

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEES

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Abstract: *The leadership style and the thereof oriented behavior pattern represents the basic attitude in which a person exercises its leadership tasks. There are a series of different leadership styles with numerous explanation attempts aiming to present a model for a successful leadership behavior. The worldwide trend leads in the direction of Management by Delegation with clear operating principles which is nowadays the central point of all general interests concerning this topic but a thorough documentation regarding the different leadership styles is the starting point for each manager when trying to build a good relation with the employees. A well-defined and applied leadership style will influence the working behavior of the employees and in turns lead to a better functioning of the whole organization. The knowledge-based organization needs to be up to date with both the oldest and the newest theories concerning leadership so it can create a working relationship with its employees. The present paper aims to present the main aspects concerning leadership, leadership styles and concepts in order to find the best way of creating a successful relationship between leadership and employees by strengthening the individual responsibility of each employee and hence improving the functioning of an organization.*

Keywords: leadership, leadership style, employee, manager

1. Introduction

The democratic social order supposes the independent thinking and responsible individual. The most important area of life where each of these individuals can develop and perform their ability is the job. If one is not permitted to act on one's own authority, than it can also not be expected from him to make responsible decisions in the areas where he acts as a citizen. The basic right to free development of the personality must, according to the prevailing rights, not only be respected but also actively encouraged. This is part of the human dignity which in turns ensures the general human freedom of action. Within the working relationship, the basic right to free self-development and human dignity has immediate application for the employer, the working committee as also for each superior so it can protect the

employee from any authoritarian managerial power which does not grant the freedom to self-development. Also, each individual superior from an organization is linked in view of his leadership style, to the basic rights. If he, as a middle manager for example, fulfills the function of a main manager than he can develop his own personality and thus, he can exert his own expert and leadership knowledge. Each individual manager should consider the development of his employee's personality and should not be allowed to treat them as an object of his own discretionary power. Thereof, who wants to bring forward the basic right to free self-development within the working life must respect the employee's freedom to develop. As already mentioned, the importance of self-development is based mainly on its tight

connection to the constitutional principle of human dignity. Given that an authoritarian and autocratic leadership style interferes with the human dignity, leadership problems nowadays are solved through the fundamental law. The human dignity is disturbed when the individual is demeaned to an object, to a bare means. Terms like „Internal dismissal” and “Mobbing” are meanwhile becoming standard concepts in the economy and administration. These mainly represent a growing misguided development in the relation between the executive managers and employees, putting therefore pressure on our society. Another element important for the leadership style is the responsibility. The individual is hold responsible, as mentioned in the first entry of the constitutional law, “before God and other people” and this responsibility, which supposes a natural freedom of decision is a “typical human trait”. Only if the individual is as free as possible when it comes to the decision-making process, than he can be hold accountable. Inversely, the individual assumes gladly the responsibility if he can make decisions freely. Strengthening and developing the responsibility of the individual is an overriding managerial function.

2. Staff management and leadership styles

It is very difficult to have a clear image regarding leadership, responsibility and behavior towards staff in all situations. Hence, a prevailing topic is to find the best way to manage staff. In some cases, the managers are advised to impress their staff through enthusiasms and in other cases it is advised to use hard-line assertiveness. A general accepted approach concerning leadership has not been yet enforced. This is also linked to the fact that leadership is strongly connected to different world-views. Considering that, there is also a different approach to leadership and leadership style within the same culture, the problem becomes more complex when it

comes to cross-cultural leadership situations. For example, during a German and French merger, there have been several projects groups. When they first met, the German employees prepared the meeting very thorough: they prepared proposals, formulated list if questions and detailed presentations. They wanted to make quick common agreed decisions. For the French employees, the first meeting was of the same importance. They were excited to exchange and develop ideas with their future German colleagues. They didn’t have concrete ideas but wanted first to meet their new colleagues. This type of misunderstandings are often resulted during the collaboration of different cultural groups without having information about the different cultural background. The results produce, on one side, a slowing in the integration process and on the other side frustration among the participants. Especially during a merger between organizations from different countries the whole integration process can be influenced negatively due to this cultural differences. So, in the example given above, the German representatives asked themselves if their future partners are reliable and the French representatives interpreted the German approach as provocative, imposing authority.

Another example is that of a German line manager in Spain which demands from his Spanish colleagues to make proposals and give him advice, or critic. This approach is perceived as being strange because it contradicts the Spanish view of the “omnipotent leader” who makes decisions alone. The request to involvement is perceived mainly as a weakness in his leadership style.

Americans tend to ask their partners to address themselves on first name bases, which is not well perceived in countries like Germany. Here, the first name bases is used for personal relationships and friendships. American though, see the addressing on first name bases as a form of

acknowledging equality and appreciation and this form of addressing does not question any hierarchy or competencies.

