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LEADERSHIP STYLES AT APPLE AND SAMSUNG



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Introduction

Any organisation that wants to succeed must have strong leadership. It entails not just making judgements and issuing instructions, but also inspiring and directing others to collaborate towards shared objectives. Various leadership philosophies have been established to demonstrate how leaders can influence their organisations' results. For instance, transformational leadership, as described by Bass (2008), entails forging a compelling vision and motivating people to follow it, which frequently results in important organisational transformations. Conversely, Yukl and Gardner (2020) define transactional leadership as concentrating on upholding the organization's daily operations through rewards, discipline, and clear frameworks. These approaches show the different ways in which leaders can modify their strategies to suit the needs of their respective organisations.

This essay will examine the leadership approaches of Apple and Samsung, two significant tech firms. It will go through how Apple changed leadership from Steve to Tim Cook. The leadership of Lee Jae-yong at Samsung will also be discussed. The essay will demonstrate via these instances how diverse leadership philosophies are modified to meet a range of possibilities and difficulties, enabling businesses to remain successful and creative.

Leadership at Apple

Under the leadership of Steve Jobs and Tim Cook, Apple has been moulded by two very distinct approaches to leadership, which have both had a significant effect on the performance and culture of the organisation.

Transformational Leadership Under Steve Jobs

Known for his innovative thinking and visionary style, Steve Jobs is widely acclaimed as a transformational leader. According to Northouse (2021), transformational leadership is inspiring others to achieve extraordinary results by articulating a clear future vision. Jobs set an example for this by encouraging his staff at Apple to think creatively and create products that would revolutionise the IT sector. Under his direction, products like the iPhone and MacBook became famous due to his unwavering attention to design and user experience, as well as his tireless quest for perfection (Isaacson, 2011; Galloway, 2017).

Jobs' management approach wasn't without difficulties, though. His strict managerial style and rigorous standards frequently resulted in a high-stress workplace. While encouraging innovation, this atmosphere occasionally inhibited creativity and resulted in fatigue within the workforce (Goleman, 1996; Mullins and Christy, 2016). Notwithstanding these problems, Jobs' capacity



to motivate his staff and stretch the envelope of what was thought to be feasible was essential in making Apple a dominant force in the technological industry (Schmidt, Rosenberg, and Eagle, 2020).

An excellent illustration of Jobs' transformative leadership may be observed in the creation of the initial iPhone. Jobs envisioned a revolutionary gadget that would be a hybrid of a phone, iPod, and internet communicator. Even though it appeared to be technically unachievable, he encouraged his team to carry out this idea. The outcome was the iPhone, a device that solidified Apple's status as a pioneer in mobile technology while also completely redefining the smartphone market (Isaacson, 2011; Podolny and Hansen, 2020).

Transactional Leadership Under Tim Cook

After Steve Jobs stepped down as CEO, Tim Cook brought in new ideas and a new way of running Apple. Cook's leadership style is more in line with transactional leadership than Jobs' transformational style, which places more emphasis on managing and upholding the current organisational structure than drastically altering it (Bass, 2008). According to Podolny and Hansen (2020), Cook's leadership is distinguished by a significant emphasis on supply chain management, operational efficiency, and sustainability. These components have been essential to Apple's continued market supremacy as it enters new markets like wearables and services.

In contrast to Jobs' more dictatorial manner, Cook adopts a more inclusive and collaborative leadership style. According to Schmidt, Rosenberg, and Eagle (2020), he cultivates an atmosphere at work that prioritises employee well-being and encourages teamwork, which has been crucial in maintaining Apple's innovative culture while maintaining operational excellence. Apple has been able to capitalise on its history of invention and adjust to new market opportunities because of the transition from Jobs' style to Cook's transactional strategy (Waldman and O'Reilly, 2019).

Apple undertook a major strategy shift towards services and sustainability under Cook's direction. For example, Cook spearheaded the release of Apple's Environmental Responsibility Report, outlining the business's dedication to employing recyclable materials and lowering its carbon impact. By expanding Apple's income sources beyond hardware to include services like Apple Music, iCloud, and the App Store, this focus on sustainability not only enhanced the company's reputation but also helped it become more profitable (Podolny and Hansen, 2020; Northouse, 2021).



Leadership at Samsung

Over time, Samsung's leadership has also changed, placing a greater emphasis on strategic management and innovation.

