



A Review of Literature on Leadership

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1. DEFINING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is one of the most studied and least understood topics in all the social sciences. Many people have struggled to define leadership and there are a plethora of definitions and clichés, none of which are universally accepted. The following are typical:

'Leaders articulate and define what has previously remained implicit or unsaid: they invent images, metaphors and models that provide a focus for new attention. By doing so, they consolidate a challenge, provoking wisdom. In short, an essential factor in leadership is the capacity to influence and organise meaning for the members of the organisation.' Bennis and Nanus (1986)

'A leader shapes and shares a vision which gives point to the work of others.' Handy (1991)

However, after a century of theory and research, there is little agreement on a definition.

A traditional view of leaders centres around the strong individual providing vision and inspiration to organisations, and sees leadership as a process of them motivating other people to act in particular ways in order to achieve specific goals.

John Brown (1996) working with the 'Managing Change Through Innovation Project' (sponsored by the DoH and The Scottish Office) sees leadership as essentially about moving people in unison and with consensus towards a commonly defined goal. For this reason, he sees leadership and managing change as often synonymous and bound up in a cyclical process:

leadership → promotes commitment → encourages change ideas →
needs leadership → requires consultation → generates involvement
and trust → enhances leadership etc. etc.

Brown concludes that effective leadership involves change management (and managing change requires good leadership). Being a successful leader entails encouraging innovation in others by using skills of active listening and empowering. Brown (1996) quotes Gordon who emphasises that only when the power of the leader is 'given away' to the team (so individuals' contributions carry equal weight) that suggestions for improvement and change will be forthcoming. Empowerment, change and leadership are seen as inextricably linked.

Leadership is currently seen by some to be also about drawing people together, co-ordinating the component parts of an organisation and integrating its outputs:

'...adapting, modifying, adjusting and rearranging the complex task and function interfaces that keep slipping out of alignment.' Sayles (1993)

Phil Hodgson of Ashridge Management College analysed the behaviour of business leaders and likewise found:

'Generally the managers interviewed had outgrown the notion of the individualistic leader. Instead, they regarded leadership as a question of drawing people and disparate parts of the organisation together in a way that made individuals and organisations more effective.' Hodgson, in Crainer (1995).

Daniel Goleman et al (2002), author of the influential book 'Emotional Intelligence', however sees leadership as essentially an emotional process of creating a *'reservoir of positivity'* in people (called 'resonance') which releases the best in people and allows them to flourish. The prime task of leadership is seen as being to *'drive the collective emotions in a positive direction and clear the smog created by toxic emotions.'*

2. IDENTIFYING LEADERS

Distinguishing leadership and management

The traditional view of a leader is heavily influenced by military models and sees the leader as a figurehead with vision and charisma. Leaders are portrayed not as team players, but as 'generals' inspiring the organisation's 'troops'. However, these traditional notions of who is seen as a leader are increasingly being challenged:

'Our prevailing leadership myths are still captured by the image of the captain of the cavalry leading the charge to rescue the settlers from the attacking indians. So long as such myths prevail, they reinforce a focus on short-term events and charismatic heroes, rather than on systematic forces and collective learning.' Senge (1990)

The literature is littered with long debates about the relationship between leadership and management. In line with the view of leaders as relatively rare, charismatic individuals, leadership has in the past been portrayed as entirely separate from management. However, increasingly leadership and management are seen as separate, though inextricably linked.

Brown (1996) quotes Bennis and Nanus who suggest that the distinction between leaders and managers is the degree of inquisitiveness. A manager may never question whether procedures are meeting desired objectives or whether there are better ways of meeting the same objective. Leaders, on the other hand, always do this and constantly ask the 4 basic questions:

- why are we doing this ?
- why does it have to be done this way ?
- does it work ?
- is there a better way of doing this ?

Brown (1996) says that Peter Drucker recommends asking a 5th question: should we be doing this at all ?

Leadership is seen as an important attribute of all managers faced with managing in a constantly changing social, economic and technological environment. Conversely, management skill is seen as crucial for leaders to achieve real results. John Kotter (1990) said that '*leadership complements management: it doesn't replace it.*' and he distinguished leadership and management in the following way: -

	<u>Leadership</u>	<u>Management</u>
Creating agendas	Establishes direction	Plans / budgets
	Develops a vision of the future	Establishes detailed steps / timetables
	Develops change strategies	Allocates resources
Building networks	Aligns people	Establishes structures
	Inculcates vision in people	Staffs the structures Develops delegating and monitoring policies / procedures
Execution	Inspires Energises others to overcome barriers	Controls Organises to solve problems
Outcomes	Potentially revolutionary change	Consistent key results

This view of leadership as a subset of management is important as it means junior managers and supervisors need to be seen as having a important role to play as leaders of their teams. The increasing emphasis in the 1990's has been on leaders as people at all levels in an organisation who are managing in a consensus-seeking manner. Leonard Sayles (1993) is representative of

this new thinking when he said that leadership affects managers at all levels, not just those at higher echelons:

'Managers who are not leaders can only be failures.'

3. THEORIES ABOUT THE NATURE AND ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

Trait theory

This theory is also known as the 'great man' or 'implicit' theory of leadership and is rooted in psychological assessments of personality. It assumes that certain people are born with a set of key personality characteristics which make them 'natural' leaders. Supporters quote examples of great men like Napoleon, Gandhi and Churchill.

This theory sees leadership as a natural attribute of the individual. Exponents emphasise the value of assessing people for the necessary traits and using the results in recruitment and selection processes (rather than developing effective leaders). A myriad number of personality tests (of which the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator remains the most significant) exist to support assessment.

