

Section II

MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT – DURABLE SOURCE FOR THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH

LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

Leadership is the ability to transform vision into reality, and the leader is the architect who manages to turn what was just a projection of the future vision of the organization in a tangible reality. A leader can be a manager, while the manager is always a leader. If management function is carrying out particular activities under formal authority, leadership is more than authority and power. Add leadership vision, daring, personal effort and amount of unique qualities, personal, boosting process management.

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The concept of *leader* is frequently used by the experts in management and human resources, by teachers and students, by everybody employed within a consultancy company, and also by the professionals in the field of communication or even the non-specialists wanting to induce a sophisticated air to a speech or a written communication. In other words, everybody has heard of or pronounced the word leader at least once. The meaning of this word is clear and to be found in all the fields; it is about leading the way or be the boss. The study of leadership showed even deeper layers of the concept, and the theorist or professional leaders have drafted definitions and insights hereto.

“*Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality*”, says Warren G. Bennis and takes a further step by stating that above and beyond one’s visionary capabilities, a leader should also be a good social architect, i.e., the man who understands the organization and is able to hone its mode of operation. The leader’s architect side urges him to transform what is only an image, a blurry projection of the organization’s future into reality (2003, p. 102). Asking the opinion of ninety leaders on the personal abilities needed to lead the organization effectively, W.G. Bennis concluded that none of them mentioned concepts that fall into the category of gender stereotypes: charisma, the dress code or good time management. On the contrary, the latter were considered concepts and prejudices belonging to those who do not actually know the essence of leadership. Most leaders mentioned as important qualities those of consistency, commitment, acceptance of challenges, taking risks and accountability, and above all, the ability to remain permanently

connected and of continuous learning. The Donald Michael's study (1980) also states that leaders must undergo continuous training and that the best place for training and learning is the very organization that fosters them (ap W.G. Bennis, 2003, p.177). The most successful leaders manage to do the moment they develop a set of skills that Michael D. calls *new competences*. Thus, leaders must *acknowledge and share uncertainty with others, embrace errors, respond to the future, become interpersonally competent and gain self-knowledge (i.e. listening, nurturing, coping with value conflicts etc.)*.

The Leadership is not the perquisite of the top management. Leadership can be acquired and learned, as Andrew Goşu (2012), the director of a Romanian consultancy company in the area of organizational development, says when explaining the Gauss curb in support of this theory, during an interview with a specialized magazine: "just 5-10% of the leaders are born this way, 5-10% can't be leaders whatever the training, and the rest of 80-90% are normal people who came to be leaders by working and learning the art of leadership, while operating in a leadership development conductive environment." Being a good leader does not happen by accident or chance; and, as proven by numerous cases, more of the times it is not a native feature either. In the same line of thought, considering another statement of A. Goşu (2012), that "an exceptional leader is the one bringing exceptional results", we may conclude that mediocrity is not related to leadership at all. Although short-term successes are also important, one expects more from a leader, such as medium and long-term results and their related sustainability over time.

Anywhere in the world, the leaders have followers, and for a leader to be followed all the way through all his actions, he must be perceived as being in the position of providing people with the means to satisfy their needs.

There is no such a thing as a recipe for the perfect leader, but *true leaders are not emulating the behaviour of other leaders. They must find the right balance between authenticity and adaptability, that is employing their own resources in relation with a given environment*, in other words, they should become *authentic chameleons* according to Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones (2010). The leader's model described by the two authors is slightly different from the theoretical models, in the sense that their successful leader's profile involves a mix of three factors, namely authenticity, context and communication, overcoming the classical personality-context landmark. In the view of the authors, the authentic leader is highly impressed with outstanding features, and the inner harmony, consistency in achieving tasks and communication of a coherent message, are what make him the ideal leader, a leader worth following.

