Leadership
Understanding the Dynamics of Power and Influence in Organizations

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Editor

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Preface

Employees in both large and small organizations are experiencing tremendous personal and professional pressures which are a product of the changing context in which organizations operate today. Chief among these changes are growing globalization, down-sizing of organizations, the introduction of participative work-team structures, increasing diversity in the work force, and greater legal constraints. In order to cope with these forces, supervisors and administrators need a deeper understanding of how to marshal and manage human resources.

In response to these challenges, leadership training is frequently cited as an area warranting greater investment. Today, more and more universities are offering leadership classes—often as electives within colleges of business administration or departments of psychology and sociology. Leadership courses are also found in continuing education programs, such as those in executive development and management training. Despite growing recognition of this area within the curriculum, there is still a shortage of strong (i.e., academically grounded) college-level texts in this area. Leadership, an anthology of key writings by renowned contributors, is designed to meet the need for a text that encompasses the major theories in the field. Materials have been selected from journals and periodicals widely recognized for publishing in the areas of general management and leadership.

This book is aimed at upper-level undergraduate and graduate-level students in leadership and management, and would be appropriate for executive MBA courses. Portions of the text may also be useful for continuing education training programs of short duration (one to three days), with a reliance on assigned readings for participants. Departments of psychology, political science, sociology, public administration, nursing, safety, and education will also find it relevant. By going beyond a general introduction, Leadership fills a need at the university level for a text on leadership with an academic, critical focus which is rich with high quality writing and innovative, yet practical, material.

Leadership is divided into six sections. Part I provides an overview of the subject with readings that examine what leaders actually do, as well as the many myths surrounding the notion of leadership. Part II focuses on the fundamentals of leadership by taking a close look at the specific tactics people use to get their own way. These readings analyze the political games people play and the two-way nature of leader-subordinate influence. Part
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III considers problems that can arise from leadership gone wrong—when power and influence are abused. The major, formal models of leadership that have been offered over the years are reviewed in Part IV. These articles include newer variations of the leadership-trait model, as well as behavioral and situational views. Part V looks at contemporary views of leadership, emphasizing reliance on maturity of subordinates for success. This area includes leadership in the context of self-directed work teams, entrepreneurial leadership, the notion of the leader as servant, and examples of leaders who are recognized for having empowered others or for providing moral leadership. The final section, Part VI, overviews the roles of societal and organizational cultures as they pertain to leadership. This section also considers gender issues that relate to managerial roles, as well as the problems inherent in situations where extreme emotions are present in the workplace.

Each of the six sections opens with a selection of interesting quotes on leadership. These quotes are drawn from a variety of business, popular, historical, and academic sources. They are intended to raise issues that are of relevance to the theme of each section, and may help serve as discussion starters.

In this second edition of Leadership, the selection of articles has been updated where appropriate, while popular classic materials have been retained. As before, there is a mix of scholarly and managerial writings.

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PART I

Introduction and Overview

By working faithfully eight hours a day, you may eventually get to be a boss and work twelve hours a day.

Robert Frost

Management is the art of getting other people to do all the work.

Anonymous

It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get back up.

Vince Lombardi

If I were truly lucky, I wouldn't have this job.

Ronald Reagan

Boy, the things I do for England.

Prince Charles (on sampling snake meat)

Leadership is always a fascinating topic. Although the subject goes in and out of vogue, it never ceases to draw the attention of both academic and business audiences. Perhaps this fascination stems from our admiration of the ability of others to reach their goals and to be influential, or out of our desire to be more effective in obtaining desired results ourselves. Academic areas that consider leadership to be a topic within their domain include business, politics, communication, sociology, and psychology. This breadth of interest reveals the allure of leadership. In this volume, we will examine a number of perennial questions. For example, is leadership a reality or is it merely a social construction that observers attribute to perceived and interpreted events? Does leadership make a difference in a group’s performance, or is the actual outcome more powerfully determined by the interaction of members and the force of contextual dynamics?

