Cultivating Leadership in an Organization

Understanding Authentic Leadership, Developing Followers, and Confronting Unconscious Bias

Dr. Mary Holsenbeck
Evolution of Leadership Styles

- Great Man Theory
- Trait Theory
- Situational Leadership
- Contingency Leadership
- Charismatic Leadership
- Transactional Leadership
- Transformational Leadership
- Authentic Leadership

Old style-follow the leader

New transformational
Transactional Leadership

- Also known as *managerial* leadership, focuses on *supervision, organization, and performance*
- Leaders promote compliance by followers through both *rewards* and *punishments* – stick and carrot
- Focused on *maintaining the status quo*
- Establish and standardize practices that will help the organization reach maturity, emphasizing *setting goals, efficiency of operation, and increase of productivity*
Transformational Leadership

- Focuses on exceeding organizational expectations
- A transformational leader has the following qualities:
  - empowers followers to do what is best for the organization
  - is a strong role model with high values
  - listens to all viewpoints to develop a spirit of cooperation
  - creates a vision, using people in the organization
  - acts as a change agent within the organization by setting an example of how to initiate and implement change
  - helps the organization by helping others contribute to the organization
Authentic Leadership
Bill George

- Authentic leaders:
  - have **insight** – they are visionaries
  - demonstrate **initiative** – they go first
  - exert **influence** – able to draw a following
  - have **impact** – able to create real and lasting change
  - exercise **integrity** – the foundation of authentic leadership
Competencies of Authentic Leaders

- Leaders must learn how to manage, motivate, inspire and lead by example
- Leaders should be stable, fixed, and reliable
- Most notable aspect of personal virtue is Mindset
- Align emotions with choice and its reason
- Continence - Ability to make the right choice under multiple circumstances with consistency and predictability
- Inspire creativity and initiative
- Leverage organizational learning
- Align purpose, processes, and people
- Create a link between intelligence, communication, and leadership style to develop a set of best practices for effective performance
Values-Based Leadership

- Ethical values in organizations are developed and strengthened primarily through values-based leadership.
- Values-based leadership is a relationship between leaders and followers that is based on shared, strongly internalized values that are advocated and acted upon by the leader.
- Leaders tie values to organizational goals.
- Personal ethics:
  - Employees learn about values from watching leaders.
  - Leaders demonstrate courage, determination, and self-sacrifice.
  - Leaders uphold their commitment to values during difficult times or crises.
Increasing Leadership Effectiveness

- Model the way
- Inspire a shared vision
- Challenge the process
- Enable others
- Be an encourager
Top Five Leadership Skills

- Motivation
  - Motivate through empowerment; deal with lack of motivation; tipping point of motivation
- Effective Communication
  - Hear what they mean, talk so they will listen; build a culture of open communication; establish and implement ground rules
- Conflict Management
  - Identify conflict that requires resolution, learn the art of negotiation, reframe conflict for collaborative resolution
- Team Building
  - Create diverse work groups; establish creativity and collaboration; deal with negative and positive participation behaviors, be aware of In- and Out-Groups
- Leading through Change
  - Clarify the vision – get buy-in from management; cooperation from the team; clear vision of outcomes; and, is the change necessary? Don’t waste time and money on a change that cannot work
The Language of EQ

- Cognition
- Mindfulness
- Introspection
- Collaboration
- Analysis
- Self control
- Resolution
- Motivation
- Resilience
- Inspiration
Develop Your People

If you are a leader, you need to be in the business of developing people.

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Three Essentials for Growth

- **Autonomy**
  - Equip them and let them go.
  - Allow them to learn from their mistakes.

- **Leverage their strengths**
  - A good leader understands both strengths and weaknesses of followers.
  - Put them in a position of leveraging their strengths.

