Leadership Considerations

Non-traditional business skills and tactics used within organizations - the use of these skills and tactics by successful individuals in today's business organizations.

Introduction

The Nontraditional Organization

Travica (1998) provided a basis for defining a nontraditional organization by discriminating between the traditional bureaucratic organization and the nontraditional organization structures of organic, adhocracy and network organizations. Travica posited that mechanistic, hierarchical control organizations, characterized as bureaucracies, were no longer viable in terms of quality, short product to market times and cycles, and innovation. As well, existing bureaucratic organizations experienced turnover from disenchanted innovators in their organizations (Kuratko, Montagno & Hornsby, 1990) suggesting that the structures themselves were a hindrance to the development of an innovative approach to business issues. A large body of literature suggests that the driving force for change in the traditional business organization was the need for innovation and innovators. Travica's view was from an information technology (IT) viewpoint and suggested that the newer organization structures would be strongly driven by information and knowledge and thus IT would become the nexus of the nontraditional organization. They found that trans-boundary communication and trust sharing to be significant in organizational design. Toftoy and Chatterjee (2004), noted the economic downturn and called for action to change the then current culture of business into an intrapreneurial culture. Organizational change to accommodate intrapreneurialism, dealing with the need for innovation in organizations, is the second theme of this response.

Kuratko, Mantagno and Hornsby (1990) identified three factors for organizations to promote intrapreneurship, a change in organizational structure, management support of the effort and resource availability. Later, Kuratko, Ireland, Covin and Horsby (2005) identified middle level managers needed to change behaviors and structure to endorse, refine and shepherd opportunities as well as to provide resources needed for innovation. Carland and Carland (2007) also suggested changes of management support and freeing of resources but added the need to provide a reward system towards innovation to enhance the organization's ability to establish an intrapreneur friendly environment. Carland and Carland noted major blocks to the intrapreneurial culture as being the unwillingness to see possible alternative futures and the avoidance of risk taking. Vincent (2005) found that a more dedicated group of individuals was needed to help move innovation through the organization acting as "innovation midwives." Their functions were to help justify the innovation, identify relevance to the core of the business, reduce risks associated with the innovative effort, and resolve the many conflicts that arise as the innovation competes for resources. In Vincent's case study, the innovation midwife was found to be the bridge between a sponsor of innovation who lived in the investment and return world of the organization and the mavericks and champions that discovered the needs that drove invention. Sim, Griffin, Price and Vojak (2007) in researching a division of a Fortune 500 company providing engineering services, distinguished between inventors, champions, implementers, and innovators. They suggested the inventor was a strong introvert, task oriented technology expert. The champion exhibited extrovert tendencies, was business and politically oriented, motivated by profit and success. The implementer, also an extrovert sought to find rational answers and facilitate development of new concepts to achieve those answers. The innovator was the most multi-faceted individual that spanned technology, customer and market domains driven to create solutions to customer problems. It would seem that the behaviors and skills of the innovator are that of the intrapreneur.

While there are a number of actors and unique traits involved in intrapreneurship, the literature did appear to identify successful skills and behaviors. Carland and Carland, among many other authors, cited Pinchot's 1999 intrapreneur's ten commandments.

1. Remember it is easier to seek forgiveness than to ask for permission.
2. Do any job needed to make your project work, regardless of your job description.
3. Come to work each day willing to be fired.
4. Recruit a strong team.
5. Ask for advice before resources.
6. Forget pride of authorship, spread credit widely.
7. When you bend the rules, keep the best interests of the company and its customers in mind.
8. Honor your sponsors.
9. Underpromise and overdeliver.
10. Be true to your goals, but realistic about ways to achieve them.

Pinchot's list continues to be a repeatedly quoted item in recent writing on intrapreneurship. Some of Pinchot's suggested tactics also appear in the third theme, nontraditional leadership.

