

Leadership Propositions for Team Success in India

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Abstract

We know remarkably little about how leaders establish and manage effective teams, despite the prevalence of leadership influences on organisational team performance and the substantial literatures on leadership and team/group dynamics. "Functional leadership" is the prism through which we examine leader-team dynamics in this study. This concept basically states that the leader's primary responsibility is to do, or get done, whatever functions are not being handled sufficiently in terms of group needs. This functional leadership approach is explained in terms of four superordinate and 13 subordinate leadership dimensions, which are linked to team effectiveness and a variety of team procedures. So, what exactly is a value proposition for a leader? A leader value proposition is a commitment you make to your employees about the atmosphere you will seek to build as their boss. It stems from your basic principles and an understanding of your own leadership style. You may share your leader value proposition with your team and hold yourself accountable to it once you have articulated it, think of it as a set of personal commitments that your daily actions should reinforce. Even if you have not formally expressed it, if you have spent time in a leadership position, you are probably already living some sort of "value proposition". The benefit of thinking things through and putting it down is that it gives you and your team clarity. Interested in creating your own? (1) **Leadership Strengths:** Start by jotting down your leadership strengths-what do you excel at? (For this phase, you might find it helpful to take a strengths assessment or get input from others). (2) **Values:** Next, think about your personal values, attempt to limit your list to 3–5 items. Some excellent prompts for communicating your personal principles are available. LVP is a three-letter acronym that stands for Leader Value Proposition. Now combine your talents and values to see what they say about how you wish to work with your team on a daily basis. What kind of atmosphere do you want to surround yourself with? What has it been like to collaborate with you? There is no perfect way to capture your leader value proposition; as with anything authentic, it should reflect you. In writing my own, I chose to start each phrase with the words "I will..." to reinforce the promise I am making to each member of my team. You could equally use phrases like "you can expect..." or "I am committed to..." or "I believe..." We also develop a number of guiding propositions. A key point in considering such relationships is the reciprocal influence, whereby both leadership and team processes influence each other. The study tries to site examples of sport personnel, industrialist, eminent political leaders, and best Indian companies.

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INTRODUCTION

Organizations, depending on how long they have been in existence, are guided by a variety of leadership philosophies that management believe will help in the attainment of objectives. Such managers are guided by both classical and contemporary theories as well as empirical studies in developing leadership plans. Before the 20th

century, the most common leadership style was autocratic leadership where decision making was limited to leaders in top management positions without consulting other members of the team. In recent times, things have taken on a new turn such that autocratic leadership is gradually being eliminated from most organizations [1]. Modern leadership is currently characterized by more flexibility [2], transparency [3], inspiration over decision [4] and leading by goals [5]. This study presents a leadership plan for organizations with a focus on clear corporate recommendations that theoretically support propositions for effective leadership approaches for team success.

Theoretical Support Propositions for Effective Leadership

Scholars, over the years have developed theories which elaborate on why individuals get to leadership positions [6–8]. These theories stress on attributes, traits and behaviours that can cause people to improve on their leadership capabilities. The Great Man Theory, Trait Theory, Behavioural Theory, Situational Approach, Skills Approach and Path-Goal Theory are the classical leadership theories and approaches.

“Leaders are born not made....” Are the few example Mother Teresa, Mahatma Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln etc. The Great Man Theory is also called “Great Person Theory” posits that leaders are born with some special characteristics that enable them to lead. Thomas Carlyle who made this theory popular [9], explains that with the suitable conditions, leaders will emerge [5]. This theory however does not have any inference on followers, the environment of the leader or diverse situations which may arise.

The trait theory is very similar to the great man theory which believes that inherent qualities such as charisma, confidence, intellect, communication and social skills are in-born not learnt, e.g., Shivaji Maharaj, Prime Minister Late Smt. Indra Gandhi, and Mr. Narendra Modi [10]. Scientific research, however, has not been conclusive on the list of characteristics, traits and abilities [8].