Part of our interest in leadership derives from our expectation that people who are nominal heads (such as managers and administrators)
should display leadership. In addition, we are concerned with our own abilities to successfully project strong leadership qualities over and above mere administrative competence. Individual interest in social dominance predates recorded history; however, only in the past century has serious attention been devoted to the study of leadership as a social phenomenon.

The first section opens with Bernard Bass’s consideration of the origins of leadership concepts, from the most primitive to contemporary definitions of the construct. Professor Bass looks at various theories of leadership, and the questions which they raise and attempt to answer. Next, John Kotter of Harvard University examines the differences between management and leadership, and suggests that most organizations are overmanaged but underled. Henry Mintzberg, in a classic discussion of the manager’s job, distinguishes between the folklore of a manager’s presumed activities and the factual reality of a fragmented, reactive set of activities. Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas then explore the role of adversity in the development of leaders. Finally, Robert Vecchio considers whether (and, if so, to what extent) leadership can be taught.
Concepts of Leadership

Bernard M. Bass

Leadership is one of the world’s oldest preoccupations. The understanding of leadership has figured strongly in the quest for knowledge. Purposeful stories have been told through the generations about leaders’ competencies, ambitions, and shortcomings; leaders’ rights and privileges; and the leaders’ duties and obligations.

THE BEGINNINGS

Leaders as prophets, priests, chiefs, and kings served as symbols, representatives, and models for their people in the Old and New Testaments, in the Upanishads, in the Greek and Latin classics, and in the Icelandic sagas. In the Iliad, higher, transcendental goals are emphasized: “He serves me most, who serves his country best” (Book X, line 201). The Odyssey advises leaders to maintain their social distance: “The leader, mingling with the vulgar host, is in the common mass of matter lost” (Book III, line 297). The subject of leadership was not limited to the classics of Western literature. It was of as much interest to Asoka and Confucius as to Plato and Aristotle.

Myths and legends about great leaders were important in the development of civilized societies. Stories about the exploits of individual heroes (and occasionally heroines) are central to the Babylonian Gilgamesh, Beowulf, the Chanson de Roland, the Icelandic sagas, and the Ramayana (now they would be called cases). All societies have created myths to provide plausible and acceptable explanations for the dominance of their leaders and the submission of their subordinates (Paige, 1977). The greater the socioeconomic injustice in the society, the more distorted the realities of leadership—its powers, morality and effectiveness—in the mythology.

The study of leadership rivals in age the emergence of civilization, which shaped its leaders as much as it was shaped by them. From its infancy, the study of history has been the study of leaders—what they did and why they did it. Over the centuries, the effort to formulate principles of leadership spread from the study of history and the philosophy associated with it to all
the developing social sciences. In modern psychohistory, there is still a search for generalizations about leadership, built on the in-depth analysis of the development, motivation, and competencies of world leaders, living and dead.

In 2300 B.C. in the Instruction of Ptahhotep, three qualities were attributed to the Pharaoh. “Authoritative utterness is in thy mouth, perception is in thy heart, and thy tongue is the shrine of justice” (Lichtheim, 1973). The Chinese classics, written as early as the sixth century B.C., are filled with hortatory advice to the country’s leaders about their responsibilities to the people. Confucius urged leaders to set a moral example and to manipulate rewards and punishments for teaching what was right and good. Taoism emphasized the need for the leader to work himself out of his job by making the people believe that successes were due to their efforts.

Greek concepts of leadership were exemplified by the heroes in Homer’s Iliad. Ajax symbolized inspirational leadership and law and order. Other qualities that the Greeks admired and thought were needed (and sometimes wanting) in heroic leaders were (1) justice and judgment (Agamemnon), (2) wisdom and counsel (Nestor), (3) shrewdness and cunning (Odysseus), and (4) valor and activism (Achilles) (see Sarachek, 1968). (Shrewdness and cunning are not regarded as highly in contemporary society as they once were.) Later, Greek philosophers, such as Plato in the Republic, looked at the requirements for the ideal leader of the ideal state (the philosopher king). The leader was to be the most important element of good government, educated to rule with order and reason. In Politics, Aristotle was disturbed by the lack of virtue among those who wanted to be leaders. He pointed to the need to educate youths for such leadership. Plutarch, although he was involved with prosocial ideals about leadership, compared the traits and behavior of actual Greek and Roman leaders to support his point of view in The Parallel Lives (Kellerman, 1987).

