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COURSE: STS 325

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STS 325: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

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QUESTIONS

What is the shape of the perfect leader and does he or she exist?

2. Does a leader need to be motivated? How can leaders maintain themselves to stay motivated?

3. Does every manager need to be a leader?

4. You say anyone can become a leader. Is it really possible? Aren't there people whose traits make them unfit to be a leader?

5. In which way do you see that new technologies will affect leadership and leaders?

6. What is the relationship between leaders and followers?

7. Is there any trend that could be called "the new leader"? Or have things really not changed that much over the last 2000 years?

8. Does a leader need power? How can a leader avoid being corrupted by the power?

9. Some authors say leaders must divide their time in three parts: one for handling finances, another for quality, and a third for relationships. What do you think about?

10. What's the worst fault a leader can have?

11. As far as communication is a key point, how can a shy person be a leader?

12. If so much material is written about leadership, why are there so few real leaders in companies?

13. The role of principles of leadership is so extensive that it puts one to think, isn't a good leader a kind of superman or superwomen? How can that be?

14. Is a military model of leadership adequate to any company, as far as it based most on authority and discipline?
15. Is there an ideal percentage of leaders in a company? Can an excess of leaders turn into a problem?
16. What is better for a company that does not have huge sums to invest in training: try to build a team of leaders, with all the failure possibilities, or concentrate on building a good team of efficient managers?
17. Can someone be a good leader, but not a good manager? Which is better for a company?
18. Is there any index of success for turning common managers into leaders, i.e., a tax of effectiveness of training?
19. How do you keep people's loyalty in a company that is downsizing? Isn't it asking too much of a leader?
20. One of the main trends in the new economy is people working at home, connected to work by net. How can one be a leader with much less eye-to-eye contact?

MODEL ANSWERS IN ALTERNATE SEQUENCE (ODD NUMBERS)

1. To paraphrase W. Somerset Maugham, "There are three rules for creating good leaders. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are." There are no perfect leaders that is why good leaders are always trying to improve themselves through self-study, training, education, mentorship, making mistakes and then learning from them, etc. Since there are no perfect leaders, it is hard to build a good leadership model, which is why there are hundreds of them. But, we can be sure of a few things that good leaders have:
 - A vision of the future ("where are we going?").
 - The ability to encourage followers to jump into that experience (overcome the challenges to achieve the vision).

- A love of self-improvement for themselves and their followers. This love makes them good coaches and mentors.
- Empowering their followers to get things accomplished (delegates).

2. A leader definitely has to be motivated; those who are not will quickly be seen as frauds in their followers' eyes as they expect their leaders to be enthusiastic about their work. Motivation comes in two forms: extrinsic and intrinsic.

Extrinsic motivators come from the outside. For example, one reason that I go to work is that I need to make a living in order to survive. Intrinsic motivators come from within. For example, another reason that I go to work is that I get a great deal of satisfaction when I accomplish a difficult task.

Good leaders set and achieve goals that allow them to get a healthy balance of both motivators. Although many people believe that intrinsic motivators are the best, that is not necessarily so. Often, the extrinsic motivators lead us into new situations and then our love for doing it (intrinsic) carries us through and on to new heights.

3. All good managers are leaders to various degrees. They need to carry out their leaders' visions by creating their own visions that support the larger vision, and then getting their workers to accomplish the vision. For example, Howard Schultz, of Starbucks Coffee Company, had a vision of 2000 stores by the year 2000. This vision became one of the driving forces behind the company's success. Did Howard Schultz build those 2000 stores himself? No way! Schultz's vision was achieved by managers and supervisors throughout the organization who had smaller scale visions that directly supported his 2000 by 2000 vision. They got the visions accomplished by delegating the means and authority to their subordinates. These managers and supervisors also supported their employees by giving them the means and opportunity to grow by coaching, mentoring; and providing training, development, and education opportunities.

A CEO cannot be the sole leader of a large organization. There are simply too many leadership tasks that must be accomplished . . . a leader cannot do all of them herself.

4. Anyone can become a leader that has the willingness and drive to achieve that goal. Traits can be changed or reduced by focusing upon the more desirable traits and then using them to overpower the unhealthy ones. This is one reason there are no perfect leaders, we all have a few unhealthy or weaker traits. But the better leaders concentrate on and grow their desirable traits so that they over-power their weaker traits.

5. Today, good leaders achieve their goals by selecting the right tools and processes (technology) to achieve their goals. Good leaders focus upon their goals and then do what is necessary to achieve it; they do not pick a technology and then try to achieve some goal with it.

