

Chapter 1

Leadership Thinking Through Managerial Psychology

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ABSTRACT

Business organizational needs are met successfully when there are leaders in place who understand their people, industry, and societal concerns. Organizations inherently involve humans who must be managed and directed to varying degrees, and managing is not always as streamlined as some may wish. Understanding the needs and goals of each individual or group is paramount for a manager to elevate from daily management to ongoing leadership. A good manager/leader should strive to have personal knowledge of a collection of leadership theories and applications that would serve them in different situations. People are complex beings, and great leaders have the ability to appeal to the psychological aspects of how to lead particular groups of individuals. Through this framework, leaders can have a better understanding of how to manage when necessary, and managers can in turn begin to learn how to lead. This chapter offers insight to an audience who can begin to identify a core group of leadership competencies, theories, and qualities to synergize their personal preference.

INTRODUCTION

Keeping in good company with multidisciplinary leadership networks is good practice for those who wish to learn all they can relative to how relationships, qualities, and personalities of good leadership come to fruition (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010; Scott et al., 2018). Although research has been conducted on the topic of leadership personalities, much of it has been found to have no consistency on what is considered concrete answers on how impactful personalities are relative to improving leadership capabilities (Andersen, 2006; Solaja et al., 2016). Many managers or leaders (managers/leaders or manager/leader) have great approaches to management and leadership, but it seems that the most effective ones understand the benefit of simply being yourself and displaying authenticity while leading (Gan et al., 2018).

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-3811-1.ch001

Around the year 2010, a manager of architecture mentioned to another middle-manager that she showed natural leadership abilities simply by behaving the way she did in everyday work (T. Hill, personal communication, 2020, February 18). She did not realize that many projects were salvaged because of her due diligence and guidance of team members along the way. It was said that her personality and how she relates made it easy for others to listen and respond to her indirect guidance (T. Hill, personal communication, 2020, February 18). Not initially seeing that her role instinctively provided guidance, the middle-manager decided it was time to learn more about leadership and how it impacts her ability to help the practice while also motivating others to achieve their leadership goals and performance levels within the firm.

This chapter provides a comprehensive synthesis on how a combination of leadership competencies, relationships, applications, theories, and social facets can offer enhanced thinking for aspiring and existing manager/leaders. Also, snippets of comments are shared on how this synthesis alludes to the psychological makeup of leaders who implement a diverse education toward advanced viewpoints on the subject of managerial and leadership psychology. Included in this chapter is a brief introduction to a working proprietary management consulting model currently under early development by the author.

BACKGROUND

Over several years of working in various business organizations and industries, the author came to realize that there has never appeared to be one way by which managers manage and leaders lead, regardless of stereotypes (Brescoll, 2016). Along with this understanding, various consulting models have attempted to insert psychological factors into the evaluations of managers and leaders depending on the type of organization and need. Jansen et al. (2016) highlighted sociopsychological factors such as team efficacy and cohesion. Efficacy and cohesion collectively denote a process that is inherently situated within behavioral science whereby positive individual and team behaviors are paramount to a successful outcome (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2020).

As the author alludes to in the subsequent sections of this chapter, leadership practice and theory may have differing values in terms of utility depending on one's interpretation. The author ascribes to a philosophy that sets his thinking process as a pragmatic social constructivist. With this mindset, the researcher remains open to practice ideals and theoretical constructs as they evolve. As such, he has initiated a model framework which he calls the AEC (i.e., architecture, engineering, and construction) management cybernetics model © (The MC model © or MCM ©). As an AEC practitioner, the author is developing this model to assist not only building science practitioners and academics, but diverse business organizations as well. According to Johnson (2020), the model—once complete—focuses on the following:

This model shows the integration of four systems involved in Dr. Johnson's AEC management cybernetics model (The MC model or MCM). The model builds on the automation of self-regulation in a continuous feedback system, but with the added value of leadership as the pinnacle factor. The theoretical foundation is focused on the complexity leadership theory as the basis of this model. Within the model's life-cycle framework, there are five domains with each domain having five processes. The framework can be applied in building and design firms practicing architecture, engineering, or construction (AEC), but can also be utilized by real estate development companies and other practitioners who specialize

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