The search for associations between the personal attributes of leaders and their effectiveness has been a major objective of leadership research. Studies have looked for correlations (rather than attributes that all effective leaders possess). There is a some agreement about the traits which correlate with effectiveness in leaders. The meta-analysis by Barrick and Mount (1991) lists the following 5:-

1. conscientiousness – reliable, hard working, dependable, achievement-oriented, concerned with quality and standards
2. extroversion – lively, socially confident, affiliative
3. openness to experience – willing to accept fresh evidence and see beyond the immediate and obvious
4. agreeableness – not antagonistic, empathetic, able to connect with others emotionally and to perceive, respond to and meet the emotional needs of sub-ordinates
5. low on neuroticism – stable, cope with pressure, good 'reality testing'

Kets de Fries (1997) who studied many senior managers and chief executives particularly emphasised the agreeableness trait as crucial for building the network of allegiances and alliances for success in middle /senior management

Jaques (1989) argues that cognitive power (the maximum scale and complexity of the world an individual is able to cope with) is central to differences in leadership ability because it determines the time horizons that leaders can comprehend and work with.

Many other researchers have added to the list, including Stogdill (1974) (one of the founding fathers of leadership research) and Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991). The central traits appearing in most lists are:

intelligence
determination

self confidence
integrity

sociability

Interestingly, Lord, DeVader and Alliger (1986) list masculinity and dominance as important traits of effective leaders.

Trait theory is recognised as being inadequate in providing a full explanation of why some people are more successful as leaders. Concerns revolve around :

1. there being little consistency between the lists of required traits
2. the traits considered essential having no generally accepted meaning and being likely to represent a multitude of concepts and qualities
3. having the required combination of qualities does not necessarily determine success
4. the assumption that personality is stable and that tests discover (rather than construct) traits
5. the implication that leaders need to be selected rather than trained.

Concepts of leadership have therefore largely moved away from the mysterious 'something' that some leaders have which inspires subordinates to achieve beyond their capabilities and can inspire unquestioning compliance.

'Charismatic' or 'transformational' leadership

There is currently a resurgence of interest in the charismatic basis of leadership. This has come in response to the differences that some individuals have made in realigning or remotivating struggling organisations. Whilst not strictly a trait (because it lies in the eye of the beholder, not in the mind of the possessor), belief in the importance of charisma¹ perpetuates the view of a divide between those who can lead and those who can only follow.

Burns (1978) was the first leadership researcher to write extensively about charisma. He recognised that leadership is essentially a collective process

¹ Defined by Max Weber (1947), the sociologist, as 'a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural or exceptional forces or qualities.'

requiring the involvement of followers, not an individual position for those with superhuman qualities. He distinguishes between managers as 'power holders with capacity to influence others' and 'transformational leaders' who 'induce followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and motivations, the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers.'

Bass (1985) defined transformational leaders as those who use their personal vision and energy to inspire subordinates to do better than they would have expected (as distinct from 'transactional leaders' who merely help subordinates to identify and achieve their own, and the organisation's objectives).

Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996) identified the following 4 core components of transformational leadership:

1. charismatic communication style – engenders trust and respect, motivates, intellectually stimulates
2. communicating a vision – sets challenging goals, causes followers to question traditional approaches, values and beliefs
3. implementing a vision – energises followers and focuses efforts on achieving goals
4. individualised consideration – gives followers the feeling they are treated as unique individuals, treatment is perceived as different from that received by others

Longer (1991) emphasised the role of language in the charismatic leadership style, particularly:-

framing – defining the purpose of the organisation in a way which creates emotional excitement and a sense of confidence
rhetorical crafting – using metaphor, rhythmic devices, allowing emotions to surface (e.g. through non-verbal channels).

Interestingly, in measuring transformational leadership, Bass and Avolio (1994) found that women score significantly higher than men.

Style theory

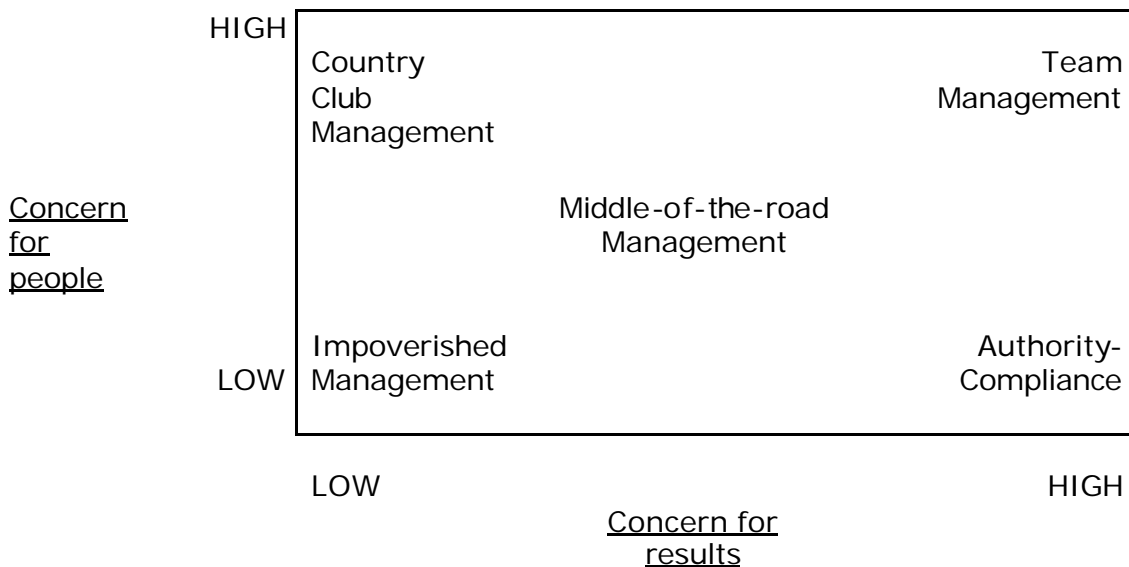
The style theory about leadership asserts that successful leadership is not dependent on the possession of a single universal pattern of inborn traits and abilities, but on behaviour. This theory focuses not on what sort of person effective leaders are, but on what they actually do. Fleishman (1973) explained the shift in emphasis as being 'from thinking about leadership in terms of traits someone 'has' to conceptualising leadership as a form of activity.'