Behavioural theories helped to shift the narrative from the fact that leaders are born to the fact the leaders are made [11]. This theory focuses on how leaders behave and act rather than their characteristics or traits; meaning no matter the traits or inherent characteristics of an individual, with the right behaviour they are likely to rise to leadership.

The situational approach e.g. Indian cricket icon, M.S. Dhoni explains that leadership has mainly two dimensions, directive and supportive [5]. For every situation, the leader needs to evaluate, and analyse what is appropriate for his followers. For the given task, the leader decides whether to provide direction or support, depending on the competence level of followers.

Unlike the “Big Man Theory” and “Trait Theory” the skills approach lays emphasis on skills which can be learned and developed. Despite the fact that inherent traits and characteristics are essential for leadership, effective leadership requires knowledge and capabilities [5, 12]. It suggests that leading effectively results from many learned skills like knowledge of technique, i.e., technical skills; ability to interact with other people, i.e., human skills; and ability to come up with ideas for running the organization, i.e., conceptual skills.

The last leadership theory considered is the ‘Path-Goal Theory’ which was developed by Robert House in 1971. It explains the style chosen for leadership should be contingent in nature, where a perfect balance is there between behaviour, need and context [13]. Northouse explains that the path-goal theory focuses on how leaders motivate their followers to achieve set objectives [5]. It is built on the expectancy theory of motivation where employees believe they can achieve a set target by their employer; that they will be rewarded when the target is achieved; and that the reward is valuable. This follower motivation by leaders is achieved through defining goals, clarifying the path, removing obstacles and providing support [5]. The path-goal theory ensures that a leader selects a leadership

style which is based on subordinate characteristics and environmental factors; as well as focus on motivation factors [12].

Like the other theories, the path-goal theory is not as straight forward theory. There is no specific leadership style suited for all situations whenever needed by the organisation. Whereas, indeed the path-goal theory, each situation is unique and requires a leader to implore a directive style, which is task related; a supportive style, which is relational; participative style, which is process related; and achievement-oriented style, which is identity or status related [13]. A leader who makes use of the path-goal theory needs to use or may use any of the four leadership styles at any point in time or a combination of them depending on characteristics of subordinates and environmental factors.

Environmental factors consist of task structure, formal authority systems and controls, and level of support from the subordinate's team members or the organizational structure and culture. For instance the leader may make use of the supportive style, if a subordinate is not getting the needed support from his work group. If leaders do not duplicate environmental structures, it is more productive that exist in an organization [13]. As much as possible, the directive style needs to be minimized, where the organization has formal authority systems and controls.

Leaders need to reduce direct instructions as much as much as possible, when tasks are structured and repetitive. It may be argued that the path-goal theory is the same as situational approach. Nonetheless, though they have some similarities, they are different theories altogether. While the situational approach requires that leaders adjust their leadership style to the level of subordinate development, path-goal theory requires that leaders adjust their leadership styles in relation to subordinates' motivational needs [5]. The path-goal theory guides workers to choose the best paths to reach their goals as well as the corporation's goals and how their leadership styles impact on subordinate motivation, thus providing a connection between leadership theory and motivational theory [13]. More significantly it brings to the awareness of leaders the fact that they are to help their subordinates achieve set objectives.

MS Dhoni, India's most successful cricket captain, is on the verge of becoming one of the game's greatest leaders. People have previously attributed his achievement to things like luck, timing, and good fortune. However, a definite pattern emerges from a deeper examination of his success. Managers at all levels can learn a lot from Dhoni's leadership approach. Managing egos, change management, managing success, managing pressure, focus, instinct, managing failure, uninhibited style invokes respect from opponents, stands by his people, and is adaptable. Dhoni is well aware that the focus is on him as a captain, but he never takes advantage of it. In both success and failure, he retains a tight grip on his emotions. He still has a lot of cricket left in him, and we might be able to learn more from him!

