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Leadership and Leader Development

WENJIN DAI AND ALEX TYMON

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

- explain the difference between the terms 'management', 'leader' and 'leadership'
- identify the significance of leaders and leadership in a variety of organisational contexts
- understand some traditional and emerging theoretical approaches to the study of leaders and leadership
- specify the importance and challenges of leader and leadership development
- critique approaches to leader and leadership development
- apply this knowledge to the work of the HR professional.

5.1 OVERVIEW

In Part 3 of this book, we focus on specific themes within the area of leading, managing and developing people. One might readily imagine that the concept of leadership will be pivotal in its own right and, furthermore, an important underpinning for subsequent topics; for example, the management of change covered in Chapter 6. The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the main theoretical approaches to the study of organisational leadership, and to provide an awareness of the strengths and shortcomings of these approaches. One such potential strength lies in the relevance of such approaches in a variety of work contexts, and we will stress that when we consider leadership, one size does not fit all. We also briefly outline current contributions to leadership understanding from academic research. Thinking on leadership moves apace and new contributions reflect the inherently dynamic nature of the topic area and also point to 'direction of travel' and, therefore, possible future developments.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the terms 'management' and 'leadership' as they impact on both the strategic purpose and direction of an organisation. We present several influential approaches to the study of leadership, identifying both traditional, and emerging, approaches. We will not only summarise the approaches but also discuss them with the aim of providing a critical awareness of their implications. Then we move to a discussion of the leadership development challenge, highlighting common issues, some of their potential causes and suggestions for improvement. Throughout the chapter links are made between organisational leadership in general, leadership development and the role of the HR professional in particular.

5.2 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on leadership and leadership development in a business or organisation context, and their important roles in both devising and implementing organisational strategy. It considers how existing theories and frameworks help to address the questions of what is leadership, what could be identified as good or bad leadership, and how to improve the understandings of leadership development in a business or a working environment. As we noted in previous editions of this book, the notion of leadership has provided an enduring fascination; not only to academics such as psychologists and political or social scientists, but also to journalists, biographers, authors, dramatists and film-makers, for whom it provides a rich source of material both factual and fictional. We believe this still to be the case. Understanding leadership – the starting point of our chapter – can be legitimately regarded as one of the most important yet highly debated areas in organisation studies.



REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY 5.1

Before we delve into the academic literature on leadership, it may be helpful to review your own views on the topic through consideration of some prominent business leaders, for instance, Sarah Willingham (of TV's *Dragons' Den*), Larry Page (Google), Yun (Jack) Ma (Alibaba) and Martin Winterkorn (ex VW). Conduct brief research into your chosen leaders' business careers.

- 1 Can you identify common traits among these leaders? What style of leadership do you associate with these people?
- 2 Have they always been successful and brought positive influences?

5.3 UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is a word that people come across every day, yet many find it difficult to define; often it means different things to different people. For some, leadership is mostly about the 'leaders': the very few people who arguably have the most influence over others. Hence, studying leadership is focusing on that particular group of individuals – their personalities, traits, emotions, and more importantly, how to become one of them. However, some argue this perspective ignores the influence of followers who surround and support the leader, even come up with the ideas and follow them through thick and thin. In this perspective leadership is regarded as relationships between leaders and their equally important followers. Among the numerous definitions of leadership, most incorporate the idea that it involves achieving outcomes through the efforts of others (Yukl 2012). This stresses one of the simplest and most classic definitions that leadership is having followers, as leaders cannot be leaders without followers (Grint 2010).

Some criticise these traditional distinctions between leaders and followers and consider them as interchangeable roles rather than particular groups of people (Jackson and Parry 2011). Other current debates in the area include that leadership does not have to appear powerful or remain positive. The destructive and dark sides of leadership have realistic implications that many people experience every day. The blurring of the line between leadership and management in twenty-first century organisations is also topical. What practitioners and academics would agree upon is the contested and elusive nature of leadership. Nevertheless, these perspectives have made this subject open for continual and critical dialogues, and thus more appealing.

5.3.1 IS LEADERSHIP BETTER THAN MANAGEMENT?

Leadership has received a great deal of interest in recent decades, particularly when regarded as a distinctive aspect compared to management. In 1977, Abraham Zaleznik challenged the traditional view of management which focused on organisational structure and control. He argues that inspiration, vision and human passion are the essential leadership elements that drive great successes in organisations, but were omitted in the traditional view. Subsequently he claims there are fundamental differences between managers and leaders (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 The differences between managers and leaders

	Managers	Leaders
What they do?	Embrace process, seek stability and control, eager to resolve problems quickly	Tolerate chaos and lack of structure, want to understand issues more fully before resolution
Who are they?	Rational, persistent, tolerant problem-solvers	Creative thinkers, in common with artists and scientists
How they do it?	Take an impersonal, passive outlook. Negotiate and coerce, balance opposing views, design compromise, limit choices, avoid risk	Take a personal, active outlook. Shape ideas, alter expectations, set company direction, develop fresh approaches to problems, seek risk when opportunities appear promising
Why they do it?	To feel part of the organisation. Perpetuating and strengthening existing institutions	To feel apart from the organisation. Hope to profoundly alter human and economic relationships
Relation with others	Minimal emotional involvement. Subordinates perceive them as inscrutable, detached and manipulative.	Relate to others directly, intuitively, empathetically. Subordinates 'love' or 'hate' them. Relations appear intense, turbulent, disorganised and unanticipated

Source: Adapted from Zaleznik (1977, 1992)

These distinctions project negative and positive implications on to managers and leaders. Managers seem to be handling tasks and resolving problems in their boring mundane everyday life, whereas leaders are positioned to be a group of people arguably full of creativity and excitement which subordinates either 'love' or 'hate'. In John Kotter's article 'What leaders really do', he argued that 'leadership is different from management, but not for the reasons most people think. Leadership isn't mystical and mysterious ... Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it.' (1990, p103) Instead he argues leadership complements management: good management brings order and consistency while leadership is about coping with change and producing continuous change in our volatile world – so the real challenge in organisations is to balance strong leadership and good management (1990, 1999). Fundamentally the lines between leadership and management are increasingly blurred. Yet it seems nearly impossible to identify whether this is the manager's or the leader's job.

The tendency to describe managers and leaders as two types of people can be harmful sometimes, as it would be rather difficult to be a manager without coping with change, or a leader without bringing back order and consistency. As Gosling and Mintzberg (2003, p54) argue: 'the separation of management from leadership is dangerous. Just as

management without leadership encourages an uninspired style, which deadens activities, leadership without management encourages a disconnected style, which promotes hubris.' Therefore it is important to understand the differences, also the underlying and inseparable connections between management and leadership.

5.4 LEADERSHIP AND MANAGING PEOPLE

There has been a revival of interest in the concept and application of leadership in recent years. Two decades ago, ambitious candidates for top-flight jobs in the world of business and public affairs might have enrolled on programmes to become Masters of Business Administration or to take diplomas in management studies. Today there is a burgeoning market in postgraduate degrees such as leadership studies, or business development and leadership. So an initial question to consider is why there is such renewed interest in the field of leadership, and how this could help us to understand modern organisations and organising processes. Perhaps part of the answer is to do with changing patterns of organisational life and similar changes in social expectations within the working environment.

Traditional organisations with strongly hierarchical structures are becoming rarer, and newer forms of both commercial and public sector organisations tend to be more flexible and task- or client-focused. What Handy (1976) described as 'matrix' organisations are generally considered to be more effective in a highly fluid commercial or operating environment; and the 'shamrock' style of organisation (Handy 1989) charts the move towards further operational flexibility. This type of organisational flexibility was also described by Atkinson (1984) in his model of the flexible firm, which disaggregates different organisational requirements and builds in a further form of organisational flexibility by outsourcing or subcontracting a number of its activities. This kind of articulated organisational structure works against the maintenance of strong hierarchies based around position (or legitimate) power (Mullins 2013), and often requires individual managers to exercise a different form of authority from that conferred simply by virtue of status or rank. Similarly, wider social attitudes towards authority have changed and, as in other walks of life, people generally expect to be consulted and involved in their work rather than simply instructed. In some circumstances these expectations are now supported by the law, for instance through the Information and Consultation of Employees (ICE) Regulations of 2005, which now apply to all businesses with more than 50 employees. Together, these trends may have renewed the interest in leadership as an important skill for those attempting to 'get things done through other people'. The importance of leadership is also reflected in the National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership, which appear to show a transition between operational and/or supervisory levels of management at levels 2 and 3, and a more strategic approach at levels 4 and 5 (Management Standards Centre). Thus, studying leadership and its development is important for HR practitioners.