In studying the relationship between the behaviour of leaders and their effectiveness, researchers have identified as many as 12 behaviours. Halpin and Winer (1957) crystallized these down and proposed that leadership is essentially comprised of 2 independent kinds of behaviours: -

task behaviours (also known as 'initiation of structure' or 'concern for results') – e.g. maintaining standards, meeting deadlines and defining objectives, roles and methods of work in detail in order to facilitate goal accomplishment

relationship behaviours (also known as 'consideration' or 'concern for people') – e.g. exhibiting concern for the welfare of group members, encouraging mutual trust, appreciating good work, being easy to approach, responding to suggestions, promoting two-way communication and obtaining approval of actions to help subordinates to feel comfortable with themselves, others and the situation.

The most widely known model arising from this theory first appeared in the 1960s but has been revised several times since by its originators Blake and McCauley (1991). This model combines the 2 types of behaviours to distinguish 5 leadership styles:



This leadership grid does not provide a neatly organised set of prescriptions for effective leadership (like trait theory) but offers a framework for assessing leadership behaviour and describing its major components.

Whilst style theory provides ideas about the main dimensions of leadership behaviour, it implies that one style of leadership can consistently produce a high level of effectiveness. However, it is clear that good leaders in one situation may not be good leaders in another.

Contingent theory

Many researchers have queried the notion that variations in leaders' effectiveness are due solely to individual differences (either in traits or behaviours). An alternative theory of leadership, originally propounded by Fred Fiedler (1967) and also by Ralph Stogdill states that key features of a situation interact with the leader's style to determine the level of effectiveness.

Contingent theory suggests that a leader's style is relatively fixed (reflecting deep-seated, motivational and temperamental factors), but that some styles are more effective in some situations than others. This is because some situations satisfy the leader's deep-seated needs (e.g. for recognition by others, success in achieving tasks) better than other situations do.

Fiedler distinguished the following sorts of variations which determine how 'favourable' a situation is, and which might account for different levels of leadership effectiveness:-

- i. task structure – the complexity of the job in terms of goal clarity, the degree to which correct solutions are obvious and the number of possible routes / solutions
- ii. position power – the extent to which the organisation legitimises the leader's authority and confers formal / informal power
- iii. leader-group relations – this is the most important of the factors - the extent to which the leader has the acceptance, confidence, support and loyalty of subordinates

Podsakoff et al (1996) also found that staff's professional orientation, ability and experience and the cohesiveness of the work group were contextual variables which moderated a leader's effectiveness.

This theory would suggest that to maximise effectiveness, either:

- leaders need to change the situation to best suit their style (e.g. by developing the abilities of subordinates), or
- leaders should be specifically selected for a particular situation (i.e. "horses for courses") – for example, in situations of particularly low or high 'favourability' a group might best be served by directive leadership, which is most likely to come from a leader with a bias towards task-oriented behaviour).

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1973) combined these factors into a 'leadership continuum' of styles appropriate to certain situations. This continuum is still widely reproduced today, and ranges from an 'autocratic' style (high use of authority) at one end to a 'democratic' style (high freedom for staff) at the other end.

The idea that effectiveness of a particular leadership style is contingent on the situation is still a view held today by most psychologists and leadership trainers because many studies appear to provide evidence for this link. However, the empirical rigour of this theory is increasingly being doubted. The notion of someone's leadership style being 'natural' or 'fixed' has also been questioned, as has the tendency of this model to relegate or marginalise the value of people-oriented behaviours (a bias for which is only demanded when things are going neither well nor badly).