Often informally chosen, the leader is the representative of the group fostering him, and also the group's spokesperson. A leader encourages teamwork and freedom of speech in his followers. He also delegates, coordinates, listens and solves problems. If we are to talk about his communication skills, the leader should focus on a clear presentation of opinions, effective verbalization and writing, and last but not least, on active listening. Goşu A. (2012) is coming around to the same line of thinking when it comes to how open, simple and concise a leader should be.

He says that *There is no need for sophisticated deeds in order to be a leader, and anyone in this position should avoid choosing to communicate in a fancy and encumbered way rather than simple, direct and clear.*

A leader can be also a manager, while the manager isn't always a leader. The changes affecting public and economic aspects of the society during the last decades of our century, generated a more creative management process through leadership. The management style, type of relationship with the subordinates and the approach of the tasks are evenly unifying and segregating factors for the two above mentioned concepts. One may say that being a manager or a leader is equally science and an art, and that the success of any business depends on how well the two are interconnected. The management process consists of administrative and business activities, planning, implementation, monitoring and achievement of targeted results, all done under a formal authority. The leadership process represents more than authority and power. Leadership adds vision, challenge, personal effort and an amount of unique personal abilities that boosts the management process. If a manager succeeds in influencing the subordinates towards achieving the organization's objectives without making use of the formal authority, than he is demonstrating leadership instincts. Peter Drucker, in his preface to Warren Bennis' book, *Leaders* (2003) is supporting this theory by saying that *any manager who is able to lead, not lecture, who knows how to talk and relate with people, has the duty to try leadership.* Warren Bennis also makes the difference between managers and leaders saying that a manager's job is to apply the authority he was invested with, carry out responsibilities, and worry about how things should be accomplished while a leader's job is to inspire and motivate. Hence, the difference is significant: *Leaders are people who do the right thing; managers are people who do things right.* The leaders are those creating dangerously, giving birth to new ideas, policies and methodologies, taking risks, and not just skilfully approaching an already existing environment.

Management and leadership are two distinct yet complementary systems of action in an organization. There is no percentage formula for perfectly balancing the two systems together therefore achieving and maintaining equilibrium between them is a true challenge. The same idea is plastically illustrated by Stephen R. Covey (1994, p.86-87) who says that *the management is the efficiency in climbing the ladder of success while leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall.* Although management and leadership do not define the same thing, the terms are often used interchangeably. Moreover, nowadays, there is a tendency to consider or name all managers leaders. In theory, leadership is considered to be a function of the management, but reality has shown that managers should be interested in becoming leaders, relying less on the formal appointment and management position. Managers that are not trying to earn the leader's position are exposed to failure, as Leonard Sayles (1999) suggested. The truth is that neither one can undertake anything completely without the help of the other and *effective overlap of the two systems can be a major prerequisite for success in an increasingly complex and changing business environment*, said John P. Kotter (2008, p.38).

Even if leaders are not given formal power, their followers supply them with even greater authority through their behaviour and commitment. Employees who are willingly following the leaders practically become their followers without being compelled to, but because they want to, which is not always the case in the formal relationship with managers. Olga Dezso (2012), CEO of a large management consultancy firm in Romania, says in one of the interviews for a specialized management magazine that *the real managers are not directors waiting to be entrusted top management powers, the same way as the great leaders are more than managers endowed with a certain amount of refinement. Basically, the actions of a manager and those of a leader are completely different ... If the companies will take one's role for the other's, expecting all managers to be leaders or considering the "leader" just an advanced form of a "manager", then both roles will be mixed up, underestimated, misunderstood and finally wrongfully played.*

One doesn't need to be a professional theorist in order to be able to record and express judgements about the leadership phenomena, especially if the person has been through situations confirming those assessments. The American former football player, Joe Namath, born in 1943, he himself a true leader, issues his view about leadership in a clear, simple and original way, and his quote immediately became famous "To be a leader, you have to make people want to follow you, and nobody wants to follow someone who doesn't know where he is going." So very true!

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