For the purposes of this chapter, strategic leadership is taken to mean the activities involved in the initial creation of an overall business or organisational strategy, then directing and energising organisational resources towards the achievement of that strategy. Insofar as it then relies on others to carry out the strategy it may involve some management, but it is primarily about business vision and mission and engaging the energies of the workforce in pursuit of that vision. This means 'doing the right thing', creating the differentiators which, in people terms, involve becoming an employer of choice, an organisation which is able to encourage outstanding performance from its workforce and thus achieve superior results. On the other hand, managerial leadership is taken to mean activities surrounding the creation, maintenance and development of an appropriate infrastructure for business operations, including that which involves organising the work of other people. It means creating a working environment that can

help a business or other organisation to achieve its objectives. In this sense management includes leadership to some degree: it is about 'doing things right'.

5.4.1 STRATEGY AND LEADERSHIP

As we saw in Chapter 2, the term 'strategy' is conceived as a means of identifying the ways in which an organisation seeks to pursue its purpose, or achieve its objectives. A prominent view of business strategy is 'resource-based', that is to say, mainly to do with identifying the key resources that give the organisation a distinctive capability and finding ways of applying those capabilities to parts of the market that offer the best prospects (Johnson et al 2011, Legge 2005, Boxall and Purcell 2011). Following from this, the key tasks in the strategic planning process could be said to be:

- analysing the organisation's environment and the changes that are expected over the plan period
- identifying and evaluating the organisation's key resources: those that are distinctive (by comparison to competitors) and those that are also important to delivering value to customers, taxpayers or client groups
- considering strategic options: ways of matching organisational resources to particular parts (segments) of the market, looking for the approach that is forecast to create maximum added value for shareholders, or to achieve the most effective use of public or donor money
- choosing the preferred strategic option
- re-aligning the organisation's resources (human and others) behind the chosen strategy: acquiring new resources, modifying existing resources and getting rid of those that cannot be economically reconfigured (which, of course, opens up questions about the ethical treatment of human resources)
- directing and energising those resources towards implementing the strategy
- responding to unexpected events during implementation.

Most of these activities are focused at the higher levels of a business or organisation, and are often the province of a single individual (for instance, in a small business or owner-managed enterprise) or a small group such as a company chief executive and board of directors. In the public sector, strategic management will be in the hands of those who exercise political power and the professional experts who advise them and find appropriate means of executing political decisions. They are activities which are primarily about making informed strategic choices, in other words responding to the question 'What is the right thing to do?' They are also about convincing and energising others to put their effort behind the chosen strategy, and in this sense involve many leadership skills. In terms of people management, this level of leadership is about defining approaches to ensure that appropriate talent is recruited and motivated to achieve superior results.



REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY 5.2

List five personal qualities or attributes which you associate with successful leadership and place them in order of importance. Ask others (in your family, friendship group or class) to do the same, then compare the lists. How many attributes are common to all lists? Do you agree on the relative importance of these attributes? Do you think they are culturally specific, or relevant in all cultural contexts?

5.4.2 MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Increasingly, leadership ability is defined as one of the attributes of the successful manager, along with the intellectual skills required for the assimilation of information, analysis and planning, technical and professional knowledge of the business area or sector, and a clear understanding of the specific organisation and its capacities.

The Management Charter Initiative (MCI), which developed as a result of the recommendations in the Handy and Constable and McCormick reports of the late 1980s, undertook a major analysis of the nature of management for the purposes of establishing a clear framework for managerial qualifications. Its work resulted in the adoption of a competency-based approach which quickly became highly influential in the field of management development in Britain (Frank 1991). The 1997 edition of the occupational standard was based around four major components: managing operations, managing finance, managing information and managing people, only the last of which could be clearly seen as requiring leadership skills. Ten years later, the MSC researched and developed a new set of standards, which also provide a functional map and set of units of competence which encompass the important knowledge and skill components of effective management. The significance of leadership is more clearly emphasised in the title of the new standards themselves: the National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership. The six basic elements of the new standards, which can be viewed at the MSC website (www.management-standards.org), are:

- managing self and personal skills (depicted as a central aspect of the remaining five standards)
- providing direction
- facilitating change
- working with people
- using resources
- achieving results.

Leadership ability can be firmly associated with the second, third and fourth of these elements; and indeed the term 'working with people' has replaced 'managing people' in a way which might indicate the reducing of emphasis on formal control and the increased need for collaboration in present-day work environments noted above.

The CIPD Professional Standards recognise that soft skills are just as important as technical ones, and so these are better represented and thus reflect more fully aspects of leadership which are essential to good management practice. Nevertheless, these functions are qualitatively different from those required of strategic leadership which, as we have noted, appear at the higher levels of organisations. The majority of the Standards are much more concerned with 'doing things right' in the sense of providing an effective structure within which people can achieve high levels of performance for their organisation.

Now let us turn to some of the concepts and theories about leadership, and to identify how well they might support the development of the ability to work with people, either at a strategic or at a more operational level. The following theoretical discussions will be in two parts: firstly the traditional or established leadership theories will be described, then we will discuss some of the emerging leadership theories. The distinction between the established and the emerging is not definite, but please bear in mind some of the emergence theories are still being developed and some topics are under-researched (Dinh et al 2014).

5.5 LEADERSHIP: ESTABLISHED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

It is useful at this point to remind ourselves of some of the key frameworks which have developed for the analysis and study of leadership. A summary of differing academic

approaches to the subject is offered by several writers including Mullins (2013), Bloisi et al (2007), Hersey et al (2001), Huczynski and Buchanan (2013), Kreitner et al (2002) and Yukl (2012). Most offer a framework for leadership studies which identifies the following main schools of thought:

- the qualities or traits approach
- the leadership styles approach
- the situational approach and contingency models.

Taking each of these approaches in turn we can examine the general principles and models involved, and comment on their suitability in relation to either strategic leadership or managerial (operational) leadership.

5.5.1 QUALITIES OR TRAITS APPROACHES

This is essentially the 'great person' theory of leadership, and tries to identify the significant features of acknowledged leaders. Early approaches to the study of leadership (mostly undertaken before and shortly after the Second World War) dwelt on the personal qualities and characteristics of successful leaders in an attempt to isolate the 'magic ingredients'. They have not generally agreed on a common set of characteristics, although one or two, such as self-confidence and intelligence, did figure in a number of models (Kreitner et al 2002). However, we talk later about some emergent theories of leadership which indicate a resurgence of interest in traits as an approach to the study of leaders.

As a result, we might consider that trait theories offer few pointers which can help aspiring managers assess their potential other than by trying to decide if they possess the appropriate qualities, or can develop (or even simulate) them. Trait theories offer little help in terms of suggesting how managerial leaders can prepare and adapt themselves to the reality of work to be performed.

Adoption of the 'traits' approach also has implications for the role of people management in an organisation. If the development of successful organisational leaders is largely a matter of identifying those individuals who possess the desired characteristics and then offering the selected potential managers opportunities to develop and exercise these abilities, then the focus of people management will probably be on devising appropriate tests (such as psychometric or aptitude tests) which will help identify the 'right stuff', and devising systems of training and promotion which will support their development. More on leadership development will be explained later in this chapter.

5.5.2 THE LEADERSHIP STYLES APPROACH

Approaches to the study of leadership that analyse the differences between leadership styles are generally focused upon the leader's attitude towards people and the resulting behaviours which they exhibit in their day-to-day dealings with members of the team. This generates a range of possibilities, and the resulting classifications usually identify a range of styles, perhaps most succinctly described by Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973).