A scholarly highlight of the Renaissance was Machiavelli’s (1513/1962) The Prince. Machiavelli’s thesis that “there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things” is still a germane description of the risks of leadership and the resistance to it. Machiavelli was the ultimate pragmatist. He believed that leaders needed steadiness, firmness, and concern for the maintenance of authority, power, and order in government. It was best if these objectives could be accomplished by gaining the esteem of the populace, but if they could not, then craft, deceit, threat, treachery, and violence were required (Kellerman, 1987). Machi-
avelli is still widely quoted as a guide to an effective leadership of sorts, which was the basis for a modern line of investigation with the Mach scale (Christie & Geis, 1970). A 1987 survey of 117 college presidents reported that they still found The Prince highly relevant.

In the same way, a fundamental principle at West Point today can be traced back to Hegel’s (1830/1971) Philosophy of Mind which argued that by first serving as a follower, a leader subsequently can best understand his followers. Hegel thought that this understanding is a paramount requirement for effective leadership.

Universality

Leadership is a universal phenomenon in humans and in many species of animals.

Animal Origins

Leadership predates the emergence of humankind. Allee (1945, 1949, 1951) maintained that all vertebrates that live in groups exhibit social organization and leadership. High-ranking males feed more freely than do other members of the group and tend to have more ready access to females. In some cases, high status involves guard duty and protection of the herd.

Pecking Order

Individual animals dominate or submit their local spaces to others in the well-known pecking order. In one of the early experiments on animal social relations, Murchison (1935) placed roosters at opposite ends of a narrow runway and measured the distance that each advanced toward the other. As a result of successive pairings, he was able to determine a strict hierarchy of dominance. Rooster A invariably dominated all the remaining subjects. At the bottom of the hierarchy was the rooster who yielded to all the others.

Douglis (1948) removed hens from their home flocks and placed them in other flocks for short periods. The hen’s pecking order in each flock was observed. It was found that a hen can become an assimilated member in at least five different flocks and have a different status in each. The hen can recognize and react to the status or esteem of as many as 27 individuals. Highly dominant hens become assimilated within three days, but hens that
were not dominant required three to six weeks to become assimilated. Once established, a hierarchy tended to maintain itself.

**Dominance Effects in Primates**

Miller and Murphy (1956) and Warren and Maroney (1969) tested pairs of monkeys who were competing for food in an area and observed strict dominance hierarchies. Subordinate animals were more successful in obtaining low-preference, rather than middle- or high-preference, foods. Bernstein (1964) noted that when the dominant male was removed from a group of monkeys, the activities of other males increased. After the dominant male returned, he resumed his dominant status and the activities of other males decreased.

Carpenter (1963) studied societies of monkeys and apes. His general findings suggested that the leader tended to control the group’s movement in its search for food and shelter, regulate intragroup status, defend the group, and maintain its integrity in its contacts with other organized groupings. When the dominant male was removed from the group, the territory covered by the group was markedly reduced. Thus, the leader enlarged the freedom of the group’s movement. But the dominant male tended to be avoided by low-ranking males. In some bands, the one or two males that were next in rank stood by the leader to ward off intruders and were permitted to groom him on occasion.

Again, Mason (1964) reported that leaders among groups of monkeys and apes appeared to have the primary function of initiating progressions and determining the line of march. The dominant males quelled intragroup fights, protected the females and young, were attractive to all members, were sought out by females, and influenced the size of the group’s territorial range.