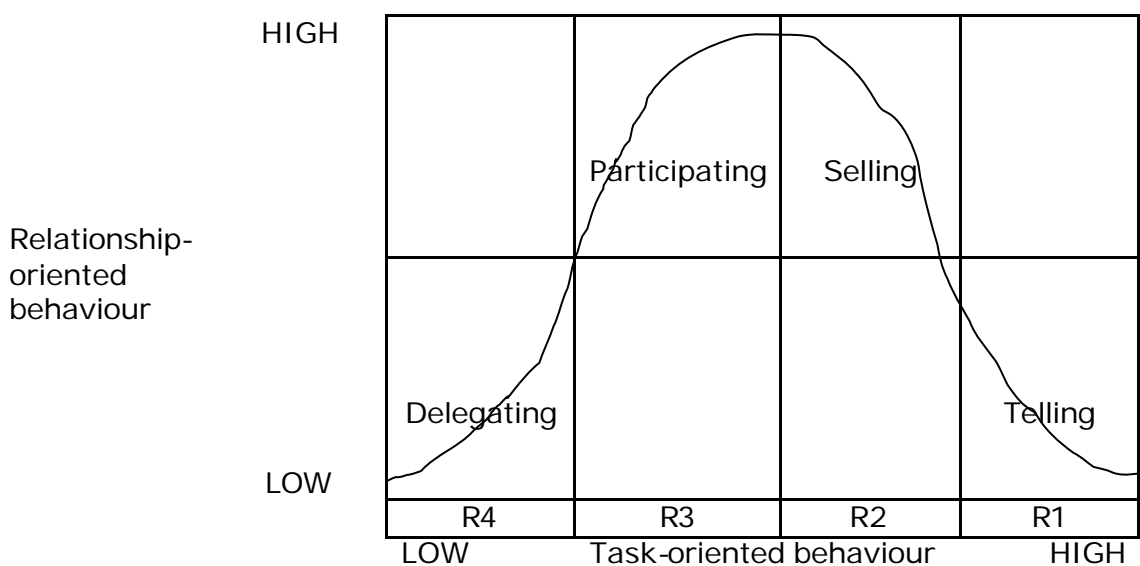
Situational theory

The logical extension of contingent theory is a view that leaders can shift their style relatively easily to fit the situation. That is, leaders have choice and control over what leadership behaviours they display in certain situations.

This theory is most closely associated with Hersey and Blanchard (1988) who drew heavily on the work of Stogdill and Fiedler a generation earlier. Hersey and Blanchard felt that the key situational factors which influenced leadership style were the competence of followers and the motivation of followers. By combining these 2 variables, they distinguished 4 leadership situations reflecting the 'readiness' of followers to perform a specific task:-

- R1 followers unable and unwilling / insecure
- R2 followers unable and willing / confident
- R3 followers able and unwilling / insecure
- R4 followers able and willing / confident

They went on to describe 4 styles of leadership which were likely to be most successful in a given situation:-



Whilst leaders are believed to have a dominant style, the most successful are those who are flexible and able to adapt their style to meet the demands of the environment. For example, as subordinates 'mature', the leader needs to vary their style in pace with this change.

Hersey and Blanchard's model has proved robust and is seen by some as the 'state of the art'. It forms the basis of a significant proportion of leadership training which suggests that leaders should first diagnose the readiness level of their followers for a particular task and then adjust their leadership style to suit.

Goleman et al (2002) also distinguishes different styles that effective leaders adopt, but defines these not in terms of behaviours, but in terms of their emotional impact on people. He states that effective leaders scan people and groups, reading cues to determine the right style to adopt:-

visionary	moves people towards shared dreams
coaching	connects what a person wants with the organisation's goals
affiliative	creates harmony by connecting people to each other
democratic	values people's input and gets commitment through participation
pace-setting	meets challenging and exciting goals
commanding	soothes fears by giving clear direction in an emergency

Situational theory assumes that leaders are rational, well-intentioned, flexible and willing and able to alter their style to suit changing circumstances. This may not be the case even for effective leaders.

Action / functional theorists

John Adair (1993) was the originator of the view of leadership as a set of functions that a person fulfills for their followers. This theory analysed leadership from the perspective of the needs of followers rather than from the perspective of the way the leader operated. Adair saw 'action centred leadership' as a process of meeting 3 inter-related needs:

1. task (the needs relating to achieving the goal)
2. individual (the needs of each follower)
3. team (the needs relating to building and maintaining the group)

An effective leader must fulfill a range of functions in order to meet all 3 of these needs. Adair listed the functions of leadership as:

defining task planning briefing controlling
evaluating motivating organising setting an example

Each of these functions which are required to achieve the task, maintain the team and meet the needs of individual team members is expanded in annex I. According to this functional theory, leadership can be a shared team role - leadership can be evoked from the group itself. The formal leader then becomes a "safety net", picking up the functions the group members fail to provide themselves.

Adair believed that all of these leadership functions could be taught. Much leadership training today is derived from the theory that there is a clear specification of behavioural outcomes involved in leadership. A number of typologies specify the skills needed. A useful 'mid range' typology (not too specific or too broad) was developed by Gary Yukl (1989). It covers skills involved in negotiating a social order as well as face-to-face skills:

building relationships	<u>networking</u> <u>supporting</u> <u>managing conflict and team building</u>
influencing people	<u>motivating</u> <u>recognising and rewarding</u>
making decisions	<u>planning and organisation</u> <u>problem solving</u> <u>consulting and delegating</u>
giving / seeking information	<u>monitoring operations / the environment</u> <u>informing</u> <u>clarifying roles / objectives</u>

The Audit Commission (2001) sets out 4 leadership functions that are important for steering any transformational change in public services:

1. Navigate: set direction, develop a manageable programme, prioritise, co-ordinate and set targets
2. Inspire: develop a shared vision, role model values and behaviours, develop individuals through coaching, counselling and sponsoring
3. Mobilise: sell the vision, listen and respond, proactively manage stakeholders
4. Enable: create space and find resources, allocate adequate skills, invest in infrastructure, make speedy decisions and delegate authority

The key challenges for leaders in achieving transformational change are given as:

- building support for change – so most stakeholders and staff accept the need for change and support the leadership's direction of travel

- involving stakeholders and staff in determining how the change should happen - in order to build real commitment to it

For both of these, communication is seen as a critical activity. Leaders need to spend a considerable amount of time explaining the rationale and vision and engaging in a dialogue about it. The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (2000) report talks of leaders having to:

'offer compelling narratives to their managers, staff and the public which make sense of the challenges their organisations face.'

More recently, there has been a shift in thinking away from this focus on leadership as a set of functions with an associated skill set, towards a focus on leadership being about creating effective teams.