6. Leaders are change agents who guide their followers onto new heights, while along the way, they develop and grow their followers. A leader's two driving goals should be make the organization a success and if he or she departs the organization, they have trained and developed people to fulfill their shoes.

7. As we have gotten a better understanding of human behaviours over the last hundred years or so, leaders have moved along the “leadership continuum” by going from [Douglas McGreagor's Theory X to Theory Y](#). We are still a long way to from fulfilling Theory Y, but we have greatly tipped the scale to its favor.

8. The degree of power that a leader requires is determined by the goals that she must achieve. For example, the leader of a country requires different powers than the leader of a church. Power is the possession of control, authority, and/or influence over others. This power is used to achieve a goal. Some leaders, such as presidents, have all or parts of the three, while others, such as Mother Theresa, might have only one.

Power does not corrupt. Corruption is the degree that someone's action has veered from a moral value that a society or community has set. Although the amount of their action is controlled by the type of power they have, it is their inner-self that drives the action. For example, Hitler was a leader by almost every definition, yet there were certain groups that he hated. This hatred drove him to mass corruption (in his community it was not viewed as corruption, while in almost every other community it was). If he never achieved the position he held, his inner-hatred (corruption)

of select groups would have still been there. His inner-self-controlled the power. The only preventive medicine for corruption is a healthy respect for others (diversity).

9. Leaders have two “leadership continuum” scales that they must follow. Earlier, I talked about the people scale, and how we have been moving from Douglas McGregor’s Theory X to Theory Y. This continuum can be seen as the vertical axis (concern for people) in [Blake and Mouton's Managerial Grid](#). The other axis is the “concern for task” and it is plotted along the horizontal axis. By focusing on the far end of the scales or continuum and developing goals to achieve the 9s, a leader can create her visions. And then by developing great people (people scale) and giving them the means to accomplish your vision (task scale), you have ensured that the necessary ingredients are there for organization success. In other words, good leaders have “goal directed visions” and then achieve them by inspiring their people to work through change and challenges in order for task accomplishment. This, in turn, equals a successful organization.

10. A failure to see the benefits of [diversity](#). This creates like-people throughout the organizations and leads to one-way thinking. If you do not have a diverse team, then you cannot come up with the creative [brainstorming](#) solutions to stay competitive. Also, you alienate your customers and consumers who can be quite diverse.

11. Communication, from a leadership point, is more than just directing others (which shy people would draw back from), it is more about maintaining healthy relationships (which almost every shy person is capable of doing). One of my favorite quotes is from Captain Henry “Jim” Crowe, USMC. While in Guadalcanal on 13 January 1943, he used the following words and actions to motivate his troops: “Goddamn it, you'll never get the Purple Heart hiding in a foxhole! Follow me!” It was more than an order, it was his action of not showing his fear by being in the front that motivated his troops.

Leaders use both actions and words to get things done. Bossing others is the act of directing others to get things done without having any concern for them. Shy people do not normally become bosses, but many of them do become leaders... while the outgoing bullies become bosses.

12. Who says there are so few leaders? The only people who can call a person a leader are the followers. People outside the organization might call a person a leader, yet that person might have just been a dictating tyrant who used their power of authority to get things done. This only made that person the boss, not a leader. Only the people who work for another person have the authority to call that person a leader.

Too many people equate leaders with the power of authority, yet it is more about visioning and achieving goals through others. Organizations that are lagging behind their competitors often have a lack of leaders throughout their ranks. While great organizations have leaders throughout the organization, from top to bottom. Just as I mentioned earlier about Starbucks' goal of 2000 stores by the year 2000, it took a lot of leaders throughout the ranks to accomplish it.

13. Leadership is like many other difficult skills, it takes skills and practice. That is why it is important to develop leaders throughout your organization; although you can learn the knowledge and the skills in a short period of time, it takes plenty of practice to get it right. Senior leaders should always be coaching and mentoring their subordinates on the leadership continuum.

14. Researchers at McKinsey & Company and the Conference Board discovered that one highly effective route of leadership is demonstrated by the U.S. Marine Corps. The Marines' approach to motivation follows the "mission, values, and pride" (MVP) path, which researchers say is practical and relevant for the business world. A couple of other organizations that follow the MVP path are 3M, New York City Ballet, and KFC. There are four other valid paths to follow: Process and Metric (Toyota), Entrepreneurial Spirit (BMC Software), Individual Achievement (Perot Systems), and Reward and Celebration (Mary Kay).

The Marines invest in their front line by following five practices:

- **Over-investing in cultivating core value:**

Make an investment by intensely focusing on core values. Give your employees more than a brief introduction--assign some training to your most experienced and talented managers. One role model can influence 40 or 50 new hires. Also, focus on values after

the training, i.e. Marriott prominently displays customer letters praising superior performance.