Zajonc (1969) interpreted the fact that fighting disappears almost entirely in primate groups after a hierarchy of dominance has been established as evidence that such groups develop norms. The norms are learned by group members, are stable but can be changed, and are complied with by the majority of members. Koford (1963) observed that the relative dominance of two bands of monkeys that meet at an eating place is usually determined by the relative dominance of the leaders of the bands. Once the dominance of a band has been established, it is observed by the other group, even in the absence of the other leader. Experimentation and observation in natural settings suggest that groups of animals develop strongly
differentiated status hierarchies that their members recognize and observe. In primate groups, leaders obtain privileges that tend to bolster their dominance. Their presence is an advantage to the group in gaining possession of a desired territory and in expanding the area of free movement for the group. However, whether these findings and similar results reported for packs of wolves and hyenas, elephant matriarchies, bands of gorillas, and pods of whales are relevant to understanding the human condition remains controversial.

Humans

Parenthood, a condition that unarguably cuts across cultural lines, makes for ready-made patterns of leadership. Nevertheless, the patterns of behavior that are regarded as acceptable in leaders differ from time to time and from one culture to another. Citing various anthropological reports on primitive groups in Australia, Fiji, New Guinea, the Congo, and elsewhere, H. L. Smith and Krueger (1933) concluded that leadership occurs among all people, regardless of culture, be they isolated Indian villagers, nomads of the Eurasian steppes, or Polynesian fisherfolk. Lewis (1974) concluded, from a more recent anthropological review, that even when a society does not have institutionalized chiefs, rules, or elected officials, there are always leaders who initiate action and play central roles in the group’s decision making. No societies are known that do not have leadership in some aspects of their social life, although many may lack a single overall leader to make and enforce decisions.

Leaders, such as Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, and the Macabees, were singled out in the Old Testament for a detailed exposition of their behavior and relations with God and their people. God was the supreme leader of his Chosen People who clarified, instructed, and directed what was to be done through the words of his Prophets and arranged for rewards for compliance and punishment for disobedience to the laws and rules He had handed down to Moses. In Islam, the ideal caliphate leadership was based on religious law (Rabi, 1967).

In The Parallel Lives, Plutarch (1932), in about A.D. 100, tried to show the similarities between 50 Greek and Roman leaders. Latin authors, such as Caesar, Cicero, and Seneca to name just a few, wrote extensively on the subject of leadership and administration. Their influence was considerable on the medieval and Renaissance periods, which looked back to the classics for guidance. Their influence on Thomas Jefferson and James Madison has
an impact on the design of the U.S. government as we know it, as did such Renaissance scholars as Montesquieu in his *The Spirit of Laws* (1748).

Military writings about leadership stretch from the Chinese classics to the present. Napoleon listed 115 qualities that are essentials for a military leader. Meyer (1980) called for a renaissance in the concern for military leadership, in contrast to the focus on the “over-management” of logistics. Resources must be managed by the military leader but are no substitute for effective leadership.

The Importance of Leaders and Leadership

Napoleon expressed his feelings about the importance of leadership in his quip that he would rather have an army of rabbits led by a lion than an army of lions led by a rabbit. Surveys of job satisfaction from the 1920s onward illustrated the importance of leadership. They uniformly reported that employees’ favorable attitudes toward their supervisors contributed to the employees’ satisfaction. In turn, employees’ favorable attitudes toward their supervisors were usually found to be related to the productivity of the work group (see, for example, Lawshe & Nagle, 1953). Since then, countless surveys can be cited to support the contention that leaders make a difference in their subordinates’ satisfaction and performance. Leaders also can make the difference in whether their organizations succeed or fail.