- **Empowerment**
  - Empowerment through removing obstacles to success (poor communication, lack of training, micromanaging)
Five Principles of Adult Learning

- They understand why something is important to know or do.
- They have the freedom to learn in their own way.
- Learning is experiential.
- The time is right for them to learn.
- The process is positive and encouraging.
Unconscious Bias: A Stumbling Block in Effective Leadership
The Role of Unconscious Bias

What is unconscious bias?
• Deeply held set of beliefs that determine our attitude and behavior
• Based on the past
• Can be adopted through culture or influence of others

How does it manifest?
• Through closely knit relationships with others who are like us (group think)
• Results in favoritism, in- and out-groups, inaccurate perceptions
• Missed opportunities

Why is it important?
• Influences our decision-making
• Limits our perspective
• Increases organizational efficacy
Definition of terms

- A **stereotype** is an exaggerated belief, image or distorted truth about a person or group — a generalization that allows for little or no individual differences or social variation. Stereotypes are based on images in mass media, or reputations passed on by parents, peers and other members of society. Stereotypes can be positive or negative.

- A **prejudice** is an opinion, prejudgment or attitude about a group or its individual members. A prejudice can be positive, but in our usage refers to a negative attitude.
  - Prejudices are often accompanied by ignorance, fear or hatred. Prejudices are formed by a complex psychological process that begins with attachment to a close circle of acquaintances or an "in-group" such as a family. Prejudice is often aimed at "out-groups."

- **Discrimination** is behavior that treats people unequally because of their group memberships. Discriminatory behavior, ranging from slights to hate crimes, often begins with negative stereotypes and prejudices.
Where Bias Occurs

- Workplace
- Home/family dynamics
- Social settings
- Faith-based settings
- Socio-economic strata
- Ethnic groups
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Culture
- Age
Let’s Go Deeper

- What is truly unconscious:
  - Patterns and themes
  - Diversity in thinking, values, ethics
  - Introverts vs. extroverts
  - Reflective and Automatic thoughts
  - Cognitive dissonance
  - Personality types
  - How we feel about people, beliefs, and behaviors that differ from us
Cognitive dissonance is anxiety that results from simultaneously holding contradictory or otherwise incompatible attitudes, beliefs, or the like, as when one likes a person but disapproves strongly of one of his or her habits.

Automatic thoughts are immediate, first, quick thoughts that go through our mind in response to a situation. They link two beliefs together that trigger assumptions and opinions based on non-empirical evidence.
Reflective thinking is a series of logical rational steps based on the scientific method of defining, analyzing, and solving a problem.

In her book “Quiet”, Susan Cain posits that introverts are thought to be less capable of leadership, can be pushovers, and society is structured to reward extroverts.
Characteristics of implicit bias:

- Implicit biases are **pervasive and robust**. Everyone possesses them, even people with avowed commitments to impartiality such as judges.
- Implicit and explicit biases are generally regarded as related but **distinct mental constructs**. They are not mutually exclusive and may even reinforce each other. Some research suggests that implicit attitudes may be better at predicting and/or influencing behavior than self-reported explicit attitudes. Moreover, some scholars suggest that implicit and explicit attitudes should be considered in conjunction in order to understand prejudice-related responses.
- The implicit associations we hold **arise outside of conscious awareness**; therefore, they do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
- We generally tend to hold implicit biases that **favor our own in-group**, though research has shown that we can still hold implicit biases against our in-group. This categorization (in-group vs. out-group) is often automatic and unconscious.
- Implicit biases have **real-world effects on behavior**.
- Implicit biases are malleable; therefore, the implicit associations that we have formed **can be gradually unlearned and replaced** with new mental associations.
Further Clarification

- Scientific research has demonstrated that biases thought to be absent or extinguished remain as "mental residue" in most of us. Studies show people can be consciously committed to egalitarianism, and deliberately work to behave without prejudice, yet still possess hidden negative prejudices or stereotypes.

- A growing number of studies show a link between hidden biases and actual behavior. In other words, hidden biases can reveal themselves in action, especially when a person's efforts to control behavior consciously flags under stress, distraction, relaxation or competition.

- Unconscious beliefs and attitudes have been found to be associated with language and certain behaviors such as eye contact, blinking rates and smiles.

