Written Assignment 1: Leadership vs. Management

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Who is a leader? One's first response may be a manager. However, there has been much discourse in the organizational science community on how the two terms differ. In a study done by the American Society of Radiologic Technologists, 90% of respondents believed they were leaders (Wolfe, 2019). Obviously, not all these participants have the role of manager, yet they still believe they lead. This highlights that, to many, leadership and management is different. Instead of asking who is a leader, ask what is a leader and what is a manager. Leaders and managers have different definitions, traits, abilities, activities, behaviors, job responsibilities, and performance goals. It is important to discuss these differences as well as some similarities to understand what a good leader is.

Defining Leaders vs. Managers

The terms 'leader' and 'manager' are not interchangeable. In a simple example by Geller (2022), "managers hold people accountable while leaders inspire people to be self-accountable" (p. 30). Leaders inspire confidence and raise support among those needed for success, while managers focus on planning, organizing, and controlling in addition to leading others (DuBrin, 2018). There is no argument that there is crossover between managers and leaders. Most managers lead in addition to many other responsibilities. However, not all leaders are managers. Emergent leaders, or group members who influence others despite not having actual authority, are a common example of this (DuBrin, 2018). A leader is not always a manager, and a manager is not specifically a leader. Because of this inability to use 'manager' and 'leader' as synonyms, many scholars believe in the importance of distinguishing the two roles.

Those in support of separating managers from leaders emphasize each roles' core; leaders are people-focused, and managers are result-focused (DuBrin, 2018). Geller (2022) states that

managers motivate other-directed behavior while leaders encourage self-directed behavior (p. 30). Meaning, managers get subordinates to perform correctly by using things like rewards and punishments as a response to behaviors, but leaders develop interpersonal relationships to get subordinates (or peers) to behave correctly independently. Another professional, Kirkham (2020), believes that managers have a focus on key organizational tasks while leaders focus on producing momentum (p. 42). Producing momentum involves motivating and inspiring others, addressing their emotions, and assembling a team (Kirkham, 2020). Overall, leadership is interpersonal based. There is no leader without followers. In contrast, managers can still be considered a manager without followers, due to the administrative aspects of their role.

Not all scholars agree that distinguishing between managers and leaders is important. Mintzberg (2011) believes that effective managers must be leaders and effective leaders must be managers (p. 8). He states that "instead of distinguishing managers from leaders, we should be seeing managers *as* leaders and leadership as management well practiced" (p. 9). This highlights the common argument against differentiating management and leadership; the two roles are too intertwined to be practically separated. While it is true that good leadership and effective management are both necessary, the argument is flawed in its assumption that those good leaders also need to be the effective managers. Emergent leaders influence others in a way that brings about organizational success even though they are not managers. They are, however, supported by effective managers.

Effective Leadership Theories Over Time

Now that the difference between managers and leaders has been established, it is important to evaluate the difference between what makes a leader good or bad. The first theories of good leadership emerged in the 19th century and pinpointed personal characteristics deemed

necessary for good leadership (Kirkham, 2020). Some examples of these characteristics include self-confidence, extraversion, trustworthiness, passionate, and courageous (DuBrin, 2018). A leader's motivation and cognitive abilities are also important to being perceived as a good leader (DuBrin, 2018). However, just as people themselves are very different, good leaders can be too. No specific traits, motives, or cognitive capabilities are required to be an effective leader, which is why many intellectuals favor other, more specific theories rather than the trait theories.

Behavioral theories of leadership concern the attitudes and behaviors of successful leaders. First emerged in the 1950s, these theories argue two important effective leadership behaviors: task-focused and relationship-focused (Kirkham, 2020). A relationship-oriented pracitce involves leaders aligning followers, giving emotional support and encouragement, being open to followers' opinions, etc. (DuBrin, 2018). A task-oriented pracitce involves leaders concentrating on group members' strengths, organizing for collaboration, setting the direction, etc. (DuBrin, 2018). It is important to note that even though task-oriented behaviors and attidues are not focused on interpersonal relationships, they are still focused on people, which is the core of leadership.

Other, more recent theories are more focused on specific types of leadership. On of these is transactional versus transformational leadership. Transactional leaders focus on routine and regular standards, while transformational leaders are focused on transforming their followers and making an organizational change (DuBrin, 2018). Heroic leadership theories have emerged in recent years, and involve the idea that leaders are 'heroes' to the organization and share the vision and strategic plan that is needed to lead the team to 'victory' (Kirkham, 2020). The development of these many different theories over the years have created some discourse on whether a leader is 'born' or 'made'.