The usual efforts to estimate the number of leaders in the United States use census data on proprietors and officials. But Gardner (1988) noted that although owners, managers, and officials are in the position to do so, they do not necessarily act as leaders. Cleveland (1985) estimated the number of opinion leaders in the United States and how they grew in number between 1955 and 1985. In 1955, he estimated that there were 555,000 opinion leaders, whereas in 1971, he guessed that at least 1 million Americans could be classified as opinion leaders. He considered seven out of ten public executives to be opinion leaders—policymakers in public, philanthropic, voluntary, and large-scale “private” enterprises—in 1971. By 1985 he estimated the number to have multiplied to 1 out of every 200 Americans.

As Cleveland (1985, p. 4) stated: There are some 83,000 government units in the United States, and about 175,000 corporations each doing more than $1 million worth of business a year. The galloping rate of growth of

1. Bergen (1939), Houser (1927), Kornhauser and Sharp (1932), and Viteles (1953).
complexity means that a growth curve of the requirement for leaders (if anyone were clever enough to construct such an index) would show a steeper climb than any other growth rate in our political economy.

Is Leadership a Figment of the Imagination?

Some critics argue that all the effects of leadership are in the eyes of their beholders. Followers attribute effects that are due to historical, economic, or social forces to leadership, as in romantic fiction (Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987; Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). Other critics, such as Pandey (1976), regard leadership as a useless concept for understanding social influence. For Calder (1977), the objective contributions of the “leader” to outcomes may be more interesting than true. The extreme position taken by some attribution theorists is that organizational outcomes are determined primarily by other factors, but leaders are credited with what happened after the fact.

Organizational leaders who are perceived to be exerting leadership on organizational performance are merely the subjects of misperceptions, some critics contend. That is, organizational outcomes are objectively determined by environmental and organizational factors in which leadership, at best, can play only a minor role. For instance, M. C. Brown (1982, p. 1) concluded that “once other factors influencing effectiveness are accounted for, it is likely that leadership will have little bearing on organizational performance.”

Pfeffer (1977) took a similar but not as extreme position: Leadership is a sense-making heuristic to account for organizational performance and is important primarily for its symbolic role in organizations. Leaders are selected or self-selected to fulfill the fate of the organization and are highly constrained by organization and external factors. Therefore, they can have only limited impact on organizational outcomes compared to external factors. Leaders are able only to react to contingencies, to facilitate the adjustment of the organization in its context, and to alter that environment to some limited extent. Also they have no control over many factors that affect organizational performance and they typically have unilateral control over few resources.

Despite these constraints, management and leadership seem to have a substantial effect on some organizational outcomes. Thus, when Lieberman and O’Connor (1972) examined the effects of top management on the success of 167 firms over a 20-year period, they found that the effects
depended on which outcomes were considered. Managers had the greatest effect on profit margins but the least effect on sales; they also were of less consequence in capital-intensive industries. In the same way, Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) showed that the mayors of 30 U.S. cities had considerable influence only on those budgetary issues, such as libraries and parks, that were not in the domain of important special-interest groups, such as the police, fire fighters, and highway maintenance personnel. In all, Pfeffer concluded that since people want to achieve the feeling that they are in control of their environment, they find it useful to attribute outcomes of their group and organizational performance to leaders, rather than to the complex internal and external environmental forces that actually are most important. Meindl and Ehrlich (1987) showed that if performance outcomes of firms were attributed to the leadership of the top management, rather than to the employees, market conditions, or the government, the judges gave better evaluations of the outcomes. Meindl and Ehrlich attributed this finding to the judges' assumption that leaders have a reliable and potent impact on outcomes.

Even when the true causes of outcomes were logically not determinable, Meindl, Ehrlich, and Dukerich (1985) showed that there was a tendency to view leadership as the likely cause of the outcomes. This study and the one by Meindl and Ehrlich (1987) were thought to demonstrate that leadership is more of a romantic notion than a phenomenon that truly affects group and organizational outcomes.

Then there is evidence that would-be followers, subordinates, and groups of employees are so constrained by technology, rules, job requirements, and organizational policies that there is little discretionary room for a superior or leader to make much of a difference in how things get done (Katz & Kahn, 1966). Furthermore, subordinates may have much more effect on the behavior of their superiors than vice versa (Goodstadt & Kipnis, 1970).