Leadership Style that Facilitates Motivation

One of the main roles of leaders is to motivate followers towards the achievement of the desired objective. Leadership plays an important role in the success of individual or otherwise success of a team. Individuals however have various motives for which they do the things. As a result, what motivates one person may not necessarily motivate the other, according to Mitchel [14]. Motivation involves identifying those characteristics that trigger people's behaviour and causes them to engage in the required behaviour [14].

Various theories are used to explain the concept of motivation, considering the complexity of individual needs and motives. Among such theories are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory/Motivator-Hygiene, McGregor's X and Y Theories, McClelland's Need Achievement Theory, The Equity Theory, Value-Percept Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory and Porter-Lawler Model [15].

Maslow's hierarchy of needs groups human needs in five stages and explains that depending on which level an individual is/will be satisfied and motivated to work productively if necessary needs are met appropriately. The physiological needs, security needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs are the five stages which every individual expects [16]. Satisfiers or characteristics of work that bring about satisfaction in employees such as achievement, recognition, the actual work, responsibility and advancement are identified in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory [17]. X and Y Theories by McGregor's classify employees in two groups [18]: the first, theory X, assumes that employees generally do not like work and need to be forced, controlled threatened with punishment and directed in order to produce the desired results; while the second, theory Y, assumes that if employees are satisfied well enough with their work, they will work effectively.

Individuals are propelled to excel due to their own personal ambition, need and achievement, which is explained in McClelland's theory [17]. Employees will always consider the work that is put in and the rewards they get from assigned responsibilities such that if the reward is high, they will work better according to the Equity Theory [19]. The Value-Percept Theory postulates that personal values influence individual satisfaction [20]. To obtain satisfaction while reducing dissatisfaction among employees is the main idea of Vroom's expectancy theory [21]. The way individuals behave is affected by both internal and external elements, personal goals, needs, desires and the ability to decide between possible behaviours, is explained in Porter-Lawler Model [21].

When people work as individual, or as a groups or individuals come together to form groups, the motivation theories hold good. However motivation becomes more complex with teams, when individuals in the group will have peculiar personal needs that will motivate them to give off their best and if this is not well managed by leadership, some members of the team may not work as expected, while on the other hand, those who are motivated will work excellently [22].

When Ratan Tata took over the Tata Group in 1991, he defined a new strategic course for the company. It did almost no business outside of India at that time. Despite internal criticism, he insisted that the corporation needed to go global, in part to avoid becoming too reliant on the economy of a single country [23]. He led the conglomerate's 96 companies on a wave of acquisitions beginning in 2000, employing a case-by-case, trial-and-error technique to purchase the Tetley Group, the Daewoo Commercial Vehicle Company, and Boston's Ritz-Carlton hotel, among others (now the Taj Boston). Other countries account for half of the Tata Group's revenue. Ratan Tata's own vision for how to compete across worldwide markets, rather than a clear, well-thought-out plan, was important in achieving globalisation.

Leadership Style that Facilitates Team Building and Clear Vision

Various styles are used by the leaders to ensure that team objectives are achieved effectively. Four leadership styles were identified by Wolman that influence the dynamics of a group namely, weak leadership, excessive deference to authority, blocking and evaluation apprehension [22]. The impact on a group depending on what motivates individuals in the group depends on the leadership styles which can be positive or negative.

If the leadership is weak means the group or team is weak, it means the leader is not firm enough when it comes to decision making and is not able to provide the required direction for the team. In this case, a member of the group may rise up to perform the 'directing' responsibility. The negative impact of this on the team will not be very severe if the subordinate has enough information to facilitate excellent decisions. In a case of insufficient information, the group may lose focus as a result of misplaced priorities thus delaying the achievement of the team's objectives.

The team members seem to always agree with the leader without any kind of opposition to everything situation. Even when the leader makes a mistake, the danger lies here also, no member of

the team says anything. This mostly negatively impacts organizations as project timelines, quality and cost are not achieved [24].