Strategic Leadership Under Lee Jae-Yong

The current chairman of Samsung, Lee Jae-Yong, has been instrumental in advancing the company's strategic goals. The best way to characterise his leadership style is strategic leadership, which is centred on making choices that will affect the organization's success over the long run (Waldman and O'Reilly, 2019). Lee has made innovation a top priority to keep Samsung competitive in the global market, especially in cutting-edge fields like artificial intelligence (AI) and semiconductors (Koh, 2020).

Samsung has reorganised significantly to focus on its main development sectors and streamline operations under Lee's direction. In order to increase productivity and foster innovation, this reorganisation process involved combining different business groups, demonstrating Lee's flexibility in tailoring his leadership style to the changing needs of the technology industry (Sbeglia Nin, 2021). Samsung has been able to maintain its market leadership through strategic vision and adaptation thanks in large part to Lee's leadership as the company navigates the quickly evolving technology landscape.

Samsung's significant investment in semiconductor manufacturing is a glaring illustration of Lee's strategic leadership. Lee led Samsung's plan to invest billions in increasing its semiconductor production capacity in response to the global semiconductor shortage. This calculated action demonstrated Lee's astute long-term planning and leadership and not only served to alleviate the chip shortage but also established Samsung as a major player in the global semiconductor market (Sbeglia Nin, 2021; Western and Garcia, 2018).

Innovation-Centered Leadership

The dedication to innovation that is engrained in Samsung's organisational culture has been essential to the company's long-term success. The company's emphasis on technology breakthroughs and the ongoing creation of new goods is indicative of its innovation-centered leadership (Evans, 2023). Samsung's leadership cultivates a culture of perpetual modification and adjustment, guaranteeing the company's sustained leadership in the technological sector.

The company's substantial investments in research and development, which are a key component of its leadership strategy, further demonstrate its commitment to innovation. Samsung has



established itself as a global leader in semiconductors and consumer electronics by fostering an environment that prioritises innovation and technological advancement (Yukl and Gardner, 2020). With its focus on innovation, Samsung has been able to hold onto its competitive advantage in a market that is changing quickly.

Samsung's creation of foldable smartphone technology is a prime example of its innovative leadership. Samsung made significant research and development investments to commercialise this technology, even in the face of the dangers and technological difficulties involved in producing a foldable phone. In addition to establishing a new standard for the smartphone market, the success of the Galaxy Fold series demonstrated Samsung's dedication to pushing the envelope of what is conceivable and cemented the company's standing as an industry innovator (Evans, 2023; Schmidt, Rosenberg, and Eagle, 2020).

Personal Leadership Experiences

Tim Cook and Steve Jobs both have leadership styles that I have seen in action in my professional experience. I once worked for a project manager who, like Steve Jobs, had a revolutionary vision and was extremely motivated to produce remarkable outcomes. The team was motivated to go beyond what we had first believed was feasible by this leader's ability to persuasively communicate a compelling vision for the project.

The team was able to complete a very difficult assignment because of the leader's ability to inspire and direct them towards this lofty objective. But like Jobs' management style, this strategy came with a lot of pressure and high standards, which occasionally led to a difficult work atmosphere. This reflects the difficulties Jobs faced as a leader, where the constant quest for innovation and perfection might at times inhibit originality and result in fatigue (Galloway, 2017; Isaacson, 2011).

Conclusion

To sum up, effective leadership has a crucial role in an organization's ability to overcome obstacles, stay innovative, and preserve a competitive edge. The significance of modifying leadership strategies to suit the changing demands of an organisation is exemplified by the leadership philosophies of Lee Jae-Yong at Samsung and Steve Jobs, and Tim Cook at Apple. Apple became a leader in innovation thanks in large part to Steve Jobs' visionary leadership and transformational leadership style. But it also produced a high-stress atmosphere that might inhibit innovation. Tim Cook's shift to a more transactional style of leadership ensured Apple's sustained development and market domination by allowing the business to keep its innovative edge while putting a strong emphasis on operational efficiency and sustainability.



Similarly to this, Lee Jae-Yong's strategic leadership at Samsung has fuelled the business's growth by emphasising long-term planning and innovation. His ability to lead has been crucial in negotiating the complexity of the international market, especially in light of the large investments he has made in semiconductor technology and the creation of cutting-edge goods like foldable smartphones. These businesses serve as examples of how different organisational objectives and outside obstacles require different leadership philosophies to be addressed, ultimately leading to long-term success and leadership in the field. These illustrations demonstrate that there is no one-size-fits-all method for good leadership; rather, it is a dynamic process requiring ongoing adaptability and strategic vision.

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