Miner (1975, p. 200) was ready to abandon the concept of leadership, stating that “the concept of leadership itself has outlived its usefulness. Hence, I suggest that we abandon leadership in favor of some other, more fruitful way of cutting up the theoretical pie.” In 1982, Miner recanted this statement but still maintained that the concept has limited usefulness because so much of the empirical research has been on emergent leadership in small groups, rather than within more complex organizations. For Miner, the fragile, distressed leadership that arises in the small, temporary group to develop, maintain, and enforce the norms of the group may have
little relevance for leadership in the impersonal “task system” of the traditional organization.

Leaders Do Make a Difference

Despite the skepticism about the reality and importance of leadership, all social and political movements require leaders to begin them. As Tucker (1981, p. 87) put it, “in the beginning is the leadership act. A ‘leaderless movement’ is naturally out of the question.” This does not mean that formal, institutionalized leadership is required. In fact, no leader in an institutional form appeared in the numerous peasant revolts from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries in Southern Germany. The same was true for journeymen’s strikes during the eighteenth century. Leadership remained informal and egalitarian. Only in the middle of the nineteenth century did definite leaders, such as Ferdinand Lasalle, emerge. Lasalle placed himself at the head of the German workers’ movement and worked out its explicit ideology, along with the myth that he founded the movement (Groh, 1986). This behavior is consistent with most cases of institutional development: Leaders determine the direction they will take. The historical records of the early British Royal Society of the seventeenth century illustrate that its secretaries were responsible for who joined the society and what kinds of science were sponsored (Mulligan & Mulligan, 1981).

Indeed, leadership is often regarded as the single most critical factor in the success or failure of institutions. For instance, T. H. Allen (1981) argued that the school principal’s leadership is the most important factor in determining a school’s climate and the students’ success. Sylvia and Hutchison (1985) concluded that the motivation of 167 Oklahoma teachers depended considerably on their perceptions of the quality of their relationships with their superiors. And Smith, Carson, and Alexander (1984) found that among the 50 Methodist ministers they studied, some were more effective leaders than were others. The effectiveness of these ministers was evidenced by the differential impact that their ministries had on church attendance, membership, property values, and contributions to the church.

In the business and industrial sector, Maccoby (1979, p. 313) concluded, from his observations of the manager as a game-playing politician, that the need of firms to survive and prosper in a world of increasing competition, of technological advances, of changing governmental regulations, of changing worker attitudes, requires “a higher level of leadership than ever before.” When an organization must be changed to reflect changes in
technology, the environment, and the completion of programs, its leadership is critical in orchestrating the process (Burke, Richley, & DeAngelis, 1985). Mintzberg and Waters (1982) examined the evolution of a retail firm over a 60-year period and found that a senior executive could successfully reorient the firm by intervening to change previous strategies and organizational structures. In the same way, Day and Lord (1986) noted that when confounding errors are controlled in studies of the effects of executive succession, differences in executive leaders can explain as much as 45 percent of their organizations’ performance. Agreeing with Chandler (1962), they stated that historical analyses of changes of leadership over significant periods have shown that leadership has a profound influence on an organization. Concurrent correlational analyses of a sample of executives and their organizations at the same point in time reach similar conclusions, although the effects are not as strong.

In a review of experiments in the United States on the productivity of workers between 1971 and 1981, Katzell and Guzzo (1983) concluded that supervisory methods seemed particularly effective in increasing output. In Sweden, Westerlund (1952) observed that the high-quality performance of supervisors improved the attitudes and performance of telephone operators. Also in Sweden, Ekvall and Arvonen (1984) found that leadership styles accounted for 65 percent of the variance in organizational climate in the 25 units they studied. Virany and Tushman (1986) stated that the senior managers of better-performing minicomputer firms were systematically different from those of firms that performed poorly. The senior management in the better firms had had previous experience in the electronic industry and was more likely to include the founder of the firm who still served as chief executive officer. Although most attention has been paid to industrial leaders as developers and builders, Hansen (1974) pointed out that the success with which a firm, such as the Ford Motor Company, closed a plant without much human dislocation depended on effective leadership.