Nontraditional Leadership Traits

Rickards and Moger (2006), in a study surveying articles covering creativity and management for 1991 through 2000, found nine highly overlapping themes addressing creative leadership. These were: (1) leadership learning and knowledge systems, (2) empowerment and distributed leadership, (3) creative problem solving, (4) innovation leadership and entrepreneurship, (5) leadership in turbulent environments, (6) change centered leadership, (7) structural supports and hindrances to creativity, (8) strategic planning and leadership, and (9) the social construction of creativity. These themes set the stage for this response's last category of nontraditional skills and tactics. Zhou and George (2003) noted that leaders could have direct effects on employee creativity based upon the leader's own behavior. The leader behavior could either promote or discourage risk taking as well as individual self-esteem found to be involved in the innovation process. Zhou and George noted the involvement of leader member exchange (LMX) theory discussed in greater detail in this paper's response to question three. Important to Zhou and George was an implementation of emotional intelligence as a leadership skill. They defined emotional intelligence as the ability to understand, reason and use emotions to aid in cognitive processes as well as decision-making. Based upon LMX theory, emotional intelligence spans both the leader and the member. Of interest, Palmer, Walls, Burgess and Stough (2001), applying the Trait Meta Mood Scale along with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire to 43 participants, found that inspirational motivation components of leadership were significantly correlated with emotional intelligence. The leadership style having the most correlation was that of the charismatic leader. However, leaders need also to adapt to the culture of the organization. Pennington, Townsend and Cummins (2003) in a correlational study with an independent variable of leadership practices and team culture as a dependent variable, found that the matching of leadership styles and differing cultures of organizations are important. These observations paint a picture of the new leader, highly self aware and sensitive to the needs and climate of the organizations they lead.

The role of unconventional behavior has been found to be an effective leadership attribute in the newer organizational structures as identified by Jaussi and Dionne (2003). They noted that transformational leadership produced more divergent thinking in groups and the groups were more flexible. They suggested if a leader takes visible risks, that behavior translates to the group that risk taking is encouraged. Jaussi and Dionne developed a study of 364 subjects in a two-by-two experiment with high vs. low transformational leadership and conventional and unconventional behaviors of the leader. Unconventional behavior was found to be unique from transformational leadership and enhanced the effects of modeling creativity at the individual level. At the group level, a leader's unconventional behavior was found to positively affect group cohesion. Additionally, they found that transformative leadership had little affect on individual creativity. Thus, a flair for the unusual and adoption of charismatic leadership appears to be a useful tool of today's leadership. Humor is another behavior that has become acknowledged as a leadership tool.

Decker and Rotondo (2001), in a survey study of 1,000 business school alumni in a Mid-Atlantic university seeking to better understand the effect of humor in a leadership context as well as use in gender differences, found that the use of humor in a positive sense produced higher levels of task and relationship behavior as well as perceived leader effectiveness. Men were found to use more humor than women. Negative use of humor appeared to be most detracting to perceived leadership when used by women suggesting that this type of behavior may be simply expected more in males. Smith, Harrington and Neck (2000), looked to determine the effectiveness of humor in a diversity context. Using previously validated instruments comprising of the Organizational Communication Conflict Scale and the Conflict Management Style Scale, Smith, Harrington, and Neck surveyed a sample of 6,200 flight attendants employed by a large USA based international airline. Based upon a 27 percent response rate, they found that humor was more likely to be used when with others of a similar racial and seniority group. Somewhat of a surprise to the authors, they did not find a gender similarity effect, indicating successful use of humor crosses the gender divide. The authors also found that African-Americans used humor less than that of any other groups in the study. Their findings did confirm humor having a positive effect in conflict management situations. Humor also may well be a moderating factor of liking in the LMX model of leadership as discussed in response three.

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The remainder of the literature surveyed in this response dealt with more specific leadership actions and attributes most often as told by the leader or in anecdotal examples in opinion articles. As this portion of the literature survey unfolded, common themes began to appear.

