

IN SEARCH OF THE PERFECT LEADER

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Throughout the ages, philosophers, scholars, ‘gurus’ and consultants have tried to figure out how to create the ideal organization and how to develop the perfect leader. It takes commitment, connection and courage to be an efficient leader. Most writing on good management and what it takes to get to the top focus on leadership it is regarded as one of the most important areas of personal development. This also explains the growing interest in leadership courses. Defining just what makes a leader effective, however, remains as difficult today as it ever was. But that does not prevent us from seeking to distil their secrets. Of course, there must be almost as many theories on leadership as there are leaders themselves and models for the best kind of leadership change with the times.

In the 15th century, Niccolo Machiavelli advocated a combination of cunning and intimidation as a way to more effective leadership. His philosophy, if not his practices, became unfashionable some time ago. “Great Man” theories, popular in the 19th century and early this century, are based on the notion of the ‘born leader’ who has innate talents that cannot be taught. An alternative approach that is still in vogue is based on trying to identify the key traits of effective leaders. Behaviourist theory prefers to see leadership in terms of what leaders do rather than their individual characteristics, and it tries to identify the different roles they fulfill. More recently, attention has moved away from the individual in the leadership role to embrace a more holistic view and investing less in what some commentators refer to as the ‘myth of the heroic leader’. Much recent work in this area has concentrated on trying to understand why some leaders are more effective than others by looking at their environment and the context in which their acts have been carried out. Situational theory views leadership as specific to the situation, for example, rather than to the personality of the leader. It is based on the idea that different situations require a different style of leader.

It is generally known that the leader is not a person with the loudest voice or strongest will taking charge of the group but of people within the group ensuring that all leadership processes are present. The chart below compares some traditional leadership behaviors with new, alternative behaviors offering a more collaborative style. It outlines the shifts in behavior required to move from the traditional model to the Foundations of Leadership Model.

Traditional Behavior	Foundations Behavior
Provide Solutions - Knowing all the answers - Providing the solutions - Telling and being directive	Be Curious - Being willing not to know - Supporting others to find their own solutions - Asking and providing guidance
Be Heard - Judging and making assumptions - Reacting to - Waiting for your opportunity to speak	Be Responsive - Being clear about the “real” challenge - Being present and resonating with - Really listening and allowing the person to speak
Control - Controlling the actions of others	Be Accountable - Promoting self-development of others

- Advice-giving	- Observing and asking
- Blaming	- Learning and supporting others
- Limitations	- Potential and possibility in our feedback

Leaders with traditional behaviors have a mental model implying that, in order to succeed and be leaders, they must provide solutions, assert their ideas and control situations, tasks and people. Those with alternative behaviors demonstrate that by being curious, responsive and accountable, they effectively motivate, inspire and align people with a vision to accomplish individual and organizational goals.

Well sometimes what the world see as a standard to determine ‘good’ and ‘bad’ is entirely wrong. You cannot judge a person only from his outer form, sometimes the best pearl is hidden in the ugliest clams. And yet, it does mean that we do not have to follow others direction to make it out into the big road. Sometimes every single thing which is different, always being criticized and so on. Always being thought as the ‘bad’ ones because the majority thought so. You can’t really be the best on everything.

But interesting descriptions of individuals that have shaped the world we live in some big ways, good or bad. Leadership has nothing to do with what’s right or wrong but courage to follow your instinct. Basically it’s the fact that history is biased in that we only see those that ‘made it’. There are likely to be many counter examples of people with these attributes who didn’t amount to anything but they are forgotten in the pages of history. We are not born great, but to become great. Everyone needs dreams to be able to live in real life. There is a leader in each of us, never underestimate the star in yourself because it can be as beautiful and shining as the ones that you decide to follow. We are all human; therefore we all have the same opportunity. Just have a better look inside. Fanatism that mentioned is widespread in the world today is a power-disease. It is excluding and motivated by fear, it spreads fear, falsehood and destruction. It has absolutely nothing to do with true leadership – it has much to do with hate, excluding life, mass-hypnosis, mass-delusion and destruction. A true leader is not motivated by power, but by love. A true leader’s motives are not centered on what he or she can get for him or herself – but on what he or she can co-create for others. He or she leads as an act of service, for the good of all concerned.

We, at least most of humanity, are not able to look beyond the reason why some people act like they do. They are a piece in the puzzle of life. The personal color of life, like drinking or other is just a veil through which we have to look. In the moment we can look in the heart and soul of a human we understand and will never judge someone about their act or behavior. Leaders cannot be defined by the habits they keep but by the decision they make when given unprecedented power.

Nobody is perfect! It does not mean that you are a good leader you will no longer commit mistakes. We are all humans and we are all entitled to commit mistakes. A great leader is not the one who shows perfect characters and behaviors. A true leader is the one who can influence and lead the public into the greater beneficence.

In order to become a leader on a collective plan, one has to become a leader of his individual plan. Follow your dreams and you will be the leader. Our big problem, especially in a world that is growing more and more fundamentalist, is not allowing people in prominent positions to commit human mistakes. We are always in search of the perfect ruler. We are always looking for a pastor to guide and help us find our way. The truth is that the great revolutions and the progress made by humanity were brought about by people just like us. We only need to have the courage to make a key decision at a crucial moment.