Human relations theorists

Human relations theory redefines leadership effectiveness in interpersonal terms rather than as a formulaic role with functions or procedures to be followed. Proponents emphasise the importance of awareness of self and of group dynamics in effective leaders. They state that the relationship-oriented behaviours (such as sensitivity to group dynamics and the ability to increase the reflexivity of the group) are more important and effective than task-oriented behaviours.

'Today's leaders have to be pragmatic and flexible to survive. Increasingly this means being people-oriented rather than task-oriented.' (Robert Sharrock in Crainer, 1995)

Hooper and Potter (1997) see leadership as an emotional rather than intellectual process. They state that what really makes organisations successful is how people feel about their work. An unhappy staff group is unlikely to have the energy and commitment to invest in service improvements and quality. So leadership is about creating positive feelings ('resonance') on the part of followers in order to deliver better results for service users. Feeling confident, trusting, safe, motivated and committed is seen as the means of generating innovation. Brown (1996) too also talks about the task of leaders to *'unleash' the innate pleasure and human potential to be derived from personal development and personal recognition in the pursuit of team objectives.*

The major proponent of this view, however, is Daniel Goleman who says that the best leaders do not see emotions as *'noise cluttering the rational operation of organisations'* but instead understand their powerful role and potency in the workplace. Goleman et al (2002) state that the leader sets the emotional standard - their emotional reaction and mood plays a significant part in delivering both tangible results and intangibles (like morale,

motivation and commitment) by influencing the emotional response and mood of others. Goleman sets out 18 'emotional intelligence' competences that effective leaders require (these appear at the end of this review in annex II).

It is in this area of dealing with feelings and conflict that Brown (1996) suggests social work trained staff may be expected have a head start ! This is because, he believes, the skills of listening, dealing with feelings, concern for the individual, problem solving, advocacy and challenging the misuse of power are also those needed to perform competently in a leadership role.

Vaill (1999) says that views which focus on the quality of leaders only tell half the story. He sees leadership as being 'authorised' by followers: '*Leadership is not the behaviour of a person at all, but rather a property of a social system.*' Leadership is seen as something that arises from a process of invitation (from a community of followers) and acceptance (by someone who wishes to lead). Brown (1996) quotes Thomas Gordon as saying that the effective leader needs to be perceived by team members as someone who is able to represent their needs effectively and get these needs met. Leadership is therefore an outcome of the interplay between the person in the leader post, the needs and attitudes of the team and the general organisational context.

The findings of researchers studying what group members look for in effective leaders support Goleman and Hooper and Potter's assertion that a key requirement in leaders is for socio-emotional competence – i.e. an awareness of, and an ability to positively influence, group relations and cohesion. This includes:-

- i. arbitrating and reconciling differences within the group
- ii. encouraging participation
- iii. increasing interdependence between members

West (1996) suggests that this also includes the ability to encourage reflexivity which he defined as 'the extent to which group members overtly reflect upon the group's objectives, strategies and processes and adapt them to current or anticipated ... circumstances.' Further information about how leaders can encourage reflexivity are given at the end in annex III. West also found spontaneity and task competence were deemed important by followers, defined as the leader's ability to:-

- i. initiate a wide range of activities
- ii. develop wider opportunities for individuals to participate
- iii. contribute to problem solving effectiveness
- iv. co-ordinate and initiate contributions
- v. evaluate
- vi. give information
- vii. give / seek opinions

viii. motivate

The influence of followers on the effectiveness of their leader has received much recent attention. Some researchers have found that maintaining the correct 'personal front of competence' is important in enabling the leadership role to be maintained. Price and Garland (1981) manipulated how the competence of leaders was perceived and found that subjects became less willing to comply with leaders perceived as relatively incompetent and rated them as less effective. They explained this by saying that displaying competence on group tasks / norms 'earns' the leader 'credits' which allow the leader to initiate activity that deviates from group norms.

However, the work of Hollander (1958) suggests that leadership is about negotiating these deviations from group norms (e.g. hours of work) with followers who see these deviations as trade-offs against close conformity with other norms which meet their needs (e.g. promoting group cohesion and task performance).

The importance of leaders creating effective followers, and reflecting problem-solving back to those followers, has received much attention recently. Brown (1996) for example in his DoH sponsored work sees effective leaders as encouraging and supporting workers to solve their own problems, so promoting the development of a problem-solving team. This will not work if there is an emphasis on status and control. Leaders in this situation are seen instead as facilitators of change rather than as the 'square jawed decision makers' of the past. This view of leadership means giving up any notion of 'always knowing best' and acknowledges that uncertainty, doubt and bewilderment are as important as energy and direction. Leadership is seen as '*something of a dance between knowing and not-knowing*' (Broussine et al in their as yet unpublished report on the experiences of leaders in local government) involving enabling staff with skills and empowering them with trust and autonomy.

In this report, one of the key lessons Broussine et al identify is that leaders' ability to learn and to harness and develop the organisation's capacity to learn (and respond appropriately) is crucial. Rather than setting themselves up as 'heroes' with '*an omniscience that beguiles and mystifies the rest who hear the past being retold, the present explained and a path to the future articulated with confidence and eloquence*' leaders need to acknowledge, engage with and build resilience to deal with uncertainty. By recognising the reality of not having all the answers, leaders encourage the need for them and those around them to learn, and cause this capacity to be enhanced. Brown (1996) says that Thomas Gordon too believes that leaders do not solve problems, they ensure that problems get solved and says that '*leadership is about creating the circumstances in which high performance teams can become committed to changing and constantly improving their service delivery.*'

The 1990s were characterised by a focus on the nature of effective teams and the view of leadership being about creating and supporting teams where followers resolve the problems they face.