Lewin and Regine (2000), suggesting an organic approach to management, noted that leaders, recognizing that their organizations needed to become complex adaptive organizations, had a common trait of "leading by not leading" (p. 20). This paradoxical statement seems to appear with some consistency in nontraditional leadership thinking. Leadership would push their organizations towards and into chaos allowing new processes to emerge rather than being imposed. In addition to the push to chaos, the authors suggested that these leaders also practiced traits of letting go of control, continuously challenging legacy relationships both functionally and emotionally, and creating a safe atmosphere for people to experiment in all aspects of the organization. These leaders were highly attuned to both the macro system and micro levels of interpersonal interaction. Lewin and Regine quoted Tony Morgan, CEO of the Industrial Society as saying, "I can't conceive of myself as a leader without the burden of responsibility to create positive and powerful relationships with everyone I interface with" (p.20).

Canlan (2001) expanded on this dimensionality by suggesting creative leaders recognized the need for authenticity and used tactics of declaring their intentions and then following through with them, exhibiting trust in both themselves and their subordinates, showing flexibility in leadership style, and openly expressing not knowing what the next step would be. In addition, Canlan suggested moments of reflection and leisure were needed for everyone in an organization.

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Rocca (2009), recounting his nine-year tenure as the executive director of the International Game Developers Association, attributed his success to a number of unconventional leadership practices. He listed principles of battling the concept of "turf" within the organization by focusing all the organization's energy and resources towards service. His approach to management was that of promoting autonomy by staying away, claiming that he went into the office less than a dozen times during his tenure. He led the organization into chaos rather than attempting to create a state of equilibrium. Rocca noted that if he was not risking being fired by the board at least once a year, he was not working hard enough. The suggestion of pushing the envelope appears to extend beyond the intrepreneurial role.

Locander and Luechauer (2007) added another dimension of the irreverent leader. They also suggested, concerning leadership, more might be achieved by less. Titled "Leader as Slacker," their commentary suggested a slacker manifesto that would, among other things, ban the use of cell phones to make all communications face-to-face. The manifesto continued by suggesting that meetings be held in unusual places, volunteerism and training on company time be encouraged, multitasking be avoided, and to hold meetings with only one or two agendas. Addressing effects of stress on individuals, the manifesto suggested steps be taken to assure that everyone would take maximum vacation time, the organization should try occasional 36 hour work weeks, taking work home should be discouraged, and a daily nap or reflection time should be instituted.

Semler (1993), in a book describing the success story about the world's most unusual workplace discussed the tactics he used over two decades to bring democracy into the company's workplace. In the book, Semler reproduced a portion of the company's survival manual that was given to all employees. The manual was the only written set of rules in the company. Some of the elements of the manual are very relevant to this response. In Semco, there was no organization chart. The manual noted that only respect of the led created a leader. Working hours, the employee's direct working environment and the individual's clothing and appearance were totally up to the employee. The use of authority to cause fear or insecurity was unacceptable and intolerable. Big changes within the company were the norm. The employee was asked to watch changes without fear. All employees were urged to take all 30 days of vacation each year. No excuse was good enough to not take full vacation time.

Finally, in a more contemporary setting, on November 6, 2009, Kim Tucci in a speech to the Missouri Venture Forum held in St. Louis, recounted key principles of his successes as one of the Mid-West's leading restaurateurs and a dominant force in the St. Louis business community. His speech was entitled, "Managing Before the Computer." Mr. Tucci proudly proclaimed that he never had used a computer. He noted a major failing in the business community that with the advent of all the new technology, people did not engage one another effectively. He noted that people talked *to* one another but not *with* one another. His speech enjoined people at all levels in the organization to "engage, engage, engage." Secondly, he noted that simply meeting another's expectations was not the path to business success. He attributed his famed success in the restaurant field to always delivering far beyond a customer's expectations. He strongly suggested that philosophy is badly needed throughout the entire domain of business.

This section on leadership skills and tactics would indicate a major move from the mechanistic form of control over the organization, moving beyond transactional leadership to the charismatic levels of transformational leadership where interpersonal relationship management is critical. Key skills or considerations driving leadership success that appear frequently in the literature are the trend to democratize and share leadership, the desire and ability to promote risk taking by all within the organization, the need to fully engage with the organization at a deep personal level, and somewhat of a surprise, an oft voiced need to incorporate leisure time for reflection and renewal.