Leadership has been considered a critical factor in military successes since records have been kept; that is, better-led forces repeatedly have been victorious over poorly led forces. Thus, not unexpectedly, morale and cohesion among Israeli and U.S. enlisted soldiers correlated with measures of the soldiers’ confidence in their company, division, and battalion commanders (Gal & Manning, 1987).

Personnel of the Mississippi Cooperative Extension reported that they felt less job stress if they saw their supervisors displaying more leadership in structuring the work to be done and showing concern for the subor-
In a study of 204 innovations in state programs, Cheek (1987) found that the governors came up with 55 percent of the innovations and the agencies with only 36 percent.

Studies by Tucker (1981), Hargrove and Nelson (1984), and Hargrove (1987) concluded that the style and performance of a U.S. president makes a big difference in what happens to legislation, policy, and programs. Successful presidents are more sensitive to the inherent politics of policy-making. They define and publicize the policy dilemmas facing the country and earn widespread public and Congressional support for their positions. They construct their policy agendas with the felt needs of the country in mind and create political support for their agendas; they also realize that timing is important (Tucker, 1981). But like Jimmy Carter, they can fail if they push for what they deem to be right but what is not politically feasible and if they favor comprehensive integrated solutions rather than incremental steps (Hargrove, 1987). Presidents can make decisions that are not implemented because they or their assistants do not follow them up. For example, as part of the agreement to resolve the Cuban missile crisis, President Kennedy ordered the removal of U.S. missiles from Turkey on the border of the Soviet Union. Six months later, he was astonished to learn that the missiles were still in place (Manchester, 1988). Although presidents spend relatively little time trying to make major reorientations in policy, they have an important impact on the smaller substantive decisions that affect the larger overall strategies (Neustadt, 1980). History may be drastically altered by a sudden change in presidents. Before leaving Washington, D.C., for his fateful trip to Texas in November 1963, Kennedy signed the first order for a phased withdrawal from Vietnam. On assuming office after Kennedy’s assassination, Lyndon Johnson rescinded the order. The war continued for another decade.

According to Richard Nixon’s “Silent Majority” speech in 1969, presidents may have to take an unpopular stand, but when they do, they can strengthen acceptance by explaining their reasons, soliciting support, and winning approval (Safire, 1975). Presidents also provide symbolic support for the development of norms, values, and beliefs that contribute to subsequent national and organizational development (Sayles, 1979). As Gardner (1988) noted, for a society to function, its people must share beliefs and values regarding the standards of acceptable behavior. Leaders can revitalize those shared beliefs and help keep the values fresh. “They have a role in creating the state of mind that is the society” (Gardner, 1988, p. 18). They conceive and articulate goals that move people from their own interests to unite for higher ends.
Often, the effects of leadership are indirect. For example, Katzell (1987) showed through a path analysis that although supervisors’ direct influence on their subordinates was modest, they exerted indirect influence and improved the employees’ morale by providing rewards, relating rewards to performance, and treating employees equitably; the increased morale, in turn, improved the employees’ performance.

Jongbloed and Frost (1985) modified Pfeffer’s (1977) reasoning to argue that leaders still have an important general role to play. What leaders really manage in organizations are the employees’ interpretations or understanding of what goes on in the organizations. The leaders manage meanings and, therefore, exert a strong impact on organizational outcomes. Jongbloed and Frost showed how the laboratory director in one Canadian hospital, compared to another in a second hospital with the same formal assignments and the same absence of control of issues, successfully lobbied for the importance of pathology and convinced the hospital administrators to allocate more funds for operations and budget than were allocated in the second hospital.