2.1. Types of leadership styles

Traditionally we distinguish the following leadership styles:

- **Patriarchal leadership style**

Considers the transfer of the traditional father figure from a family within an organization. Characteristic is the unrestricted claim to power on one side (so authoritarian) and the obligation to provide welfare for the staff. This type of managers can receive, based on their personality, great appraisals from their employees and in general can impose directions without receiving resistance.

- **The charismatic leadership style**

The charismatic manager builds his claim to power on special characteristics. Along unrestricted claims of power he also demands from his staff the readiness to make sacrifices. In turns, he offers a certain “state of salvation”. Research regarding charismatic managers also talks about the difference between “ethical” and “unethical” charisma [1].

- **Passive leadership style**

This type of leadership is due to the lack of actual managing staff not necessary a leadership style. The manager renounces his involvement and has no social relationship with his employees. This leadership style is also known as “laissez-faire- style”. Most organizations discard this passive style.

- **The authoritarian leadership style**

This leadership style is mainly based on the disciplinary authority of the superior. Its origin lies in the military organization of the Prussian administration. Nowadays it is used mainly in borderline situations, for example in situations where an organization can have serious damage. Still the authoritarian management style exists in practice. Within many medium-sized enterprises it is characterized by a strong centralization of the decision-making authority and by extensive exclusion of the employee from the policy-forming process.

The authoritarian leader delegates work but not responsibility. The information flow is primary bottom up and in reverse direction there is only a minimum information flow. In addition, there is also a wide disciplinary authority of the superior and a strict control. An authoritarian manager insists on his formal position and appeals to a strict view regarding the service and the responsibility of its employees. He considers position and tasks and is guided by the idea of rank and prestige. Also, this type of managers deny initiative and critical thinking because he perceives it as an attack to his own authority. Authoritarian personalities are strongly characterized by an authority-based thinking and are reluctant to delegating power and responsibility.

- **Craft master style**

This special style highlighted by Höhn [2] of the authoritarian and patriarchal management style relies on the management style in the craft area: the management in this field is based upon the absolutistic-patriarchal principle. Here, the craft master acts like a sovereign Patriarch in his domain. This approach is strengthened through the professional superiority towards the subordinates: the nature of a craft master supposes that he knows and can do more than his apprentice. The most interesting part of this approach is the comparison with current superiors from the top levels of a hierarchy. Here, there still are managers with the ambition to interfere in the lower level of the hierarchy as if they (similar to the craft master) know more and can do better than the others. The increasing number of organisations, the constant development of technic through division of work and specialization have led to a breach in this management principle and the main criteria of the superior is no longer that of surpassing its employees through technical knowledge but to demonstrate its suitability through his capability to enforce the knowledge of its employees or working group within the organization.

- Cooperative management style

This particular style of management acts on the assumption that teamwork and acting together is the main thing that enables the success of an organization. Here, the main position is not taken by Upper Management but by the tasks that need to be accomplished.

- Delegating leadership style

On the decision-making level the decision content of relevant cooperation, respectively within the extensive self-reliance is established and above all implemented. For the delegating leadership style distinctive similarity of the decision-making and partly also during the implementation within the team, is clearly less developed, hence there should exist common decision activities executed in a categorical, scheduled and systematic manner. The same is applied, according to Wunderer [3], on the personal level. Given that within the delegating management style the alternating interaction is lower than that of the cooperative style, there should exist a categorical, positive prosocial relation between the participants. Of importance is the high level of trust on the part of the delegating power in the competencies, readiness to take responsibility, loyalty and motivation towards the tasks of the employees. The limited or in many cases absent control over the actions must be replaced by a high self-control of the delegate as also through control over the results from the delegating power. A low alternating interaction reduces in general the percentage of interactive leadership.

3. Leadership concepts

3.1. One dimensional and two-dimensional leadership concept

In view of the elements of each particular management situation (manager, managed staff, task) we can differentiate, in general, two different management situations: completion of the task and the approach towards the needs and expectations of the employees.

Taylor [4], founder of the organizational operation management and “father of the work science”, had a very materialistic-mechanistic perspective. He acknowledged as an only motivational factor, the desire to earn money. He developed the piece-rate model and the rewarding performance model as a factor of stimulation. He also performed time and motion studies and rationalized human and technical motion sequences. The main objective was the enhancement of production and increase of productivity. Decades later, the American Mayo [5] “discovered” the working person as a social being and concluded that financial stimulation and good working conditions are not the only factors that can motivate employees to increase performance. During analysis (the Hawthorne Study) it was established that the performance of employees is influenced by their surroundings and by the people that they are working with as much as by their own innate abilities, and these factors override the financial stimulation. Mayo concentrated his study on the interpersonal relationship at work and was thus considered the founder of the „Human-Relations-Movement”, which finally failed in the 50s of the last century because it degenerated into a simple „be nice to each other”. However, it was the generator of the understanding that the main problem of each organization is to create an effective organisation and to satisfy the employees.