Conclusion

The literature suggests that in the turbulent times that business is facing, individuals are increasingly faced with an entirely different set of career actions than before. No longer dependent upon the organization, successful individuals appear to be taking the management of their careers into their own hands. And by gaining a greater insight into their personal identities, working towards resilience and flexibility in dealing with change, individuals tend to focus on increasing their education and developing broader sets of experience to enhance their worth to the newer emerging organizations.

Organizations have been forced to implement new structures to compete in a rapidly changing time of large economic swings, shifts of centers of labor and ever increasing technological change. The more successful organizations appear to understand the need to have adaptive, self-organizing communities focusing on creativity and innovation.

Leaders within these new organizational structures appear to be rapidly moving from the mechanistic, hierarchical, plan, implement, and control leadership styles to the more humanistic approach recognizing the possibilities of the potential of each member in the organization and the need to embrace and align their unique skills towards a common goal. The successful leadership styles seem to all well fit within the LMX theoretical model in that a much deeper exchange between the leader and the member results in higher trust, risk taking, acceptance of change, and intrapreneurial spirit needed for today’s business environment.

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Change Leadership

Change leadership can be conceptualized as consisting of elements of style and strategy. While style would appear to be more directly related to the type of change addressed, strategies would appear to have significant commonality in transformative and continuous change. Kotter (1995) posited eight steps to transform an organization: (1) develop a sense of urgency, (2) form a guiding coalition creating sufficient power to lead the effort, (3) create a vision, (4) communicate the vision whenever and wherever possible, (5) empower others to act on the vision, (6) plan and create short term wins, (7) consolidate improvements and move for more change, and (8) institutionalize the new approaches. Schein (2002) suggested a procedure to envision a possible change that broadens Kotter's model. First, Schein suggested questions of "Why change?" should be asked challenging if there really was a need, was it possible, what would be the motivation for change, were there both need and readiness for change, and could the information that would support a rationale for change be developed that would not trigger resistance. Secondly, he proposed that there should be an identification of the desired future state of the organization. Finally, he felt that an analysis of the present state be made and a gap analysis be made to further identify the tasks ahead.

Styles of leadership.

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Kotter (2001) noted major differences between managers and leaders. Managers coped with complexity by looking for patterns, relationships and linkages to help explain and control while leaders coped with change by creating visions and strategies. Sorenson (2000) found participative leadership style demonstrated tendencies to build cohesive teamwork, increase satisfaction, resolve conflicts, increase decision acceptance, further develop leader and decision making skills, and strove to enrich the workplace. Sorenson assumed participative leadership to be superior in that it gave voice to multiple individuals and involvement in ways that would vitalize commitment and satisfaction.

Eisenbach, Watson, and Pillai (1999) suggested that outstanding leadership models were moving toward the transformational, visionary and charismatic which focused on organizational transformation. They noted the distinction between transactional leadership developing from the exchange process between leaders and subordinates wherein the leader provided rewards in exchange for subordinates' performance and transformational leadership where behaviors moved beyond transactional leadership motivating followers to identify with the leader's vision and sacrifice their self interest for that of the group or the organization.

Sorenson (2000) also noted a second powerful style of leadership called referent leadership where individuals exhibited positive feelings for the leader along with a desire to please the leader. He noted that charisma could be a variant of referent leadership. Sorenson went on to suggest that referent and participative leadership had similar practices except for referent leadership having the characteristic of empowerment because, using that style, the leader would rely upon the use of values, interpersonal influence and relationships to manage behavior. Conger (1999) suggested the principal leadership processes of charismatic leaders were to search out existing or potential gaps and emphasize the importance of the new goals and means to close the gap, induce followers to transcend their self interests for the good of the organization, and stimulate followers' higher order needs and aspirations. Sorenson considered charismatic leaders to be organizational reformers or entrepreneurs acting on innovative or radical change. Yukl (1999) similarly found a transformational leader to be more likely to take actions that would empower followers and make them partners in a quest to achieve important objectives. In noting a difference between a transformative and a charismatic leader, Yukl suggested the charismatic leader seemed more likely to emphasize the need for radical change that could only be accomplished if followers put their trust in the leader's unique expertise. Yukl also posited that incompatible aspects of the core behaviors for transformational and charismatic leadership may make it rare for both types of leadership to occur at the same time. Noting similarity, Conger (1999) found both transformational and charismatic leaders perform in conditions of crisis, distress and entrepreneurial conditions. Conger noted dealing with high outcome uncertainty was a common factor in these leadership styles.

