my colleagues can immediately tell if something bad has happened to me, as my face and my tone of voice would tell it. I consider this trait of mine as a ‘’double-edged sword’’ as it might result not professional to barely manage your emotions, on the other hand I consider this trait as a value because it shows frankness and honesty in certain situations, as I am not able to pretend or lie about negative emotions or feelings.

Ultimately, I realized that even those cultural differences that I thought will affect my life at most in a foreign country were more in my head than real.
I did not have to change my nature in order to be accepted in society, on the other hand cultural differences themselves helped me build up a bridge in human relationship: this might have been possible though because European cultures are not that different between them, as I am more than aware that I might not be able to being a successful leader in Asian countries for example, as cultural differences would have been more emphasized, and I might find myself in the position of readdress plenty of my personality traits.

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