Blocking happens when information-flow among team members is disrupted. The things are done right when there is a free flow of information among team members. Due to the close relationship between the leader and some few team members, the team holds good, those few people are able to have access to some information that is not available to the others; such team members do not share information with the other group that is not close to the leader and this may likely cause division and leader to, not have the necessary information to achieve the set objective. However, the blocking ensures that confidential information does not go out of the team, which is an advantage; it becomes difficult for competitors to make use of confidential information against organizations who own the information.

In some cases, people hold back their ideas/thoughts, when they feel they are misunderstood or judged harshly by other members of their group. This is referred to as evaluation apprehension. Members of a team may become demotivated, who are notable to express their opinions or thoughts freely due to criticisms from other team members. In any such a situation it is the leader who should ensure that all team members have the freedom to express themselves freely without fear.

In both consideration and establishing structure, Anand Mahindra excels. He is a wonderful leader because he combines both types of behaviour, resulting in a high level of organisation and consideration. He had reached a point where he was task-oriented and more to a procedural management approach in establishing structure. For Mahindra Company, this type of leader gives specified duties, specifies procedures to follow, organises work, and communicates expectations for team members. This has also been shown to improve job performance, group performance, and organisation performance, as well as employees, stakeholders, and self-satisfaction [25].

Leadership Style that Facilitates Change Process

In considering an approach that facilitates change in an organization, transactional and transformational leadership are discussed. Transactional leadership basically describes the cost-benefit exchange process that exists between leaders and their followers [26]. Northouse exposes that transactional leadership refers to various models of leadership which dwell on the reciprocity that occurs between leaders and followers [5]. On the other hand, transactional leaders reward and punish in traditional ways according to organizational standards; transformational leaders attempt to achieve positive results from employees by keeping them invested in projects, leading to an internal, high-order reward system [26]. Bryan indicates that since they are distinct dimensions [27]. A given leader may exhibit varying degrees of both transformational and transactional leadership. The styles are not mutually exclusive, and some combination of both may enhance effective leadership. Transformational leadership inspires people to achieve unexpected or remarkable results. It gives the workers autonomy over specific jobs, as well as the authority to make decisions once they have been trained. This induces a positive change in the followers' attitudes and the organization as a whole. This implies that, if an organization is undergoing change, the best approach to ensure employees do more than the expected is the transformational leadership approach (Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021) [25].

To grasp Virat Kohli's leadership style, one must first recognise that he is part of a new generation of successful Indians who are confident in their abilities and make no apologies for it. They also have no patience for colonial clichés [2]. Kohli has genuinely wanted India to be the No. 1 team in the world and has pretty well got them there throughout his reign, a few setbacks along the way notwithstanding.

His self-assurance and self-assurance drive him to be aggressively 'in your face' at all times, and he has no qualms about telling you exactly what he thinks of you and that he can thrash you at any time. That is unsettling for most teams.

Leadership Style that Facilitates the Use of Technology

With the adoption of technology in this century it is very difficult if not impossible to have leadership devoid of the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Most organizations make use of technology in communicating with employees [28, 29]. According to Sweetser and Kelleher, social media, which appeals to the younger generation, has found its way into the corporate world [30]. E-Leadership basically refers the communication between leaders and their followers with the use of ICT. E-Leadership ensures interaction for constructive feedback [31], as well as leading by intellectual stimulation and individual consideration [32]. The use of organizational intranet, wikis, social media, and conferencing applications among others are common ICT tools that facilitate e-leadership [32].

From 5G technology to artificial intelligence, virtual reality, cloud, internet of things, and robotics, the world looks to India with bated breath for technology-enabled solutions that are both affordable and sustainable. India is on track to become the 'Techade' of this decade, with one of the most vibrant ecosystems for technology innovators and startups. India's IT and telecom sectors have played a critical part in the country's development and are prepared to lead the country to a brighter future. Modiji has stated this.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is recommended that leaders adopt a blend of supportive, participative and achievement-oriented styles of leadership. As much as possible, the directive style should be minimized or completely done away with. To facilitate change, leadership should consider the transformational leadership approach or a blend of both transactional and transformation as the combination has proven to also produce excellent results.

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