3.2. The managerial grid

Trying to integrate both views, Taylor and Mayo, Blake and Mouton [6] developed based on these two concepts, the Grid Modell or Managerial Grid, where horizontally is the concern for results and vertically the concern for people. The optimal style would be a mixture between a strong orientations towards staff as also towards achieving the goals. From combining these two dimensions, 5 different types of leadership styles occur. Blake and Moutons approach was widely popular because it was formulated clear and

explicit. As a hands-on application we can name the “managing through goals”: if the individual goals of an employee can be connected to the goals of the organization, then the employee will do his best to achieve them, the result being the high performance.

3.3. Situational leadership model

The situational leadership is an approach which presents the different types of influences which act on management. The main idea is that different situations and factors require different leadership styles and behaviour. The managing process depends on three different criteria: the industry/department, the situation of the organization, the “maturity level” of the employee. If you for example activate in the construction industry, where production is the most important aspect, then it is more required to use an authoritarian, assigning leadership style. Building plans must be implemented, therefore it would be impossible to renegotiate and discuss each building phase. In Research and Development departments and within a creative team, management must grant the employees a certain type of freedom. In this case the emphasis lies on creating an environment for exchanging ideas and brainstorming. In creative organizations, for example, in advertising agency, it is always put up for discussion, how much freedom must be awarded to creative people, therefore, one of the questions that always arises is whether the creative period must be connected to the core working hours and whether the so called “relaxation rooms” with computer games and other relaxing activities should only be used during the breaks. On the other hand, if the organization is in a crisis, quick and sometimes unpopular decisions must be made, therefore it makes no sense to discuss the necessary actions within different committees. In contrast is a participation of the employees during a growing phase of great advantage, because it creates the necessary timeframe to get

information regarding different proposals and also to implement them together. Last in situational leadership, the practical leadership style depends above all, on the employee’s “maturity”. The “maturity level” or “disposition” is defined as the employee’s ability to take responsibility, to manage its own behaviour. It is distinguished between “task maturity” (qualifications, knowledge and experience) and “emotional maturity” (determination for performance, self-confidence, readiness to take responsibility). There are different maturity levels [7]: M1- where the employee lacks both maturity components; M2- “emotional maturity” exceeds lack of “task maturity”; M3- “task maturity” exceeds lack of “emotional maturity”; M4- possesses both maturity levels. In order to use an adequate leadership style, a manager is required to evaluate the maturity development level, which in turns requires an analysis of the task-related and social eligibility of the employees.

3.4. Value-oriented leadership

The value-oriented leadership, also known as transformational leadership, relies on the orientation towards meaning and seeks to answer the “Why” of the actions. It is concentrated on the classic interpretation of the task-oriented actions and contains two main factors: Contingent Reward and Management by Exception. The led participant is concerned with executing his work according to the requirements of his manager and gets in return the desirable reward. When giving the reward, the manager is oriented toward the necessities and preference of the led participant. He interferes only if the results are not satisfactory or on request of the employee (Management by Exception).

3.5. The charisma dilemma

The charismatic leadership style is also part of the acknowledged leadership styles. The term “charismatic leadership” is mistrusted, mainly because charisma (wrongly) suggests a native leadership skill. Thus, many studies [8] proved that charismatic

leadership has a positive effect on building confidence and performance motivation as also on the value convergence and emotional connection to the organization. Stahl [1] considered that charismatic leadership produces not only an identification with the management goals but also a deferment of individual needs and personal dedication. One of the best documented study in 60 countries (Global Leadership also Organizational Effectiveness) shows that charismatic leadership stands even before other ideal expectation such as “team oriented” or “participation”.

4. Conclusions

The democratic social order with the supreme constitutional principle of human dignity influences the choice of each leadership style. The development of personal responsibility and mutual trust is the overriding task of all managers.

The leadership style and thus oriented behavioural pattern is the bases in which every manager perceives his responsibility

towards task solution. There are different leadership styles with a wide range of explanations attempts that aim to find the most successful management behaviour. Though the delegated leadership style is still today the main focus of the general interest. A special study should be awarded to the one and two dimensional leadership concept, the managerial grid as well as also the situational and the value-oriented leadership concept. The leadership style influences greatly if besides the superior, the employees can also play an active role in the decision-making process and how this can be performed. A lot of managers have not yet learned to cope with all the challenges that come with their leadership position. Hence, they sometimes act unstructured and intuitive and in most cases without trusting the capabilities of their employees. Therefore it is of outmost importance to have a solid theoretical background in order to be able to adapt to different situations and different personalities.

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