They focused on the relative strength and power of leaders and followers (that is, subordinates) in terms of decision-making. At one end of the resulting continuum is 'boss-centred' (autocratic) decision-making where a leader largely decides what is to be done in a specific circumstance, and others accept and follow the decision. At the other end is joint (or democratic) decision-making, where a leader will define a problem or situation and then participate in the decision-making simply as a member of the team.

This model recognises the need for an understanding of the relationship between specific leaders and their teams from a basis of both leader and follower characteristics (such as personality, relevant knowledge, experience and a sense of security, etc) and permits the inclusion of circumstantial considerations (organisational and societal factors, etc) in the equation. In this respect it bears considerable similarity to the contingency

models discussed in the next section. Insofar as it examines the skills and requirements for leading a team, the approach is not prescriptive, and is an appropriate tool for analysing and identifying the range of successful managerial leadership styles. It also offers some important messages about the importance of flexibility in terms of leadership style. These approaches have value but also shortcomings in terms of leadership development which are discussed later.

5.5.3 SITUATIONAL AND CONTINGENCY MODELS OF LEADERSHIP

Situational perspectives add another dimension on leadership studies: that of the circumstances, both organisational and environmental, in which the leadership activity occurs. This allows the development of what is generally termed the contingency approach to leadership; in other words an approach which might answer the question 'What type of leadership actions and behaviours are appropriate?', in other words 'It all depends on the circumstances'. Contingency approaches thus suggest a wide range of different but equally valid ways of leading and managing people. Some, such as Hersey and Blanchard's model of situational leadership (see Hersey et al 2001), focus on the appropriate leadership styles for groups or individual followers who are at different stages of readiness or maturity to achieve a task; 'readiness' being defined as a combination of both ability, willingness or confidence to carry out the task in question. As these vary over time, so the leader needs to choose and use the most appropriate style to fit the circumstances. The four styles suggested in the situational leadership model are summarised from Hersey et al (2001, pp182–87) as follows:

S1 – telling: this provides high amounts of guidance and direction but little supportive behaviour. This style is most appropriate for low follower readiness, including situations where followers are unable and/or unwilling. The leader structures the task and concentrates on step-by-step help and instruction.

S2 – selling: this requires high amounts of both directive (task) and relationship behaviours. This style is most appropriate for low to moderate follower readiness; particularly when followers are willing but still not fully capable of performing. The leader encourages more dialogue to achieve buy-in amongst the followers.

S3 – participating: this shows high levels of two-way communication and supportive (relationship) behaviour but low amounts of guidance (task behaviour). This style is most appropriate for moderate to high follower readiness: in other words situations where followers are competent but inexperienced, or competent but demotivated. The leader should focus on discussion, encouragement and facilitation rather than instruction.

S4 – delegating: this involves little direction or support; in other words, low levels of both task and relationship behaviours. This style is most appropriate for high follower readiness, in other words, situations where a leadership intervention is largely unnecessary (unless there are significant problems), and can focus on monitoring.

For instance, an HR assistant who is highly capable and confident about carrying out selection interviews would respond well to a delegating style of management in relation to this work. However, if they then find themselves in changed business circumstances and need to carry out redundancy interviews without having had much relevant experience, then a 'selling' style of managerial leadership might be more suitable, or possibly a 'telling' style if the individual was particularly resistant to carrying out the new task. There is also evidence that contingency approaches to leadership have particular relevance when considering inter-cultural situations. Kreitner, for instance, suggests that national culture is an important contingency and that cultural analyses such as those of Hofstede can be helpful in identifying appropriate styles for the needs of different cultural groups (Hofstede 1991, Kreitner 2001).

There seems, from Kreitner's research, to be some indication that the most widely applicable style is the participative one. It is well suited to many national cultures but

particularly those such as that of the US and Sweden where there is limited 'natural' respect for hierarchy and seniority: what Hofstede would term a 'low power distance' culture. Nevertheless, it can be successful in a wider range of cultures than the directive style. The latter is more specifically suited to 'high power distance' cultures where status automatically commands respect (Kreitner suggests French and Indian cultures), and where subordinates will generally expect their leaders to have the answers by virtue of the expertise which has enabled them to achieve their status. The directive style translates poorly into 'low power distance' cultures or those where joint regulation or codetermination is the norm (for instance, the German one). He explains, however, that: 'Participative leadership is not necessarily the best style; it simply is culturally acceptable in many different countries ... directive leadership turned out to be the least appropriate leadership style.' (Kreitner 2001, p613).

The contingency approach to leadership emphasises contextual factors as an important influence on leader success. Professor Joseph Nye, in a BBC interview ahead of the UK publication of his book *The Powers to Lead: Soft, Hard, and Smart* in May 2008, stressed the relationship between contextual knowledge and leadership power, explaining that contextual knowledge helps leaders to determine what balance they should strike between the use of what he terms 'hard' power (issuing commands) and 'soft' power (the ability to attract and retain followers). Contingency approaches remain highly relevant for the exercise of leadership in modern organisations however they are not easy to develop with limited time and experience.



A CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP AT THE BBC (PART ONE)

CASE STUDY 5.1

For 85 years the BBC has pursued its mission to 'inform, educate and entertain', not only in the UK but worldwide. It is funded by British licence fee payers through a sort of 'television tax' and is governed under Royal Charter by the BBC Trust. This arrangement makes it vulnerable on several fronts. Other commercial broadcasting and news media companies may consider that it has an unfair advantage in the market; it doesn't (indeed, is not permitted to) compete for advertising revenue in the UK. Licence fee payers may demand particularly high standards and responsiveness to a wide variety of diverse programming requirements; and its links with the government make it open to charges of political bias.

Leadership of this much loved, quintessentially British but sometimes reviled and criticised organisation is thus a difficult, but immensely important, job. In the words of veteran broadcaster David Dimbleby (2012), 'The Director General [DG] has to fight like a tiger to defend the BBC.'

In September 2012 George Entwistle took up the post after a competitive process managed by executive recruitment agency Egon Zehnder. He had been selected from a senior BBC role in July to succeed the outgoing DG Mark Thompson, but whilst both Thompson and Lord Patten (chairman of the BBC Trust) praised Entwistle as an outstanding and creative leader, some media commentators were surprised at his appointment. He was clearly an insider, having joined the BBC in 1989 as a trainee journalist, rising from reporting to editing news and factual broadcasts, including the flagship weekday *Newsnight* programme between 2001 and 2004.

But despite this long and successful service he was thought too 'quiet' for the role of BBC tiger – shy and uncomfortable in the public gaze, uncommunicative and an unimpressive public speaker (Brown 2012, Sabbagh 2012).

In October 2012, a storm of unprecedented ferocity hit the BBC squarely in Entwistle's area of expertise. Revelations on ITV about the late Jimmy Savile's sexual offences led to serious

embarrassment for the corporation, which had withdrawn a *Newsnight* programme on that very subject as early as December 2011; to some, the BBC appeared to be attempting to cover up criminal behaviour which had taken place in its own backyard. Then, on 2 November, as further evidence of abusive behaviour came to light in the press, *Newsnight* broadcast what turned out to be an unfounded allegation of paedophilia against 'a very senior political figure' of the Thatcher era.

Whilst not naming the individual during the programme, the journalists concerned allowed a trail to appear on the Internet amid the following frenzy of speculation, prompting a public denial and legal action from the accused. The sole witness and accuser interviewed for the *Newsnight* report subsequently made a statement of apology, explaining that he had mistakenly identified his abuser from a photograph shown to him in the early 1990s.

The *Newsnight* team had failed spectacularly to follow the basic rules of journalism which are included in the BBC's own editorial guidelines. Checks had not been carried out by either the programme or station editors; nor had this controversial story been cleared by the DG. But the true test of Entwistle's leadership came during the aftermath.

After a week of turmoil, *Newsnight* finally had to broadcast a humiliating climbdown and Entwistle suspended all journalistic investigations by the programme team. He appeared complacent, claimed that the matter 'had not been brought to his attention' and seemingly adopted an overly bureaucratic and poorly informed, even uninterested, attitude to the management of the affair. This attitude was revealed during a radio interview on 10 November when his approach was publicly dismantled by interviewer John Humphrys, making his continued tenure as DG impossible. He resigned later that day.