Key principles and actions for initiating change.

In considering initiation of change, a leader must keep a sharp focus on actions that will produce outcomes. However, the literature is sparse when it comes to defining successful outcomes. Carney (2000) suggested critical importance in the management of change were, "commitment levels amongst managers and staff involved in the change process; level of motivation present; use of professional judgment in decision making throughout the process; levels of understanding of the need for change demonstrated by staff; identifiable communication skills, and the recognition of the need for a high quality outcome to change" (p. 268). Jick (2003) suggested the true test of the change was the organization's ability to adapt to market forces and be flexible to withstand a turbulent environment. With this in mind, the literature would suggest the following leadership considerations prior to initiating change.

Personal readiness.

Cacioppe (1998) noted that individual leaders responded best when they first inwardly focused on their abilities to contribute to improved business performance, enhance leadership, team skills, self-development, self-worth, and to make deep changes in themselves including the ability to promote self-empowerment in others (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Rooke and Torbert (2005), based upon 25 years of administering thousands of managers using the Leadership Development Profile, found that only 15% of the leaders surveyed could create unique structures to address gaps between strategy and performance. Of the entire population surveyed, Rooke and Torbert found only 4% to be effective transformational leaders by using the power of mutual inquiry, vigilance and vulnerability. Their findings indicated that these individuals no longer sought to enhance personal skills, rather, they focused on collaborative inquiry.

Vision and commitment.

The purpose and content of vision can take a number of paths as directed by the type of change. Vision can serve more as a disruptive force in initiating change, or, it can take on a more attracting role to a new state of organization and performance. In continuous change, vision may focus more on keeping the semi-structured organization from slipping either into a rigid structure or chaos. Vision defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles (Kotter, 1995). It also provides a conceptual framework and roadmap for the change and well as provide emotional appeal for motivation (Jick, 2003). Nutt and Backoff (1997) added that vision should be crafted taking consideration of the underlying needs and values of the key stakeholders. Eisenbach, Watson and Pilai, (1999) suggested vision as providing a path for stakeholders to enter a “possibility space” that describes new ideas for an enterprise allowing people to find ways to become involved. Charismatic vision messages focus of the positive features of the future and the negative features of the status quo to develop disenchantment of the present situation, a strong identification with the future direction, along with a strong desire for the leader to lead them in that direction (Conger, 1999). Establishing a clear vision that will capture the imagination of all the stakeholders is a crucial step in initiating change. Establishing vision can also be considered a beginning step of readying the organization.

Readiness and change proofing.

Armenakis, Harris, and Mossholder (1993) argued that an important initiating step was to provide for the organization’s readiness for change. They noted that a readiness effort involved in convincing a collection of socially interacting individuals to change their beliefs, attitudes, and intentions in accordance with the discrepancy and efficacy aspects of the vision message. They noted a change agent must understand the distinction between individual and collective readiness, as well as what influences the collective interpretation of the readiness message. Drew and Smith (1995) defined change proofing as a preparation of the organization for transformation by developing the ability to recognize and respond to early signals of change or unanticipated opportunities such that the organization could respond more quickly and effectively to environmental shocks. Kotter (2001) noted that leaders also worked to align the organization both upward and downward as well as other stakeholders involved in the effort using vision wherever possible to work to block those forces that would hinder implementation.

Alignment, trust and safety.