- **Preparing every person to lead, including frontline supervisors:**

Training every front line person to lead has a powerful effect on morale. Do not write the followers off or give them superficial attention. You must embrace the notion that front line workers can lead.

- **Learning when to create teams and when to create single-leader work groups:**

Genuine teams are rare in the business world where a single individual leading a group is the norm. Real teams get most of their motivation from its mission and goals

- **Attending to the bottom half, not just the top half:**

Find the time to attend to the poor and mediocre performers, even if it means personal sacrifice. Normally, it is cheaper and easier to rejuvenate under-performers than it is to replace them. Marine Drill Instructors, despite their legendary toughness, refuse to give up on any recruit who does not give up on themselves.

- **Encouraging self-discipline as a way of building pride:**

Demand that everyone act with honor, courage, and commitment. For example, Southwest Airlines turns its planes around in less than half the time that is needed by most competitors; not by fear of punishment, but by a desire to be the best.

To emulate the Marines, many executives would have to embrace the notion that front-line workers can lead. (Jon R. Katzenbach and Jason A. Santamaria. *Harvard Business Review* "Firing Up the Front Line." May-June, 1999, pp. 107 to 117.)

15. Every organization is unique, hence it will require a different percentage. But every leader and supervisor must display some form of leadership, they cannot simply be bosses and expect

the organization to become a great organization. As far as excess, how can you have too much of a good thing; is there such a thing as a company having too much profit?

16. Why would there be more failure possibilities with a team of leaders than with a team of managers? Managers can get things done, but they have to have leaders and leadership abilities of their own. Otherwise, what will they get accomplished? It takes leaders to have visions. Once you have your vision, it needs to be framed in general terms and communicated to your team. Your team then develops the ends (objectives), ways (concepts), and means (resources) to achieve the vision. Except for developing the means (resources), all of these are leadership tasks.

17. Just as there are many managers who cannot lead, there are many leaders who cannot manage. And neither is better for a company. Both strip the company of a valuable resource, a leader who can get things done or a manager who can lead her employees.

18. I'm not so sure if there is an index, since this type of training falls more into the development category, which can be extremely hard to measure at times. For example, if you train someone to operate a forklift, you can then go to the job site to see if that person actually learned some new skills. But observing someone to see if they have gained some leadership skills is much more difficult. How do you effectively measure their visioning skills? Also, developing a leader is not accomplished in a two-week leadership course; that is where they learn the basics. The rest of what they learn comes through a trial and error period of practice. However, there are indicators that show how much value organizations place on leadership skills:

The March 2, 1999 edition of the News Edge had a story on an international study conducted by the Hay Group for Fortune magazine. They found that corporate cultures of the world's most admired companies are alike in many ways, but also differ from those of an average company.

This study reveals that the dominant values in the world's most admired companies are teamwork, customer focus, innovation, fair treatment of employees, global reach, and vision. These are mainly leadership skills!

In average companies, the overriding values are making budget, supporting the decisions of management, and minimizing risks. While these are mainly management skills!

Great companies have leaders while average companies are run by managers!

Also, Aon Consulting of Chicago reported that the top five reasons for employee commitment are (notice that all five tasks are mostly leadership skills):

- Employer's recognition of personal and family time
- The organization's vision and direction
- Personal growth
- The ability to challenge the way things are done
- Everyday work satisfaction

19. Leadership is more about enabling people to do their best and become the best, than it is about loyalty. Leaders inspire people while managers set policies that buy loyalty. Besides, organizations that have effective leaders throughout their organization will find themselves downsizing much less than organizations that are lacking leaders. That is because they will be performing the necessary steps to carry them on to the visions they have created. Also, if you have good leaders throughout the organization, you are going to find yourself doing the right things if and when it becomes cost-cutting time, being honest and compassionate.

Duct tape is like the force. It has a light side, and a dark side, and it holds the universe together... — Carl Zwanzig

Leadership is like duct tape. It is the one thing that can be universally used to repair a broken organization.

20. Most leaders still go to the "office" on a regular basis. In fact, it is extremely important that they be seen around the organization and be seen by others, they are the role models. The majority of people working at home are followers (who are just as important as the leaders). These followers who do work at home are some of the best led as they are being motivated both extrinsically and intrinsically by being well paid and being allowed to perform their job as they best see fit.

Leaders, who do work from the home due to the workplace being a mostly work-at-home environment, find these well-motivated employees are to their advantage. The only caution would be to have weekly or semi-weekly meetings on a regular basis to allow all the employees a chance to meet each other face-to-face, even if it is via videoconferencing.