Questions

- 1 Would you describe George Entwistle as a leader or a manager? Explain your reasons.
- 2 What might the situational leadership model have to tell us about the type of leadership required during organisational crises?
- 3 What benefits might an organisation gain from using external recruitment agencies to fill high-profile leadership roles such as this? What are the associated risks?

5.6 LEADERSHIP: SOME EMERGING PERSPECTIVES

In comparison to the leader-centric theoretical approaches as described above, there are many theoretical themes that consider leadership as relationships and processes which are classified as emergent approaches. Below we consider the most common:

- transformational leadership
- inspirational and authentic leadership
- servant leadership
- distributed leadership.

5.6.1 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Recent literature on leadership has noted the difference between transactional forms of leadership and transformational ones. This contrast relates back to ideas about the nature of leadership in a society which no longer accepts authority as the basis for command. If authority and 'position power' (French and Raven 1968) no longer works, what are the alternatives? One approach is to bargain: in other words to appeal to the self-interest of

the followers. So-called transactional forms of leadership rely on the leader's capacity to negotiate appropriate follower behaviours based on legitimate rewards or punishments – although there is, of course, an inherent assumption that the leader has the appropriate authority to offer such rewards or administer punishments.

This is contrasted with transformational leadership, which is a process by which leaders create high levels of motivation and commitment by generating and communicating a clear vision and, often, appealing to higher ideals and values amongst followers. Rosener (1990, p120) defines it as motivating others by 'transforming their individual self-interest into the goals of the group' and by trying to make people feel part of the organisation.

Legge (2005) explains how this focus on a shared vision and personal commitment was, in the 1980s, part of a transformational leadership style which was characteristic of successful Japanese companies. It was reintegrated into American management culture (which was more focused on transactional leadership) via the work of the excellence gurus like Peters and Waterman, or Ouchi (1981). He charts the appeal of this style of leadership, and in particular its association with the American dream and thus some of the 'soft' HRM practices which facilitate the growth of an enterprise culture.

5.6.2 INSPIRATIONAL AND AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

It is impossible to discuss questions of leadership without considering the concept of inspirational leadership, which has regained some currency in recent years. In some ways this brings us back to concepts associated with trait theories, and in particular the characteristic usually described as charisma. Inspirational leadership, we are told by Adair (2003) and others, is about creating and communicating vision, having a passion and a dynamism that drives the leader and engages the enthusiasm and efforts of the led; even exhibiting unconventional behaviour and performing heroic deeds (Conger 1999). It includes the ability to take a long-term view, to inspire trust and confidence, which unlocks talent and enables the organisation to achieve exceptional performance. A recent trend in the world of management training and development that reflects this renewed attention to the highly personal nature of leadership, and in particular strategic leadership, is found in the growing interest in emotional intelligence as a relevant and learnable leadership skill.

Mullins (2013) and Legge (2005) both sound notes of caution in their consideration of inspirational leadership and draw attention to some of its drawbacks. Certainly it is difficult to see how charismatic leadership can be developed effectively. This is not to deny that many business founders have been charismatic and inspiring individuals, but their skills have often been better described as those of the champion which, as we have seen, relies on a wide range of business skills as well as the ability to protect and nurture a project. It is also less than wholly evident that inspirational leadership in itself results in significant benefits for organisational performance; in some cases it may be that the loss of the visionary results in the dissolution of the organisation. A specific attack on the cult of the inspirational leader was made by Beverly Alimo-Metcalfe at the HRD 2008 event, where she argued that organisations probably shouldn't choose leaders who are charismatic and inspirational because these qualities sometimes can be lethal. This view is supported by Evans (2008) who posits people at the top who are charismatic get there through the demise of others – they emasculate everybody else along the way. This kind of leadership can be toxic.

Adrian Furnham (2005) has also written about arrogance and egotistical leadership behaviour using the legend of Daedalus and Icarus. Inspirational leadership relies on a certain degree of emotional manipulation, and so its ethical status as a general management strategy might be open to challenge. It may also inspire less desirable characteristics in the followers, such as a high level of individual dependence on the approval and support of the leader; a fear of 'going against the grain' or groupthink; and a degree of enthusiasm for the

vision which could encourage people to act in ways which stray beyond the boundaries of what might be considered ethical, or even legal (Conger 2002). Inspirational leaders can be bullies as well as visionaries; and the more powerfully they communicate their values, the less space there is for reasoned doubt or even opposition.

It is sometimes difficult to separate the concept of charismatic or egotistical leadership (with all its potential failings) from another idea which seems to have a more positive image – that of ‘authentic’ leadership. Authentic leadership is sometimes described as ‘an expression of the leader’s true self’ – although of course the perception of authenticity might simply result from good acting (Ladkin and Taylor 2009). Techniques from the world of performance art are often discussed in this context; for instance, the Stanislavski method (ibid) and classically rooted concepts such as mastery and congruence (Ladkin 2008). All this might suggest that followers can never really know if the leader’s display of their ‘true self’ is anything more than an illusion. However, illusions can be powerful things, and some researchers have noted that the outcomes of authentic leadership on followers’ attitudes and behaviours can have significant predictive validity in terms of enhanced trust, job satisfaction and job performance (Walumbwa et al 2008).

5.6.3 SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Servant leadership as a term was initially used by Robert Greenleaf (1977) and has come to the forefront of research as the focus of leadership studies continues to move from the leader to the followers. The concept positions the leader as a steward rather than as a commander, and places him or her in a role which is defined by commitment to serve the organisation’s needs rather than personal ambition; and to support the autonomy, growth and well-being of others. Key attributes therefore include humility, authenticity, empathy and a willingness to put the needs of others (the followers, the institution and society) above those of the self when providing direction. It also requires a recognition of the implications of organisational activity for the society (or, in an increasingly globalised world, the societies) affected by its operations. In this respect it has significance not only for the nature of the leader/follower relationship, but also for the ethical integrity of the organisation as a whole (Van Dierendonck 2010).

Whilst apparently somewhat idealistic, the notion of servant leadership is perhaps becoming attractive as an antidote to many of the widely reported failures of leadership, particularly in financial services organisations which, in 2007, sparked major disruption to the global economy, the repercussions of which are likely to last for a decade or more. Concern with the psychological flaws of chief executives has led to a line of research based on ideas of hubris, overconfidence and narcissism – the very opposite of servant leadership. This is well summarised by Bollaert and Petit (2010), whose exploration of the work seeks to move beyond an examination of this ‘dark side’ of executive psychology and appeals for a better understanding of (amongst other things) its causes:

We believe that it is important to understand the contextual factors which may cause or aggravate hubristic tendencies, including the possible ‘hubrizing’ effect of the executive function, as preventive measures could then be discussed in the context of corporate governance reform (Bollaert and Petit 2010, p373).

Negative or the dark side of leadership is now receiving increasing attention from researchers and practitioners, for a useful overview see Schyns and Hansbrough (2010).

5.6.4 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

As many have experienced in our lives, sometimes it seems rather impossible to identify one individual as the leader, as it could be shared among a group of people, or distributed across organisations. This approach is a shift from the traditional ‘leader-centric’

perspectives and many regard it as a potential solution to power abuse in organisations (Bolden 2011). As Bennett et al (2003, p3) argue:

Distributed leadership is not something ‘done’ by an individual ‘to’ others, or a set of individual actions through which people contribute to a group or organization ... [it] is a group activity that works through and within relationships, rather than individual action.

Apart from shifting the focus in current leadership studies, distributed leadership also offers a new ‘unit of analysis’ that tends to see leadership from a holistic view rather than individual contributions (Bolden 2011, Gronn 2002). It was argued that leadership should be ‘more appropriately understood as a fluid and emergent, rather than as a fixed, phenomenon’ (Gronn 2000, p324). Similar to distributed leadership, other notions such as shared leadership, collective leadership, co-leadership are also looking at leadership as a social process that explores beyond individual agency.