Simons (1999) suggested subordinate's trust in their managers as being critically important. A consequence of managers' low credibility was that the managers' words lost effectiveness as an instrument of change. Fair and just actions also factor into trust. Tyler and De Cremer (2005) noted that if leaders acted in procedurally fair ways, they were viewed as more legitimate, more competent, with employees more accepting of organizational change.

Kotter (2001) suggested the process of alignment was empowering both in the sense that lower level employees could initiate change actions with lower risk and that with alignment, individual actions would have a lesser chance to come into conflict with the organization. Schein (1996) argued that security was a key to change management. A critical balance between threat and safety was needed to maintain a motivation to change but enough security or psychological safety for the participant (this could be either an individual or a group) to provide an environment in which experimentation and learning could occur.

Understanding and planning for resistance.

Resistance to change has been found to be present even in conditions where the change is consonant with the individual's goals and values (Oreg, 2003). The failure to address resistance has been identified and considered by many to be the main obstacle to organizational change achievement (Szabla, 2007). Szabla, as late as 2007, found the complexities and understanding of the phenomenon to remain inconsistently defined and incompletely studied. While specific strategies to address resistance to change are beyond the scope of this response, it is noted that leaders must anticipate and deal with resistive responses to change which, at some times, may appear to be totally illogical.

Thus, key areas of focus concerning initiation of change for the change leader would consist first of a reflection upon the leader's understanding of self and then an understanding of the nature of the task, the nature and climate of the organization, and the optimal role the change agent might take in leading the change. Second, the leader should focus on the message or vision statement that will disturb the status quo, provide a desire for a future state, and align the organization to move towards the new goal with minimized conflict. Third, the leader must consider steps to assure the organization is ready for change. Concomitant with all these initiation steps, a key task for the leader is to develop trust within the entire group of stakeholders in that the leader has the correct vision and that the leader can lead the organization towards that goal. A key aspect of this trust is the inculcation of the notion of safety for the participants to explore and test new concepts and skills as the organization changes. Trust also may be a significant factor for the leader to consider when acknowledging and planning for resistance to change. The concepts of leader member exchange discussed next may very well be a key tool to improve resistance to change efforts.

Leader Follower or Leader Member Exchange (LMX) Concepts

Gerstner and Day (1997), in a meta-analytic review of leader-member exchange theory, offered their description of LMX as being a focus on the dyadic relationship between a leader and a member which quality helps predict outcomes at the individual, group and organizational level. Their findings indicated a significant positive correlation between LMX and satisfaction with supervision, organizational commitment, and role clarity. They also noted significant negative correlation between LMX and intentions to quit. Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) tested a model of antecedents and consequences of LMX and perceived organizational support (POS). They defined LMX more specifically as the social exchanges entailing unspecified obligations between an employee and his or her leader. In their paper, the authors defined organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as behavior performing duties going beyond the employment contract. Their findings were that LMX was positively related to performance, OCB, and favor-doing that directly benefited leaders. Additionally, they noted the antecedents of LMX of leader's perceptions of liking and expectations to be positively related. Tierney (1999), in a survey study of 240 employees, found (a) employees experiencing a higher quality LMX relationship with their supervisor would perceive the climate as change-conducive, (b) employees experiencing a higher quality relationship with their team would perceive the climate as change conducive, and (c) employees working with a team which perceives the climate as change-conducive would also individually perceive the climate as change-conducive. The quality of LMX appears to have dimensionality in terms of liking (Boyd & Taylor, 1998; Lord, Brown, & Freiberg, 1999), procedural justice (Lord, Brown & Freiberg, 1999), and the matching of self-identities in terms of attitudes and values (Lord, Brown & Freiberg, 1999). Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999), in suggesting careful consideration be taken by leaders, noted leaders can have powerful, dynamic influence on subordinate self-concepts, the subordinate's perception of leadership and group. Conger (1999) found charismatic leadership was bestowed upon the leader by their followers based upon the perceptions of the leader's behavior. This formed a reciprocal process as it was found that the leader could directly affect the perceptions of the followers.

