

Chapter 4

Leadership Skills in Disruptive and Uncertain Environments

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is as old as humanity itself, universal and inevitable. An individual throughout his or her whole development strives to be a person who inspires others to follow him or her. Leadership is directly related to an individual's need for power, as one of the needs that must be satisfied in order for the individual to move on to the satisfaction of his/her other needs, in order to feel complete, approved, and followed by other people. In the theory of the matter, and perhaps soon in practice, there will no longer be told about ruler and subordinates, but of leader and followers, and there lies the key to understanding a leadership like a purely human ability to inspire people. The chapter examines leadership crisis management and crisis leadership in disruptive and uncertain environments.

INTRODUCTION

The chapter explores the concept of leadership, etymology and history of leadership, the essence of crisis leadership, the typical required, necessary leadership traits and qualities related to crisis leadership. Cognitive biases, personal biases and stereotypes in crisis leadership are considered. In conclusion, the nature, importance and necessity of conflictual competence in crises and the cultivation of positive emotions are discussed. Leadership and crisis leadership research in part includes a very brief review of some leadership theories.

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BACKGROUND

The origin of the crisis management term can be found in the political sphere. American President J. F. Kennedy used this expression for the first time during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, when the confrontation between the USA and the USSR, caused by the installation of Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba, brought the world to the brink of World War III. (Milasinovic and Kesetovic, 2008) This is how Kennedy describes the management of a serious emergency, but crisis management as activities is older than the term itself. In this line of thought, crisis management first emerged as a practice in human history, and only recently in the 19th century as a theory, and in the 20th century as a science being studied.

Crisis management is a combined approach of various theoretical, scientific and administrative methods aimed at creating a force to predict a future. It is an interdisciplinary field combining economics, psychology, sociology, business, communication, international politics, security, emergency management. According to Akacem and Mostefaoui, crisis management is a way of reducing the negative consequences of the crisis and an art of creating a permanent habit of living with the crisis (Akacem and Mostefaoui, 2016, p.25).

Crisis management can also be defined as a set of functions or processes whose purpose is to identify, investigate and predict possible crisis situations and to create special means that would allow the organization to prevent or cope with a crisis and overcome it with minimal consequences and return to normal as soon as possible (Milasinovic and Kesetovic, 2008). Thus, it definitely includes all kinds of activities aimed at dealing with a system in a state of collapse: prevention, preparation, mitigation and recovery.

Gigliotti and Ronald define crisis management as an ability of an organization to act quickly, efficiently and effectively in possible operations aimed at reducing threats to human health and security, reducing damage to public or corporate property, and reducing negative influences on the continuation of normal business or other operations (Gigliotti, 1991).

Regarding the management of military crises and military operations, as an integral part of management in disruptive and uncertain environments, Ioannis Ragies pointed out that the army, as the professional unit charged with the task of both taking care of peacekeeping and preparing for war, remains the lead organization responsible for engagement in these complex non-military security contexts (Ragies, 2018).

1. CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND CRISIS LEADERSHIP IN DISRUPTIVE AND UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENTS

Although there is much research conducted on crisis management, only a limited portion of it focuses on crisis leadership. According to Ioannis Ragis, the leadership is the art, the application of personal qualities, knowledge, skills and behaviour to influence and inspire others to follow and succeed, and management is the science, the application of necessary functions to achieve goals (Ragies, 2018). We fully support the idea that the leadership and management are not mutually exclusive. Both are necessary: while management is about planning, organizing and coordinating, leadership is about changing, directing and inspiring (Ragies, 2018). It could be added that leadership and management are not mutually exclusive, although when viewed as activities there are obvious differences between them, but they are interconnected, complementary and mutually supportive, and different situations create opportunities for the manifestation of different elements of them.

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