Writing in the February 2008 issue of *Impact*, Linda Holbeche, the CIPD Director of Research and Policy, noted the evolving nature of management and leadership, and suggested that some important new themes are emerging from current research (2008b). Amongst these are the challenges created by the need to lead in situations of increasing complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty; the idea of building ‘communities of leaders’; and the influence of leader values in shaping the behaviour of those around them. These ideas have clear implications for HR practitioners (HRPs), who are often charged with the responsibility for developing organisational leaders.

It is also evident that the question of leadership remains an important area for academic research. The growth of virtual organisations and teams has led to an interest in the practice of e-leadership, and this is likely to be of growing significance as technology offers more and better opportunities for work to be organised using geographically dispersed expertise (Avolio et al 2000). Ilze Zigurs has developed some ideas about the transfer of traditional team roles into a virtual environment, including that of leadership. If physical presence is an important means of signalling and reinforcing leadership in traditional teams, what happens when there is no such presence? The concept of ‘telepresence’ becomes relevant here; but as she explains: ‘... being telepresent is more than just keeping up a steady stream of email messages to team members. Leaders need to learn how to use the vividness and interactivity of media to make their presence felt in a positive way’ (Zigurs 2003, p344).

HR professionals might be well placed to contribute to processes that attempt to identify the antecedents of hubristic behaviour and contribute to the necessary elements in corporate governance systems that would help to control their growth and impact. Whether we are concerned with traditional, virtual, inter-cultural, good or bad leadership, the academic field can offer the practitioner insights into useful approaches, as well as extending the range of knowledge and understanding about effective leadership in new contexts and situations.



A CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP AT THE BBC (PART TWO)

CASE STUDY 5.2

Following the resignation of George Entwistle, the BBC appointed Tony Hall (Lord Hall of Birkenhead) as its new DG with a start date of April 2013 when the interim DG, Tim Davie, stood down.

Like Entwistle, Hall had joined the BBC as a news trainee in 1973 and worked there for 28 years before leaving to become chief

executive of the Royal Opera House in 2001. This appointment was made without competition and as the result of a direct approach by the BBC Trust. One of his major challenges is to restore the confidence and morale of staff at the corporation, particularly those involved with news and current affairs programming.

Questions

1 What can recent research into the nature of leadership contribute to our understanding of how leaders can re-engage a demotivated workforce?

2 Is it ethically justifiable to award a publicly funded post like this without competition?

Outline the arguments both for and against the decision not to use an open recruitment process in this case.

5.7 DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

Many textbooks are devoted to the topic of leadership development (see for example: Gold et al 2010) and most management or organisational behaviour texts contain such chapters. The purpose of this section is not to replicate or produce a précis of these. Instead the aim is to simulate interest in further research and spotlight a few current debates on the topic of how leaders are trained and leadership is developed in organisations. These debates are important for HRPs, who may be held responsible and accountable for leadership development provision.

Leadership development is both a current and future concern, with over 50% of employers reporting that it is one of their top three priorities for the coming year (CIPD 2015g, Gurdjian et al 2014). Formal leader and leadership training programmes are used widely in an attempt to improve the way organisations are led with estimates of the annual spend on such interventions varying from \$14bn in the USA to \$50bn worldwide (Harrison and Auluck 2014, Raelin 2004, Yukl 2012). Often leadership development takes the lion's share of organisational training budgets and yet there is little evidence to demonstrate a return on this investment (CIPD 2014a, Yukl 2012). There is ongoing dissatisfaction with leaders and the state of leadership in most organisations, with less than 40% of organisations rating their leaders as excellent or very good (Boatman et al 2011).

Additionally, recent high-profile cases of poor leaders that have hit the media headlines suggest that things may be getting worse. The economic problems that started in 2008 increased the focus on leadership, but in many cases leaders were found wanting, with follower trust diminishing (CIPD 2013c, 2014a). At the very least there is more public debate and discontent with those seen as being irresponsible leaders. Cunningham (2010, p5) surmises: 'At the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century have we cracked the problem of leadership development? Not on the evidence so far.' He goes on to assert that organisations are no better led than 80 years ago.

So whilst there is a wealth of evidence that leaders and leadership are important to organisational success, and vast sums are invested in development, we are far from seeing better leaders in practice and we don't know why. Therefore this section of the chapter focuses on a selection of potential issues which could be contributing to this discontent and suggests ways these may be overcome.

The issues we have chosen to highlight are:

- The focus:
 - Who or what are we developing: leaders or leadership?
 - What is being learned: new paradigm or traditional theories on leaders and leadership?
 - What methods are being used: learning, training or development?
- The quality of learning needs analysis.
- The quality of learning evaluation.

5.8 THE FOCUS: LEADER OR LEADERSHIP?

The first issue we consider is linked to the leader or leadership debate (Day 2001). The term 'leader' refers to the individual, hence their learning increases human capital. 'Leadership' is far wider, recognising the importance of followers, and relating to the process or collective, with learning linked to social or even cultural capital (see Table 5.2 for more detail).

Increasing human capital of individual leaders can have an impact on the organisation, but this is likely to be limited in both scope and time. Scope is limited by the sphere of influence of leaders (how many employees they interact with and to what extent). Time is limited by a leader's tenure in the company (how long they remain in the organisation). With a focus on leaders, the organisation is reliant on select individuals acquiring desired knowledge, skills and attitudes and using transformed behaviours as a result; however, both of these assumptions should be challenged. As we discuss in Chapter 10, acquisition of new knowledge, skills and attitudes may not result in changed behaviour or transfer to the workplace, and even if it does, this behaviour may not be desired. Additionally, an over focus on the individual leader assumes one size fits all and ignores context; or that a successful leader in one situation will not necessarily be brilliant in another (Gurdjian et al 2014).

Table 5.2 Leader or leadership?

Comparison dimension	Leader	Leadership
Capital	Human	Social
Model	Individual Personal power Knowledge Trustworthiness	Relational Commitment Mutual respect Trust
Competence base/skills	Intrapersonal Self-awareness Self-regulation Self-motivation	Interpersonal Social awareness Social skills

Adapted from Day (2001, p584)

Conversely, increasing social capital through leadership development is more valuable to an organisation as the sphere of influence is far wider and longer lasting. New behaviours remain in the organisation and are adapted to meet changing circumstances, even if key individuals leave. Yet in most organisations the focus has traditionally been on individual leaders (Drath 2001), reinforcing a preoccupation with self-awareness and self-development at the expense of followers (Jackson and Parry 2008). Finite resources and the influence of power results in a focus on the top echelons of organisations, with an over-reliance on a limited talent pool or a few high-potential individuals with the importance of followers being ignored (CIPD 2013c, CIPD 2015g, Gold et al 2013). In the age of the protean career and increased mobility of employees this focus is unhelpful.

5.9 THE FOCUS: NEW PARADIGM OR TRADITIONAL THEORIES?

As discussed above, in recent decades theory has moved away from the idea that heroic leaders are the omnipotent force that single-handedly steer the organisation with a command and control or charismatic persona. Newer paradigm theories recognise that formal leaders are only able to effect change through others (Grint 2005). The theories of transformational (Burns 1978) and servant (Greenleaf 1977) leadership still focus on individual leaders, but put more emphasis on relationship-building and participatory approaches. This emphasises social awareness, using a collective empathy, service

orientation and commitment to developing others with context, processes and systems aligned to maximise the effects of leaders' actions (Schyns et al 2011). Distributed or shared leadership (Gronn 2002) have also emerged as viable or even desirable alternatives to traditional bureaucracies, whereby employees without formal managerial responsibility are expected to lead from the front when appropriate (CIPD 2014a). These new paradigm theories change both the focus and content of leader and leadership development to empowering and enabling behaviours with an emphasis on collective ability and responsibility.

However, Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT) and the Romance of Leadership (RoL) indicate that although organisations may overtly state their preference for newer paradigm leadership approaches, in practice they may unconsciously be encouraging the opposite (Schyns et al 2013). ILT asserts that we all hold images in our minds of leaders' traits and behaviours; we then use these schema as a blueprint for assessing individuals to decide if we will grant them leadership (Eden and Leviathan 1975); and of course without followers there is no leadership. In contrast to expectations, ILTs have proven to be relatively consistent and, importantly, are dominated by traditional leadership traits from the 'great men' theories of a century ago (Schyns et al 2013). Traits such as charisma, vigour, self-confidence, strength, intelligence, tyranny, masculinity and attractiveness, as identified by Stogdill (1948), still prevail and are valued. Indeed, in some circumstances this value is magnified by RoL theory.