The literature suggests that with the power of the leader follower relationship, there are cautionary considerations. Clements and Washbush (1999) noted that certain personality dispositions nearing a pathological level can have serious implications for the follower leader relationship. Controlling dispositions can affect the relationship in both the leader role and the follower role in that the leader can take on autocratic roles while as a follower, the same disposition can result in the follower merely following orders and become deferential and resentful. Histrionic dispositions as well as passive-aggressive dispositions were also noted to cause a dysfunctional relationship. They noted that transformational leaders surrounded by followers with strong dependency needs could find it very difficult to get objective or realistic feedback even when actively seeking it. Another related issue is that the potential higher quality relationship offered by LMX is dependent upon both the leader's and member's desire to enter such a relationship (Tierney, 1999). This may result in groups of employees or individuals engaged in low-quality relationships with their supervisor with less understanding of the organization's support for change. These employees may be less inclined toward change. With the lack of a supervisor-employee relationship that can serve as a conduit for change climate perceptions, the organization will need to add additional means for communicating its support for change to these individuals. In such a situation, the influence of the work team on employee perceptions becomes even more paramount and the management of change messages becomes complex.

The Role of Effective Leader Follower Relationships in Change Strategies

As developed in this response, change can be viewed as having multidimensional continuums. One dimension supported by the literature is that of complexity. On the one end are mechanistic, simple changes of improvement while at the other end are changes described by terms of complex, chaotic, and radical - all with levels of unknown paths and goals. A second dimension would be that of reactivity. On the one end would be those changes that are either planned or proactive with the other end being defined as unplanned or reactive. A third dimension of change would be the change timeframe. At the one end would be gradual or continuous processes and at the other end, rapid, episodic and explosive change.

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The LMX model would appear to have significant contribution to enhance leadership efforts across almost all the spectrums of these dimensions. Properly managed, LMX provides for a more humanistic and individualized approach that is suggested necessary in situations of complex and or uncontrolled change. It can increase perceived participation on the cognitive level. It can increase the sense of commitment to the leader, the group and the vision. It can increase the quality of communication stemming from the enhanced development of justice, fairness and trust. LMX can be the glue to hold the organization in semi structure needed for continuous change. LMX can enhance trust and safety allowing for accelerated learning and exploration during a chaotic upheaval. LMX can build upon the increased conversation between the leader and follower in the mutual participative development and acceptance of vision and paths to achieve change. LMX may provide a new path to address resistance to change. LMX and the dyadic conversations where each informs the other would appear to contribute to all these goals.

As complexity and uncertainty increase in a change environment, it would seem appropriate to strive towards increased and truer communication, created by closer mutual understanding between both the leader and the member, augmented by trust and liking. The literature is incomplete supporting these suggestions. However, future research may find LMX to be a path out of the poor success experience of major change. This model is appealing both in a logical sense that it is supported by the literature and in an intuitive sense, in that researchers more and more suggest that it is people who ultimately change organizations (Carlopio, 1998) and that the role of the change agent is to align, motivate, and support these individuals in such a manner that both the leader’s and as well their followers’ perceptions, beliefs, and values combine to define and support a new culture that will sustain the desired change.

Conclusion

Given the times business organizations face, evidenced by the findings of scholars and researchers and casual inspection of the daily business news, companies will continue to face change of some type. Some scholars claim that change is continuing to increase in pace. It is not unreasonable to think that companies will face all three themes of change identified in this response: Incremental change addressed by fine tuning their practices for increased efficiency, Continuous change driven by rapidly changing technologies and radical change forced upon them by major environmental shifts, societal shifts, and disruptive technologies. The history of organizational change is rich with varied new theory and practice while it remains heavily affected by the seminal knowledge stemming from Lewin and others. But, the history of success in accomplishing major change is less than admirable. There appears to be a central theme of guiding best practice for change leadership that should be tempered by a contingency management approach. It would appear it does “all depend.” Today’s leader is well advised to look both to the contemporary findings on change management as well as to the past, and, using a strong dose of common sense, develop what will work for their unique circumstances.

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