Traditionally, leadership was viewed as an innate ability, but now many believe that both leaders and managers can be developed. Because the initial leadership theories are trait based, many believe that leadership is hereditary or genetic (Dugan, 2017). For example, one is not taught to be extraverted; it is a personality trait. However, the many other leadership theories describe behaviors, attitudes, and styles that can be taught. Managers can learn how to organize, plan, and control administrative activities as well as people. This is similar in leaders, as they can learn how to align followers, set the direction, transform people, etc. While it may be true that having some key characteristics means that these activities will come easier, it is incorrect to say that they cannot be learned by most.

Level of Responsibilities' Affect on Managers and Leaders

After establishing the types of leadership behaviors and attitudes, it is important to discuss how leaders and managers do not have the free ability to act on their desired practices. A manager (especially a higher up) is restricted in its leadership abilities by other managerial responsibilities. For example, the relationship-oriented behavior of providing emotional support to followers entails frequent encouragement and praise as well as caring about followers' nonwork-related personal matters (DuBrin, 2018). A manager with many subordinates and many administrative tasks may realize that they don't have the time to give that frequent praise and stay up to date on each follower's lives. Therefore, managers who want to lead often need to focus on task-oriented behaviors rather than relationship-oriented ones.

Leaders who are not managers can be restricted in their behaviors by their lack of authority. For example, the task-oriented behavior of taking risks could be difficult for an emergent leader to perform (DuBrin. 2018). Those who lack authority may be specifically asked by their managers to not take risks and to stick to their established roles. Similarly, many task-

oriented behaviors may require the leader to be autonomous; an ability many emergent leaders do not have. Thus, leaders who are not managers often need to focus on relationship-oriented behaviors rather then task-oriented ones. Although leaders may have a specific preference for the way they lead, they are often confined by organizational boundaries.

Job Responsibilities & Performance Goals of Leaders & Managers

Finally, guidelines for the job responsibilities and performance goals of leaders versus managers can be considered. There are similarities between managers and leaders in this area to note first. Managers and leaders both need to fulfill their organizational duties. This may be writing reports, interacting with customers, making a sale, etc. While these may not be their primary duty as a manager/leader, it is still a duty that needs completion. Leaders and managers should both be assessed by how they interact with others. Even though managers may not be focused on interpersonal relationships, collaboration is a requirement, and it needs to be done well. Firms can measure this by having subordinates and peers evaluate the manager/leader instead of just the manager/leader's boss. While there are many more similarities that can be discussed, the point is that both managers and leaders have responsibilities to the organization that do no involve employees, and both must work alongside with others in a productive way.

A manager's job responsibilities and performance appraisals should primarily be focused on bringing positive results to the organization. While this does include leading, it should have an equal focus on organizing, planning, and controlling. A manager needs to come up with an effective strategy for its area and implement that strategy through delegation. Then, that manager can be evaluated on how well that strategic plan performed. Sales performance, efficiency levels, and cost control can all be indicators of a manager's job performance. A manager's goal should be to work towards the organization's vision using their resources, including employees.

A leader's job responsibilities and performance appraisals should primarily be focused on their interpersonal relationships and follower development. Although it is still important that positive results emerge with the leader's help, influencing the followers to want to achieve those results is more important. Leaders need to gain their followers' trust and help them feel motivated towards the company vision. They also need to provide constructive feedback often as well as build and maintain momentum (Geller, 2022). The best way to measure if these goals are reached is by interviewing their followers. Not only should the followers' relationships with the leader be evaluated, but the followers' attitudes about the company and motivation is important as well. Leaders should have the goal of being a positive influence for their followers and creating a motivated team that works towards organizational goals.

Conclusion

Despite the common use of 'manager' and 'leader' as synonyms, the terms each have their own meanings, characteristics, practices, and goals. A manager may lead, but they also plan, organize, and control. A leader is anyone (not only managers) that positively influences others to work towards an organizational role. Good leaders focus on their interpersonal relationships with their followers in addition to completed organizational tasks. Despite previous belief, good leaders can be developed and made instead of simply born. Although both managers and leaders may not be fully able to lead how they please, they still have important responsibilities that they must fulfill and goals they must meet. A good leader is seen by others as a major influence in the success of their organization and its people.

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