RoL theory asserts that we over-attribute success or failure of organisations or situations to individual leaders, ignoring other contextual factors such as the environment or followers (Schyns and Hansbrough 2012). Extreme examples are regularly seen in the sporting world, with, for example, football managers being sacked on the basis of a few lost matches, when realistically the players, the backroom staff and a host of other factors must have been influential on that outcome. Conversely, when things go well, they become the ultimate heroes (see, for example, the case of Jose Mourinho). Interestingly, in times of uncertainty RoL has been shown to increase (Bligh and Schyns 2007) as followers become more willing to abdicate responsibility and blame to those in formal leader positions. Therefore it is possible that the recent economic global crisis has caused resurgence in a desire for heroic leaders.

ROMANCE OF LEADERSHIP (RoL): JOSE MOURINHO

Jose Mourinho became a household name in the UK after joining Chelsea Football Club in 2004. On being appointed Mourinho said, 'I don't want to sound arrogant, but I think I am a special manager because I won the Champions league.' Following his appointment the club experienced significant success, which Mourinho was happy to take the credit for. This was, despite many other contributory factors, not least huge investments in new players and innovative support-staff changes. In 2007, Mourinho left the club after poor results at the start of the season, which he blamed on a lack of investment by the owner. But such is the nature of football that in 2013 he returned to Chelsea, much to the delight of fans, who were delighted to have the 'Special One' back at their club. In a *Daily Mail* headline in August 2012 it was reported that he felt this title was insufficient and should be changed to the 'Only One' because he had won so much. However, just seven months after Chelsea won the 2014/15 premiership title, the 'Special One' was sacked following a string of defeats.

These theories may mean that the content of leader and leadership learning is disconnected to organisational reality and practice. People may be learning about

followership theories and practices, and organisations may proclaim this is what they seek, but in practice, traditional views of leaders abound and are embedded in recruitment, training and appraisal practices. If new paradigm behaviours are not recognised or rewarded, learning transfer is unlikely. This may provide one more reason for lack of satisfaction with outcomes of leader and leadership training and development.

5.10 THE FOCUS: TRAINING OR DEVELOPMENT?

Chapter 10 provides clarification of the terms 'training' and 'development', which are often used interchangeably. Table 5.3 sets out how they differ.

Table 5.3 The differences between training and development

Training	Development
Time-bound	More opaque, longer-term, nurturing perspective
Clear, relatively uniform, skills-based outcomes	Less prescribed and more flexible outcomes
Training objectives specified by the training provider	Personal learning aims specified by the learner

Leader training courses are very common, often provided as a series of off-job modules linked together into some sort of programme over a period of months, delivered by external specialist companies. Example modules include such topics as:

- coaching skills
- motivating for success
- communicating your vision.

Such off-job, formal training courses are easier for organisations to evaluate than on-job, in-company development interventions (McDowall and Saunders 2010), but we question their value in transforming the way organisations are led. Leader training has a focus on individuals' knowledge (knowing how) and skills (acting as a leader), but not enough on attitudes, emotions and values, which have proven to be important contributors in major organisational failures (Gurdjian et al 2014, Jackson and Parry 2008).

Leadership development, on the other hand, incorporates elements such as emotional intelligence, which has been shown to be important to effective leadership (Goleman 1995). Leadership development promotes a more holistic, multi-level, identity-based approach (Day and Harrison 2007). But this is messy: it has to be in-company, on-job and involve large numbers of employees. Leadership development lacks a clear beginning or end, with non-specific learning outcomes that change and adapt to organisational rhythms. This type of learning intervention is much harder to justify and evaluating success is notoriously difficult. But if messy leadership development is what is really needed, then investing in the easier option of leader training must result in dissatisfaction with the outcomes.

In reality, for meaningful organisational transformation to happen there is probably a need for a focus on both leader and leadership with both training and development interventions (McDowall and Saunders 2010). HR has a role to play in helping the organisation recognise what it is investing in and why, so that it can determine the return on this investment; in other words going back to basics with learning needs analysis and evaluation.



REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY 5.3

- What is the focus in your organisation? Leaders or leadership? Training or development?
- How helpful is this focus?
- How might you change the focus?
- How carefully is learning needs analysis or training needs analysis carried out for leader and leadership learning interventions?
- How well is leader and leadership learning evaluated in your organisation?

5.11 INSUFFICIENT NEEDS ANALYSIS

In Chapter 10 of this book we explore the lack of focus given to proper training or learning needs analysis (TNA, LNA). If the gap in knowledge, skills or attitudes is not known then there is a high risk that any training or development intervention will have limited value. At best, resources will be wasted, providing unnecessary inputs; at worst, learners are demotivated by irrelevant input and learning becomes devalued. When some organisations are devoting a large percentage of hard-squeezed budgets to leadership development then this has big implications. Lack of LNA or TNA may therefore account for some of the dissatisfaction with leader and leadership capability and effectiveness. Failure to identify needs upfront also affects the ability to evaluate investments in learning, training and development and it is well known that these tasks are poorly done in many organisations (CIPD 2015g, Roberts 2006).



TRAINING V DEVELOPMENT

CASE STUDY 5.3

Consider two typical examples of learning intervention.

A new employee is recruited as a forklift truck driver and he goes to an accredited external trainer to be trained in driving a forklift truck. Assessment at the end of the course is a series of practical tasks done to a pre-set standard and a test of important underpinning knowledge. Success in the assessment results in the award of a nationally recognised certificate of competence. He returns to work and carries out his job, with targets set for the quantity of items moved, within set timescales, and a clear requirement to do this safely as taught.

Simultaneously, the organisation starts a leadership development programme for all the middle managers in the company. This comprises a series of half-day off-job workshops, mentoring and on-job

projects and assignments. Each manager has a personal development portfolio to record their learning goals and progress.

Source: Alex Tymon

Questions

- 1 What differences should there be in the LNA or TNA carried out for these two different interventions?
- 2 How easy is the evaluation of the forklift truck training?
- 3 What are the difficulties in evaluating the leadership development programme?
- 4 How would you carry out a return on investment or expectation calculation for both?

5.12 INSUFFICIENT EVALUATION

Only 7% of organisations in the UK complete a comprehensive evaluation of any of their training and development, 50% only do so at the most basic level of gauging reactions, and 50% do no evaluation at all (CIPD 2015g). Leader and leadership learning is the least likely of all to be evaluated (Gurdjian et al 2014, Jackson and Parry 2008). This is most likely due to the complexity and difficulties of evaluating such interventions, which begin to be highlighted in the Case Study 5.3. The forklift truck driver training is easily justified and evaluated, whereas the leadership development programme presents multiple challenges in this respect.

5.12.1 CHALLENGE 1: HOW TO MEASURE COSTS OF THE INTERVENTION?

In the forklift truck example, costs are fairly transparent: the direct costs of the training course; the time of the trainee; perhaps a small amount of on-job practice time; and increased supervision on immediate return to work whilst the new skills are honed. But for a leadership development programme costs are far from clear. For example, coaching is often cited as a valuable and effective method of developing leaders and leadership, yet how do we measure the costs? Is it just the direct costs of coaches' and leaders' time in formal sessions together? What about time spent by leaders on personal reflection? What about conversations with colleagues that might further enhance behaviour? And opportunity costs for leaders' time are much higher and more difficult to calculate than for other employees.

5.12.2 CHALLENGE 2: HOW TO MEASURE OUTCOMES?

In the forklift truck example, the outcomes are clear: safe movement of the required number of items, which are directly attributable to the training received and subsequent transfer of learning to the workplace (see Chapter 10 for more detail on learning transfer). But with leadership development outcomes are much harder to identify and thus quantify. Improved leadership should result in transforming the behaviour of followers, so it is their performance which needs to be measured. However, which followers doing what? There are many reasons why followers' behaviour could change, which may have nothing or everything to do with how they are led.