Psychological theory

Leaders may have all the capabilities and competencies that they need, and their followers have all the attributes necessary, but if the will of the leader is missing then little progress is likely. Some researchers believe that the difference between individuals who are effective leaders and those who are ineffective relates not to their personal traits, style or skills but to their fundamental needs and motivations. Peter Drucker (1992), the doyen of management theory, stated that heredity and early childhood experience were the most important factors in leadership.

Zalenik (1977) shared this view of leaders as inherently different: -

leaders - have goals embedded in their natures so they can put energy into projecting their goals in the form of visions for organisations which excite others to work towards turning these into reality
managers – have goals derived from external sources (i.e. the expectations of others) that do not come from their own psychological make-up

Leonard Gordon (1993) went on to find that the desire to be in a leadership position and have control / authority over others varies significantly between individuals. Broussine et al (forthcoming) found that the search for a personal meaning of leadership is an inescapable consequence of endeavours to learn about leadership.

McGregor (1960), the US social scientist, believed that leaders' styles derived not from concern for people and concern for results but from the psychological assumptions that managers have about their staff:

Theory X managers: Believe people have an inherent dislike of work and avoid it where possible, prefer to be directed, want to avoid responsibility and need to be co-erced and controlled to meet goals. This view leads to a directive style of leadership with goals established and disseminated down.

Theory Y managers: Believe people seek responsibility, derive satisfaction from work and will work hard towards organisational goals if they understand them and are rewarded for their efforts. This view leads to a participative / co-operative style of leadership which encourages self-managed teams and delegation.

Leadership may be seen, therefore, as being about establishing what followers want and satisfying that through some process of exchange in which both sides can win. Researchers looking at the relationship between leaders and teams have found that leaders may use the psychological phenomena of 'transference' (i.e. confusion in the follower's mind between significant individuals from his / her past and the leader) and 'projection' (i.e. the follower attributing the leader with the follower's own hopes, fears and fantasies) first described by Freud. Researchers believe that some leaders may be more aware of these psychological processes and indeed actively encourage them as part of their leadership approach. This can be constructive (encouraging achievement) or destructive (regressing to a relationship of dysfunctional dependency characterised by the emotional and intellectual deskilling of the follower).

Conclusion

There are a multitude of theories and ideas about what makes effective leadership, each of which have their proponents and critics. There is, however, no irrefutable evidence that answers this question adequately. Indeed, C.A. Gibb concluded an extensive survey of leadership research in 1952 with the following statement, which is arguably still true today :

'Any comprehensive theory of leadership must incorporate and integrate all of the major variables which are now known to be involved, namely a) the personality of the leader, b) the followers with their attitudes, c) the group itself, d) the situations as determined by physical setting, nature of task etc No really satisfactory theoretical formulation is yet available.'

4. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Audit Commission (2001) emphasise the need for good leadership at many levels within public services (not just at the very top), but state that there is currently a public sector leadership deficit due to:

- a lack of leader development
- the thanklessness of many leadership roles (in terms of too many demands, too few resources and too little control)

This means that attracting and retaining effective leaders can be hard. The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (2000) whilst acknowledging that there are many excellent public service leaders, agree that good leadership remains too rare a quality in the sector. They suggest that this deficit may be compounded by the structures and culture of the public services which constrain the development of true leadership. The PIU report

characterises the public sector environment as often one of risk aversion, blame and lack of recognition or reward.

The literature suggests that an effective leadership development process involves all of the following aspects:

- i. clear models or requirements for effective leadership: based on competencies, profiles or results
- ii. a picture of current leadership capabilities: for example, through an agency-wide audit
- iii. a strategy for leadership development: linked to organisational goals and which co-ordinates progress across many fronts
- iv. selection processes: which take account of leadership requirements as part of recruitment and promotion
- v. performance development systems: to identify, plan to address and monitor achievement of personal development objectives
- vi. a range of opportunities: through which to develop leadership competencies
- vii. career planning: actively using different posts, assignments, situations or experiences in a planned way as a means of developing leadership competence or bringing-on high potential people
- viii. research and development in leadership: a source of information, evaluation and advice on existing development opportunities (and their effectiveness) as well as on new ideas, training materials, courses and approaches
- ix. organisational structures that support leadership: by allowing leaders to lead (e.g. provides appropriate authority, time, access, resources)
- x. an organisational climate that promotes leadership: through the right values within the organisation (e.g. tolerance of mistakes, teamworking, forward looking) and by recognition and reward
- xi. top level commitment to leadership: top managers leading by example, openly valuing the importance of leadership development for staff and demonstrating this through their personal actions

If leadership is to be improved in the public sector, the Performance and Innovation Unit (2000) report says that 3 key challenges must be met:

1. improving the operating environment to promote good leadership - leaders need sufficient space and freedom to lead, the trust and confidence of those to whom they report, and clearly demarked responsibilities (see ix - xi above)
2. improving the way in which leaders and potential leaders are recruited (from within the sector and from outside) and retained through support, progression and reward (see iv – vii above)
3. Improving the capacity of existing public service leaders and preparing future leaders through development (see vi above).

This final recommendation challenges the traditional (and controversial) belief that leaders are born and not made. Most leadership writers, however, agree with the PIU that it is possible to grow the competence of staff for leadership roles to some extent. Peter Drucker wrote in 1955 that:

'Management cannot create leaders. It can only create the conditions under which potential leadership qualities become effective, or it can stifle potential leadership.'

Central to John Adair's (1993) thinking is that leadership is a skill that can be learned like any other, but he echoed Drucker's view:

'Leadership potential can be developed, but it does have to be there in the first place.'