- Studies have found, for example, that school teachers clearly telegraph prejudices, so much so that some researchers believe children of color and white children in the same classroom effectively receive different educations.

- A now classic experiment showed that white interviewers sat farther away from black applicants than from white applicants, made more speech errors and ended the interviews 25% sooner. Such discrimination has been shown to diminish the performance of anyone treated that way, whether black or white.

- Experiments are being conducted to determine whether a strong hidden bias in someone results in more discriminatory behavior. But we can learn something from even the first studies:
  - Those who showed greater levels of implicit prejudice toward, or stereotypes of, black or gay people were more unfriendly toward them.
  - Subjects who had a stronger hidden race bias had more activity in a part of the brain known to be responsible for emotional learning when shown black faces than when shown white faces.
Genesis and Progression of Bias

- **How do we learn prejudice?**
  Social scientists believe children begin to acquire prejudices and stereotypes as toddlers. Many studies have shown that as early as age 3, children pick up terms of racial prejudice without really understanding their significance.
  - Soon, they begin to form attachments to their own group and develop negative attitudes about other racial or ethnic groups, or the "out-group". Early in life, most children acquire a full set of biases that can be observed in verbal slurs, ethnic jokes and acts of discrimination.

- **How are our biases reinforced?**
  Once learned, stereotypes and prejudices resist change, even when evidence fails to support them or points to the contrary.
  - People will embrace anecdotes that reinforce their biases, but disregard experience that contradicts them. The statement "Some of my best friends are _____" captures this tendency to allow some exceptions without changing our bias.

- **How do we perpetuate bias?**
  Bias is perpetuated by conformity with in-group attitudes and socialization by the culture at large. The fact that white culture is dominant in America may explain why people of color often do not show a strong bias favoring their own ethnic group.
  - Mass media routinely take advantage of stereotypes as shorthand to paint a mood, scene or character. The elderly, for example, are routinely portrayed as being frail and forgetful, while younger people are often shown as vibrant and able.
  - Stereotypes can also be conveyed by omission in popular culture, as when TV shows present an all-white world. Psychologists theorize bias conveyed by the media helps to explain why children can adopt hidden prejudices even when their family environments explicitly oppose them.
Early Learned Behavior

- The first step may be to admit biases are learned early and are counter to our commitment to just treatment. Parents, teachers, faith leaders and other community leaders can help children question their values and beliefs and point out subtle stereotypes used by peers and in the media. Children should also be surrounded by cues that equality matters.

- In his classic book, *The Nature of Prejudice*, the psychologist Gordon Allport observed children are more likely to grow up tolerant if they live in a home that is supportive and loving. "They feel welcome, accepted, loved, no matter what they do."

- In such an environment, different views are welcomed, punishment is not harsh or capricious, and these children generally think of people positively and carry a sense of goodwill and even affection.
Break Down the Barriers

- Reduce “group think” or “in-group” mentality by expecting:
  - Every member of your team to treat each other with respect
  - Every member of your team to contribute to the best of his or her ability
  - Every member of your team to value the differences among them
  - Yourself to see each team member as a unique individual with much to contribute to everyone’s success

The Diversity of Inclusion Handbook
Sondra Thiederman, 2012
Tips for Controlling Unconscious Bias

Consciously Overcoming Unconscious Bias encourages participants to think about that, and to take small steps—micro-affirmations—toward a happier, healthier workplace by Listening, Including, Valuing, and Engaging, or L-I-V-E to meet challenges.

- Start with introspection – be honest with yourself
- Seek opportunities to act counter to your bias – look for patterns
- Observe biases in others
- Evaluate the most equitable solutions
- Seek opinions of others to reveal hidden biases within yourself – ask for feedback
Connecting the Dots

- Leadership thrives when the leader is authentic and leads according to ethical values
- Leaders with high EQ have a better chance of ensuring inclusion and diversity
- Unconscious or implicit bias can be uncovered and replaced to afford more opportunities for all
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