

Chapter 21

From Transition to Translation: A Transformational Process of First-Time Leadership

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ABSTRACT

Are leaders born or made? Trait theory claims that leadership is intrinsic intelligence. While the behavioural theory has debated that leadership requires vision, decisiveness, confidence to take risks, and these can be successfully developed by an individual. As the new industries are emerging, and at the time of COVID-19 pandemic, it is evident that leadership traits are practised and adopted when required. The swift transaction of the manager to become a leader is explained pre-eminently utilizing “be-do-know” model of leadership. For the study, 52 consultants from distinct industries such as IT/ITES, FMCG, agriculture, pharmaceutical, automobile, and manufacturing were administered through a questionnaire and interviews. The study clearly indicates that stimulus such as organizational change, innovation, crises, and correction spin-off the development of first-time leaders.

INTRODUCTION

The globalization has converted the world in to a small Global village, with the torrent of competition, collaboration and contentions (Panda, 2019). The outbreak of Corona virus has compressed the business and the people to virtual platforms and work from home. In this state of affairs, the role of a leader becomes analytical, imperative and masterful (Koonin, 2020). The adoption of Glocal and Changing business requirements has stimulated the transition of managers to the first time leaders (Reams, 2020; Vito, 2018). It is significant to comprehend the difference between Managers and Leaders. This is explored in the subsequent sections of the chapter.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-7592-5.ch021

Everyone has the opportunity to lead. It is imperative to prepare for the leadership opportunities in our future (Maheshwari & Yadav, 2018). First-time-Leadership is usually triggered by the internal and external factors viz., political, environmental, social and economic, propelled in the organization or by the organization (Bassi & McMurrer, 2016). Managers become the change agents, to steer strategic, operational and institutional restyling (Ruderman & Clerkin, 2020; Wiggins & Smallwood, 2018). But, the translation of role from a manager to a leader is demanding, time-bound and target oriented. First-time-Leadership involves middle of the road approach, to complete task, with the participation of the people (Hussain & Hassan, 2016). The transition of a manager to a leader is not an idyllic task (Turner & Baker, 2017). Most of the time first time leaders failed due to the reasons such as relying on the same skill set, Micro-managing the things, Unclear objectives, emotional imbalance, lack of delegating skills, and others (Moccia, 2018; Subramony et al., 2018). Thus, it becomes crucial to understand what are the attributes of a successful leader, especially in first-time-leadership?

The success of business leaders such as Satya Nadella (Microsoft), Tim Cook (Apple), Sheryl Sandberg (Facebook), Mark Parker (Nike), Sundar Pichai (Google) and others, have afresh the debate between trait theory and the behavioural theory on “leaders are born or made”? To support the behavioural theory that leaders are made, “Be-Do-Know” model of leadership is expended. A questionnaire was administered over 67 consultants from disparate industries to apprehend the reasons of transforming a manager to a leader. This has further contributed to perceive the difficulties faced by the first-time-leaders in translating their new roles.

Leaders and Managers

Researcher and Practitioners have defined leadership from time to time. The classical was stated by Peter Drucker “leader is someone who has followers” (Khan & Khan, 2019). The definition of leadership adopted for this study is “Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your own leadership potential” (Turner et al., 2019). These are the qualities required for first-time-leadership, at the time of transition.

The existence of leaders in organizations is widely believed to be vital. Hewlett (2006) stated that leadership is the consummate ingredient that stimulates the organizational fire of perfection. Leaders and managers are indispensably two pillars of a successful organization. As stated by the researchers that “*Managers do things right; Leaders do the right things*” and “*Management is administration, but leadership is innovation & novelty*” (Gächter & Renner, 2018). The mindset of the leader plays an imperious role while modelling decisions on solving the organizational or individual problems. Thus, an appreciative, effective, positive attitude ends up winning as a leader (Van den Berg et al., 2006).

As defined Leaders are continual learners to upkeep themselves in the era of rapid transitions and complexities. We are often more apt to expect that leaders are great if they are efficacious and successful. But it's not rational, as if they're ethical, but not effectual. Leaders are faced with a conundrum. They need to stay in business or reinstated to be figureheads. Leaders' is defined by their acolytes. The only approach is to attain the vision, in accordance with the values, through the attitudes, cultural norms, relationships, and behaviours that they simulate and elicit in their followers. Managers behaviour comprises of; conviction, accountability, responsibility, buoyant, evident, gratitude and reward. Leadership behaviours spotlight on the team members: trust people, employ people, stimulate and persuade people. The attitudes towards envoy and development make this distinction crystal clear. “The managers” del-

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