Goleman (2002) likewise recognises in his 'emotional intelligence' theory of leadership that, whilst there is a genetic component, it can be learnt too: -

'Anyone who has the will and motivation can get better at leading, but it involves relearning deeply ingrained habits.'

Influential leadership researchers such as Douglas McGregor and Warren Bennis have written that very many people contain the capacity for leadership because leadership potential is broadly, rather than narrowly, distributed in the population.

So, it is widely acknowledged that organisations can take steps to improve the quality of their leadership. It is also widely acknowledged that *'the child will never learn to ride the bike unless she is given a bike to learn on.'* (Rensis Likert). That is, people need practical opportunities to develop their leadership competence. A significant amount of research has been done on best practice in leadership development. The Bennis and Linkage (1999) study of 350 companies found leaders reporting that the most learning was gained from practical elements (e.g. 360 degree feedback and action learning teams that work with real problems) and from exposure to senior colleagues and the strategic agenda. Traditional classroom-based programmes had little sustained impact on development.

The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (2000) report that different leadership qualities are best addressed by different learning approaches. Therefore, leading-edge development practice tends to combine a variety of elements:

Area of capability	Appropriate development approach
Knowledge of sector, systems, best practice and theory	in-house programmes (e.g. induction)
	reading
	self-directed learning
	secondments
	work-shadowing
	cross-sector learning sets
	partnering
	community involvement
	'just-in-time' learning
Leadership style and impact on others	diagnostic tests
	feedback and support with interpretation
	development guides / systems which allow for self-directed use
	observation of others (real life or in media)
	supported experimentation (e.g. role play, practising)
	360 degree feedback and performance management systems
	executive coaching
	buddying and mutual support systems
	learning sets and reflective learning
Key behaviours	diagnostic tests
	feedback and support with interpretation
	development guides / systems which allow for self-directed use
	observation of others (real life or in media)
	supported experimentation (e.g. role play, practising)
	360 degree feedback and performance management systems
	executive coaching
	buddying and mutual support systems
	secondments with specific development goals
	learning sets and reflective learning
Technical skills and knowledge	targeted training courses
	on-the-job training and support
	'just-in-time' learning
	secondments
	reading and some self-directed learning

Some examples of such leadership training and development programmes are given in at the end of this review in annex IV.

Goleman (2002) and Broussine et al (forthcoming) agree that 'orthodox' methods of leadership development only go so far in even addressing (let alone impacting on) the emotional and relational aspects of leadership. The model of self-directed learning (first developed by the consultant and academic Richard Boyatzis) is suggested to be much more effective in leadership development. This entails setting a personal learning agenda (rather than a performance agenda) that involves experimenting with and practicing new behaviours, thoughts and feelings over some time in the context of safe, trusting relationships which provide support and feedback. This 'stealth learning' draws on critical self-reflection and personal inquiry with the help and insights of others, to:

- recognise strengths and weaknesses
- give the person confidence that they can change
- allow desirable habits to be repeatedly rehearsed.

Over some time this moves the person towards their 'ideal self'. This can be achieved, for example, through specially formed collaborative learning groups (see Broussine et al where they report the group had '*permission and space for the possibility of learning*') or through one-to-one coaching.

**ANNEX I : Functions of leadership
(John Adair)**

Defining the task	Breaking the task down into specific objectives and relating these to a higher aim and overall purpose (which explain why the task is important). Clarifying "how we will know when we have achieved the task". Communicating and explaining this to the team(s).
Planning	Defining how the task will be achieved. Involving the team(s) in generating creative ideas, seeking consensus on options and providing direction. Identifying contingency arrangements.
Briefing	Speaking persuasively, convincingly and enthusiastically about what is expected so the team(s) know how their contribution fits in. Allocating tasks, distributing resources, setting standards. Inspiring and motivating the team(s) by creating an atmosphere of positive, creative teamwork.
Controlling	Watching the team(s) at work, checking progress through monitoring systems and intervening only when required to ensure the plan keeps on course.
Evaluating	Asking open, probing questions and analysing the answers in order to build a balanced picture of results. Using this to evaluate the performance of the team(s) and individuals and to appraise yourself. Giving feedback and identifying ways of improving.
Motivating Organising	Understanding the needs of the team(s) and individuals and using these to move and excite people to action. Sensing dissatisfaction and removing or reducing these factors. Structuring people to work most effectively and efficiently, diagnosing and resolving tensions between people and organising your own time to provide space for thought and reflection.
Setting an example	Giving a sense of direction and inspiration through your own behaviour.

**ANNEX II : Emotional intelligence leadership competences
(Daniel Goleman)**

Self awareness	Emotional self awareness	Recognises how their own feelings affect them and their performance	
		Able to speak openly about their emotions	
	Accurate self assessment	Knows their limitations / strengths	
		Exhibits a good sense of humour about themselves	
		Welcomes constructive criticism and feedback	
Self confidence	Has a sense of self assurance borne of playing to their strengths		
Self management	Self control	Manages / channels disturbing emotions	
		Stays calm and clear-headed	
	Transparency	Is authentically open to others about their feelings, beliefs, values and actions, which allows integrity and confronting unethical behaviour in others	
		Adaptability	Juggles multiple demands without losing focus or energy
			Is comfortable with ambiguity
	Achievement	Nimble in thinking when facing new data and realities	
		High personal standards constantly drive them to improve performance	Can set challenging but realistic and attainable goals
			Continually learning and teaching how to improve
	Initiative	Seizes / creates opportunities	
		Cuts through red tape	
	Optimism	Has a positive outlook	
		Expects the best in others	
		Rolls with the punches	
Social awareness	Empathy	Is attuned to emotional signals	
		Grasps the other person's perspective	
		Can get on with people from diverse backgrounds / cultures	
	Organisational awareness	Is politically astute / understands these forces	
		Detects crucial social networks	
		Reads key power relationships	
		Understands unspoken rules	
Service	Monitors customer satisfaction		
	Ensures staff foster correct relationship with customers		
Relationship management	Inspiration	Moves people with a compelling mission / vision	
		Embodies what they ask of others	
		Offers a sense of common purpose	
	Influence	Finds the right appeal for people	
		Builds buy-in from key people	
		Creates a network of support	
		Is persuasive	