To overcome this challenge, many research studies and organisational evaluations use self or line manager reports to assess behaviour changes in leaders (Ely et al 2010), but how reliable and objective is this? And this still does not show measurable outcomes as a result of leadership development. If an organisation adopts the multi-level, identity-based approach to leadership development promoted by Day and Harrison (2007), we suggest that objective measurement of outcomes would be near impossible.

5.12.3 CHALLENGE 3: WHEN TO MEASURE OUTCOMES?

Our forklift truck training can be measured as soon as the driver returns to work. But leadership development is recognised as being 'slow burn'; with iterative, small lessons learned and then behaviour adjusted over time, it could be argued it never stops, so when is the outcome to be measured? And then there is linking inputs with outcome.

5.12.4 CHALLENGE 4: HOW TO PROVE CAUSE AND EFFECT?

An excuse given by many for poor evaluation of learning in general is the difficulty of linking outcomes back to training or development input, but in the leadership domain it is particularly acute. The long-term nature of leadership development and the once, twice or further removed behaviours of followers are hard to link, as many other factors could have affected outcomes.

An increasing number of recent studies have tried to truly evaluate leadership learning interventions using, for example, experimental methodologies or control groups (Santos et al 2015, Parry and Sinha 2005). However, these raise other questions such as the reality of experimental studies, generalisability of results and the ethics of excluding some individuals from learning interventions that might be valuable. But perhaps more importantly for HRD practitioners, these approaches are extremely complex and unlikely to be adopted by most organisations. Large companies with professional HRD teams may have the expertise and resources to carry out better quality evaluations and should be encouraged to do so, but the vast majority of UK businesses fall into the small and medium-sized category, and so evaluation is likely to remain a challenge. This suggests that a continuation of current practices is likely.

In the absence of systematic evaluation, decisions on what learning is provided by organisations reverts back to those who sign the cheques. Those individuals who attend expensive, high-profile, traditional off-job leader training tend to be top leaders, and therefore the decision-makers. These people are more positive towards these traditional methods than the organisations that sponsor them (CIPD 2013c). Hence there is a strong possibility that organisations will continue to use existing methods even if they are not satisfied with their outcomes (CIPD 2013c), unless of course a persuasive alternative is presented, and this is an opportunity for the HR function.

5.13 IMPROVING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: A ROLE FOR HR

The HR function has a chance to build its credibility by rising to the challenge of pushing for better quality leader and leadership learning. In short, the HR function can address some of the issues discussed thus far. Of course, this is much easier said than done, as this involves changing some very embedded attitudes and beliefs, exacerbated by the fact that these are held by the top people within organisations. But a real opportunity exists for those courageous enough and willing to model effective leadership behaviours and challenge the status quo.

5.14 CHANGING FOCUS: LEADER TO LEADERSHIP

The first step is to convince the organisation that leadership in its widest sense is the future. This will entail allaying fears, as those in formal leader positions will understandably be resistant to approaches that threaten their security. But promoting the view of Collinson (2006, p187), which 'views the identities of followers and leaders as inextricably linked, mutually reinforcing, and shifting within specific contexts' can start the process of acceptance. Reassuring formal leaders that their training will not necessarily be taken away, but instead enhanced, is essential. Individual leader development is a necessary foundation as better skilled formal leaders are able to use more sophisticated leadership, but there is also a need for developing collective leadership in teams and the broader organisation (Day and Harrison 2007). So the first role for HR is to help the organisation let go of the fixation on leader training and formal interventions that focus on only a small pool of top talent (CIPD 2013c) and look far wider. The paper by Dalakoura (2010, p436) provides a 'collective framework for leadership development' that could be valuable for HR practitioners attempting to start the process of widening views.

5.15 CHANGING PRACTICES: NEW PARADIGM THEORIES

HR also has a role to play in ensuring consistency in what is espoused as desirable in learning interventions and the reality of what is recognised and rewarded in organisation practice. ILT and RoL theory have the potential to undermine recruitment by allowing unconscious bias towards heroic or 'great men' traits to be sought at the expense of social awareness, collective empathy, service orientation and commitment to developing others.

HR can facilitate the design of processes and systems and provide training to overcome such biases. This should ensure that cloned recruitment does not occur and begin the process of changing the organisational culture to one that recognises and rewards collective leadership. This can then be reinforced by ensuring the content of learning interventions mirrors this message and develops the new paradigm skills required for all who need them. In short, many traditional methods of leader training used by organisations in the past need to be replaced by more effective methods aimed at leadership development. Quatro et al (2007, p439) caution: 'beware leadership development activities that may create narrowly focused leaders, asserting that a holistic approach is needed and go on to say that only the analytical facet of leadership can really benefit from off-job training approaches, the rest requires experiential development.'

5.16 CHANGING METHODS: EXPERIENTIAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING

An increasing weight of evidence suggests experience is key to effective leader and leadership development (Conger 2004, McCall 2010, Grint 2005, Raelin 2011, Yukl 2012) and concurs with much current HRD thinking in general such as the move towards more informal learning and the 70:20:10 approach (Jennings and Wagnier 2010), as discussed in Chapter 10. For leadership the experiential approach could be particularly appropriate because it recognises the importance of followers and a collective approach to development. As Grint (2005) suggests, there is huge potential for leaders to learn to lead from followers, in the way that parents learn to parent from their children. However, learning from experience is not automatic and on its own does not guarantee learning.

5.17 THE ROLE OF HR IN EXPERIENTIAL AND INFORMAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Experiential and informal learning needs conscious elements: a supportive organisation culture that develops individual interest and motivation to learn; management of experiences to maximise their learning potential; and the ability to reflect. HR has an important role to play in facilitating these elements, starting with the challenge of changing the learning culture of the organisation to one where experimentation and active informal learning become everyday activities.

Chapter 10 provides ideas on what is needed for a more self-directed learning culture to be brought about to increase individual motivation and interest in experiential leadership development. HR can further support this by facilitating the right type of experiences for effective learning. McCall (2010) stresses that, using experiential learning to develop leadership is more complex than it appears because certain experiences matter more than others. He cites the following as powerful because of the challenges they present:

- early work experiences
- short-term assignments and major experiences
- very good or very bad bosses
- hardships.

Hence, HR can really make a difference by ensuring an appropriate variety of tasks or assignments are available that present the right amount of challenge (Yukl 2012).

An additional role for HR is to facilitate the acquisition of reflective learning skills as this is critical for effective leadership development (Gurdjian et al 2014, McCall 2010, Sinclair 2007). Although not easy, reflective practice and critical reflection can be taught (Mackay and Tymon 2014). Alongside this, HR can argue for the time and space needed for experiential learning and put a focus on feedback to guide reflective learning from experience. Training people company-wide in the skills of giving and receiving feedback

effectively could be a very worthwhile investment that should increase and enhance informal and active learning.

Ultimately, experiential leadership development is not a quick fix, but then things worth having seldom are. Formal training and off-job courses especially for the select few can be expensive, requiring external providers and off-job venues. Development approaches may not be cheaper but they are more effective at providing real organisational benefits. HR needs to take on a selling role and be open about the challenges, costs and benefits, but it can only do this if it has the facts and figures at its disposal. This entails thorough evaluation of learning, which begins with robust needs analysis.

5.18 IMPROVING NEEDS ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION

Changing the focus from leader to leadership means more people are involved in learning interventions, which presents challenges for resource-strapped organisations. One way to overcome this is to use more cost-effective methods, such as on-job, experiential and action learning approaches as already discussed. A second way to ensure effectiveness for a wider audience is to carry out better needs analysis and most training and HRD textbooks have useful chapters on how this can be achieved.

Robust needs analysis will identify:

- what leadership development is required
- for which individuals
- appropriate methods
- expected or desired outcomes.

Clarity on these points will help justify investment in training and development, both financial and in terms of time and space. The last point is critical, as this enables any intervention to be evaluated and the case for future investment in leadership development is much easier to make if past success can be demonstrated. Once desired outcomes are known then HR can tackle the challenge of seeking measurement of these. Due to the issues discussed earlier, this measurement and proving cause and effect will still prove challenging, but HR will have better metrics and thus more credibility in the eyes of the organisation.

