

# The dynamics of organisational leadership

Management

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is a science  
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Leadership is probably the most written about, formally researched and informally discussed topic in behavioural sciences. Throughout history, the difference between success and failure — whether in a war, a business or a protest movement, scientific breakthrough or a great victory in the world of sports — has been attributed to leadership, which can simply be defined as an art and a science of influencing others to achieve a desired objective.

There are several distinct theoretical bases for leadership. At first, leaders were perceived to be born not made. This "great man theory" of leadership implied that some individuals are born with certain traits that allow them to emerge in any situation or period of history as leaders.

Dissatisfied with this approach, psychologists switched their emphasis from the individual to the group approach. Leadership is viewed more in terms of a leader's behaviour and how such behaviour affects and is affected by the followers. In addition to the leader and group, situation began to receive increased attention in leadership theory in which the leader is viewed as a product of the time and the situation. The person with particular qualities or traits that situation requires will emerge as the leader.

Charismatic leadership are those who by the force of their personal abilities are capable of having extraordinary effects on their followers. Charismatic leaders have superior debating and persuasive skills and technical ex-

perts and foster attitudinal, behavioural and emotional changes in their followers. The situational leaders are extremely charismatic. In the world of science we have charismatic leaders like Einstein and Dr A Q Khan. In the world of sports we have charismatic leaders like Bradman, Gary Sobers, Pele, Mohammad Ali, Imran Khan. On the human side we have leaders such as Mother Teresa, Princess Diana on one hand and Charles Sobhraj and Phulan Devi on the other.

In the Organisational context, the situational or contingency theories of leadership are best suited to motivate and inspire the workers. The first such theory propounded by Fred Fiedler an American psychologist. He developed a contingency model of leadership effectiveness. This model contains the relationship between leadership style and the favourableness of the situation. Situational favourableness was determined by the factors such as the leader-member relationship, the degree of task structure and the leader's position power. If the leader-member relationship is positive, democratic and cordial, the leadership situation will be more favourable for the leader. The degree of task structure characterises the difficulty level of the task begin and achieved by a particular leader in a given situation. The more complex and challenging the task the greater is the requirement of a higher level of calibre and character.

The last but not the least factor of situation favourableness is position power of the leader. Stronger the position of a leader more is favourableness. All the above quoted leaders enjoyed the strongest position power in

their respective periods and time of history, however, few notable names such as Cyrus the great, Darius, Cleopa, Julius Caesar, Joan of Arc, King Ibn Saud, King Hussein, Yasir Arafat and Leeh Waleeh can be aptly added to the list.

Another theory suited for two American psychologists, Martin Evans and Robert House, developed organisational leadership. It is titled as patch goal leadership theory. The theory attempts to explain the impact that leader's behaviour has. Using one of the four styles upon the situational factors, the leader attempts to influence the subordinates perception and motivate them, which in terms, leads to their role clarity, goal expectation satisfaction, and performance.

These styles are known as directive or authoritative leadership, supportive or helping leadership, and participative and achievement-oriented leadership. The military commanders and civilian dictators have initially and largely developed the first style of leadership. However, there are authoritative-cum achievement-oriented leaders who changed the course of history.

By recognising and arousing subordinate needs for outcomes over which the leader has some control, he also increases personal rewards to subordinates for work-goal attainment by making the path to those rewards easier through guidance, direction, monitoring and control.

He also helps subordinates clarify their expectancies by enlightening their minds, sharpening their intellectual acuity and acumen and also by reducing their frustrating barriers through achievement-oriented goals

and missions. Fred Fielder's situational leaders with achievement-oriented style often seek opportunities to increase their personal satisfaction. Contingent on effective performance. In other words by doing the above, the leader attempts to make the path to subordinates goals as smooth as possible. But to accomplish this path-goal facilitation, the leader must use the appropriate style of leadership contingent on situational variables present.

The best and most effective style of the leadership emerged in modern political history is proud legacy of the greatest democrat across the Atlantic — Abraham Lincoln. The style can identify themselves as politico-social-educational catalysts (change agent); they are courageous and generous and believe in the inherent goodness of the people. Because of their value-driven attitude they are largely mission-oriented and achievement-oriented. They are invariably life-long learners and are, therefore, intellectually stimulating. Their intellectual prowess enables them to deal complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty with ease and composure. The beautiful blend of their qualities of head and heart make them ready to suffer, pain, adversity, defeat or even death. The last but not the least category of leaders that has recently been emerged as a pinnacle of leadership combine in it the three last traits and style, i.e. Charisma, transformation (both evolutionary and democracy).

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