Relationship management (cont)	Influence	Is engaging
	Developing others	Has genuine interest in and understanding of those they are helping
		Is a natural mentor / coach
	Change catalyst	Recognises need for change
		Challenges status quo
		Is a strong advocate in the face of opposition
		Finds practical solutions to overcome barriers to change
	Conflict management	Draws out all parties
		Understands different perspectives
		Acknowledges the feelings / views of all sides
		Redirects energy to a shared goal
	Teamwork and collaboration	Draws others into active, enthusiastic commitment to the collective effort
		Forges and cements close relationships beyond work obligations

ANNEX III : Leaders' role in encouraging reflexivity

West (1996) states that reflective processes can be considered as existing along 2 parameters:-

Reflexivity about task, for example:

group objectives	are they appropriate, clear, valued ?
	are members of the group committed to them ?
group strategies	are they detailed enough ?
	has the group considered alternatives, a likely timespan, their effectiveness ?
group processes	how are decisions made ?
	how much support is there for innovation ?
	how much feedback is available to the group ?
	how do members interact ?
the environment	what are the wider implications of group activities (e.g. on the local community, organisational objectives) ?
	what are the relationships with other groups ?
	what is the likely impact on the group of technology and other external changes ?

Reflexivity about the social dimension of group life, including:

social support	how much mutual support do group members provide for each other ?
conflict resolution	how do members resolve conflict ?
	are these methods effective ?
member development	do members provide support for each other's development ?
	are members encouraged to acquire new skills / learn from each other's experiences ?
team climate	what do members do to ensure working in the group is a pleasant experience ?

Allen (1996) contrasts this with non-reflexive groups which react to situations that exist at the moment (e.g. they assume that organisational objectives are 'givens'), see immutable constraints and are prey to defensive routines such as denial and projection.

Leaders are seen to have an important role in encouraging reflexivity and can use the following conditions which encourage it:

- i. difficulties with the normal functioning of the group (e.g. changing market conditions, critical incidents)
- ii. interruptions such as new group members or surprises
- iii. particular successes or failures

Tom Peters (1987) states that the leader at any level in an organisation must become an empiricist. That is, the organisation must:

'become a hot bed of tests of the unconventional. It must become an experimenting (and learning), adaptive change-seeking organisation. The organisation learns from the past, swipes from the best, adapts, tests, risks, fails and adjusts over and over.'

Peters talks about the paradox for leaders in having to create the internal stability that is needed to encourage the pursuit of constant challenge and change.

ANNEX IV : Leadership development training

Leader-match training

If Fiedler's contingent theory is correct, it is easier to teach leaders how to change their situation than to change themselves. This is achieved in 'leader-match' training which involves:

- i. measuring where leaders are on the task-oriented and relationship-oriented dimensions
- ii. identifying the situations in which that leader is likely to be most effective
- iii. learning to assess the favourability of any work situation
- iv. teaching leaders how to change the situation to best suit their own style and how to maintain an appropriate balance between their style and situational control.

Performance evaluations of 423 participants up to 6 months later showed that they had significantly higher effectiveness ratings than others in a control group (Fiedler and Mahar, 1979).

Training in selecting leadership styles

Hersey and Blanchard market a range of videos, tests and exercises in support of the situational theory of leadership which aim to increase the leader's ability to assess their followers' 'readiness' for tasks and then select an appropriate leadership style. These include descriptions of work scenarios with a list of possible actions for participants to choose. Answers are scored and a detailed rationale given for the right answer (i.e. the 'correct' action).

Much leadership training is now based on developing the necessary skills. Training is split between learning and applying the relevant theories and concepts (e.g. those underpinning motivation) and developing the skills through practical steps such as role playing with feedback.

Developing group relations

The human relations theory of leadership sees empathy and sensitivity to others as the basic building block of leadership skill. One form of training which helps to develop these areas is T-Groups. First used in the 1940s, participants analyse interactions between one another and reflect on what happened. A number of studies show these groups increase self awareness

and awareness of the needs of subordinates and reduce assertive and directive leadership behaviour. However, their popularity has declined significantly because of concerns about the ethical basis of the training and the intensity of the psychological experience for many people.

A more conventional approach to providing leaders with feedback about how they respond in groups and the impact of their behaviour on others is team problem-solving exercises with feedback from trainers / peers. This can be supplemented with critical incident-based role playing to improve the transferability of the learning to the workplace.

Self directed leadership learning

Goleman et al (2002) say that it is hard to learn leadership competences in a classroom because it takes months to relearn deeply ingrained, default habits and involves experience / practice and feedback in order to master. They describe the development process as 'stealth learning' requiring 5 steps:

1. Describing the 'ideal self'
2. Describing the 'real self' and therefore the associated strengths (overlaps with the ideal) and deficiencies
3. Setting a learning agenda
4. Experimenting / practicing (using experiences, trial and error) with reflection on results
5. Building trusting relationships to help, support and encourage learning.

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