5.19 IN SUMMARY

Leaders in twenty-first-century organisations have two competing challenges: getting things done to meet today's needs, whilst adapting what they do so that their business can thrive in the future (Heietz et al 2009). These are activities that require both personal ability and skills, but more importantly the support of others and committed followers, hence both leader training and leadership development. As Raelin asserts, 'The work-based learning process as a collective and reflective experience transforms leadership in kind toward a collaborative practice that can respond to contemporary demands' and ensure that everyone in the organisation can give all they have to offer (2011, p20). Organisations can increase the chances of success in leader and leadership development by defining what leadership means in their context and who is expected to lead with what skills and knowledge and in what way (CIPD 2013c). HR has a key role to play in this by embedding development in real work and measuring the impact (Gurdjian et al 2014) whilst ensuring the context and culture is conducive to learning (CIPD 2013c).

5.20 CONCLUSION

There is a global fixation with leaders and leadership. A search of the Amazon bookstore produces more than 5,000 non-fiction books with the word 'leadership' in the title. It is

clear that there is a renewed sense of the importance of good leadership amongst those most concerned with setting standards for today's managers, be they in business, the public services, or elsewhere. This comes from economic, social and political changes, which have encouraged more aspiration towards leading others and one's self, and perhaps less obedience to traditional forms of authority.

It also stems from the need, as Handy predicted in 1989, for organisations to become more federal than monolithic, and for new styles of management and leadership to emerge to suit the changed environment, including the virtual one. It reflects a growing public interest in the standards of behaviour of those who run businesses and direct our lives through political decisions, and their competence to carry out the tasks entrusted to them. In this respect it links firmly with discussion about ethical standards and organisational practices considered elsewhere in this book.

HR professionals will be concerned to ensure good leadership in their organisations, to improve both the performance of the organisation itself and to enable it to attract and keep good staff. This means choosing appropriate frameworks for the selection of potential leaders, their initial training, managing the performance expected of them once in the job, appraising, developing and rewarding them, facilitating their careers and, sometimes, removing them. A coherent, fair and equitable approach to these tasks is thus essential.

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- 1 The relationship between leadership and management is a close one.
- 2 The way in which we analyse and understand leadership has important implications for personnel professionals, particularly with respect to the selection and training of organisational leaders.
- 3 An over-emphasis on charismatic leadership can result in undesirable organisational outcomes.
- 4 Understanding leadership is not just about a leader-centric approach; there are other leadership theories emerging which consider leadership from relational and process perspectives.
- 5 Leadership development takes the lion's share of most organisational training budgets, but with limited evidence of effectiveness.
- 6 Improving leader and leadership development requires better needs analysis, and clarity of what is being developed and for whom, alongside robust evaluation.



CASE STUDY 5.4

LEARNING TO LEAD IN SOUTHSIRE SCHOOLS

Anil Gupta and Sandra Carter have recently been promoted to the headships of two primary schools in Southshire.

Leadership in modern schools is especially challenging as it requires high-level technical skills combined with well-developed relationship skills.

As part of the trend to free schools from local authority control and grant them

more autonomy, head teachers have had to learn a range of new technical skills including project management, HRM, financial and budgetary management, public relations skills and political sensitivity.

They need to be respected leaders of staff and pupils alike, and whilst they have scope to shape the strategic

direction of their school, the increased autonomy has been accompanied by **greater** scrutiny and accountability.

Schools are a vital part of their local communities and their reputation among parents is a constant source of discussion and concern. Tricky issues abound: beyond a school's gates headteachers are expected to collaborate with other schools (some of which may be competitors for funding or pupils) and a host of agencies with responsibility for children's welfare.

Anil's background is in physics, and he has been teaching for 12 years, six of them in Southshire schools. He was made deputy head of the John Pounds Primary School (a city-centre school with a diverse ethnic mix, which takes approximately 350 8–11-year-olds) two years ago and has now been promoted to the headship of the school, which will become vacant at the end of the school year when the current head, Jim Graham, retires. Jim has been head for 17 years, and whilst well known and respected in the community, is somewhat traditional in his approach – a strong disciplinarian with considerable personal charisma. At the same time, Sandra (a modern linguist) is due to take up her first appointment as head of Teapot Row School on the outskirts of the city, which is of a similar size to John Pounds but with less of an ethnic mix. She has been promoted from a deputy headship of another school in rural Southshire. She has met the staff at Teapot Row, and whilst she finds them all to be friendly and devoted teachers, she thinks that the school has tended to rely on its reputation to attract pupils and may need to become more competitive and outward-looking in the future.

Schools in Southshire are able to draw on the resources of the Southshire Teaching and Leadership College (STLC). STLC offers a distinctive approach to leadership development: no two schools, or leaders, are alike and so STLC has adopted a highly personalised approach to leadership development. STLC has been asked to provide a suitable development programme for Anil and Sandra to facilitate their entry into their new leadership roles. Think about the design of such a programme, and consider the following questions.

Questions

- 1 How might leadership theories inform the content of the programme?
- 2 Which theories would you choose as the basis for this leadership development programme, and why? Are there any which you think are particularly unsuitable for the context?
- 3 How would you address the need to develop both the strategic leadership capability as well as the managerial leadership ability which Anil and Sandra are required to have as heads?
- 4 What possible learning and development techniques could be employed? Which would you consider most suitable?
- 5 How do you think the programme could be evaluated?

You may wish to refer to Chapter 10 to help with your answers.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What do you see as significant differences between leadership and management? Must all good managers be good leaders? Do all business leaders have to be good managers?
- 2 How would you improve the development of leaders and leadership in your organisation? How might this be different to other organisations?
- 3 Think about someone you know who you would describe as a good leader, preferably in an organisational context. What makes them good in your view? Would the skills and attributes you identified earlier be suitable in all contexts?
- 4 Are you a member or leader of a virtual team? If so, try to analyse what sorts of leadership behaviour appear to be effective in this environment. If not, what challenges might exist for leaders of such teams, and how could an HR specialist help to identify them? You might like to consider if any lessons can be learned from the way in which virtual communities such as Facebook or Second Life operate.



EXPLORER FURTHER

Dinh, J.E., Lord, R.G., Gardner, W.L., Meuser, J.D., Liden, R.C. and Hu, J. (2014) Leadership theory and research in the new millennium: current theoretical trends and changing perspectives. *The Leadership Quarterly*. Vol 25, No 1. pp36–62. Offers a summary of recent directions in academic leadership research.

French, R. (2015) *Cross-Cultural Management in Work Organisations*. 3rd ed. London: CIPD. Includes a chapter on the implications of national culture for organisational leadership as well as some information about key authors on cultural differences, and the relevant findings of Project GLOBE.

Mullins, L. (2013) *Management and Organisational Behaviour*. 10th ed. Harlow: FT/Prentice Hall. This text offers comprehensive descriptions and discussion of all major conceptualisations of both management and leadership, including those relating to gender, as well as relevant case studies.

Nye, J. (2008) *The Powers to Lead*. Oxford: OUP. Harvard Professor of International Relations Joseph Nye considers leadership styles and skills, and also discusses the transferability of leadership between different arenas such as the military, politics and business.

Van Dierendonck, D. (2010) Servant leadership, a review and synthesis. *Journal of Management*. Vol 37, No 4. pp1228–1261. Provides an overview of the antecedents, behaviours, mediating processes and outcomes associated with the concept of servant leadership.

Yukl, G. (2012) *Leadership in Organisations*. 8th ed. Harlow: Pearson. Another comprehensive review of the nature of leadership in an organisational setting.

Information and press releases about the 2012 crisis at the BBC can be found on the BBC Trust's website at www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust as well as those of most reputable newspapers.

International Leadership Association (www.ila-net.org) is a global network for leadership researchers and practitioners, it updates webinars and leadership related jobs regularly. It also offers some leadership resources and teaching activities to the public.

More case studies of leadership can be found on the CIPD website at cipd.co.uk/research/leadership.aspx