The importance of leadership is attested by academic and lay interest in leadership as a subject for development, training, and education (Campbell, 1977). Although U.S. college presidents believe that our educational institutions are reluctant to incorporate leadership education into their curricula (Cronin, 1984), the college landscape is not bleak. Gregory’s (1986) survey of all known U.S. degree-granting institutions of higher learning uncovered 53 that offered an academic course on leadership, 70 that made it possible to major or concentrate in the subject, 181 that incorporated the study of leadership in an academic course or a student-affairs program, and 81 that offered the subject in continuing education or professional programs.

2. Recognition of the importance to the nation of leadership and its development for all types of organizations is witnessed by the Alliance for Leadership Development, which includes the following members: American Leadership Forum of Houston; Association of American Colleges of Washington, D.C.; Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges; Center for Creative Leadership of Greensboro, N.C.; Coro Foundation of St. Louis; International Leadership Center of Dallas; National Association of Secondary School Principals of Reston, Va.; and the National Executive Service Corps of New York. The Alliance’s programs include the promotion of research on and teaching of leadership, related conferences and publications, a clearinghouse of information on leadership programs at universities and secondary schools, leadership development programs in the community, and development programs for corporate executives.

3. Details about these can be found in Clark, Freeman, and Britt (1987).
Leadership as a Subject of Inquiry

The importance of leadership is also demonstrated by its place in social science research. According to Mitchell (1979) and DeMeuse (1986), leadership has been one of the frequent subjects of empirical research, concentrating on the antecedents of leaders’ behavior and the factors that contribute to its effectiveness. Leadership is a featured topic in almost every textbook on organizational behavior. The scholarly books on leadership number in the hundreds, and articles, reports, and essays number in the thousands.

Several different schools of thought have prevailed simultaneously since leadership first was studied. The early sociological theorists tended to explain leadership in terms of either the person or the environment. Later researchers tended to view leadership as an aspect of role differentiation or as an outgrowth of social interaction processes. Recently, the naive theories of leadership we hold have been considered most important in explaining what is going on. But this is as it should be. Theory and empirical research should move forward together, each stimulating, supporting, and modifying the other. Neither can stand alone. An elegant theory without prospects of elegant data gathering makes for a sketchy theory. Early in a line of investigation, crude data and theory may be useful. Later, as understanding develops and practice improves, more stringent standards are required (Bass, 1974).

Assumptions

An almost insurmountable problem is the question of the extent to which we pour old wine into new bottles when proposing “new” theories. For instance, Julius Caesar’s descriptions of his leadership style in the Gallic Wars in the first century B.C. are clear, succinct endorsements of the need for what Blake and Mouton (1964) conceived as “9-9” style—a style that Fleishman (1953) described in terms of high initiation and consideration and that in the year 2500 some new theorist will give a new name. When does a field advance? Are we beyond Caesar’s understanding of how to lead infantry shock troops?

THE MEANING OF LEADERSHIP

The word leadership is a sophisticated, modern concept. In earlier times, words meaning “head of state,” “military commander,” “princeps,”
“proconsul,” “chief,” or “king” were common in most societies; these words differentiated the ruler from other members of society. A preoccupation with leadership, as opposed to headship based on inheritance, usurpation, or appointment, occurred predominantly in countries with an Anglo-Saxon heritage. Although the *Oxford English Dictionary* (1933) noted the appearance of the word “leader” in the English language as early as the year 1300, the word “leadership” did not appear until the first half of the nineteenth century in writings about the political influence and control of British Parliament. And the word did not appear in most other modern languages until recent times.

Defining Leadership

There are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept. Moreover, as Pfeffer (1977) noted, many of the definitions are ambiguous. Furthermore, the distinction between leadership and other social-influence processes is often blurred (Bavelas, 1960; Hollander & Julian, 1969). The many dimensions into which leadership has been cast and their overlapping meanings have added to the confusion. Therefore, the meaning of leadership may depend on the kind of institution in which it is found (Spitzberg, 1986). Nevertheless, there is sufficient similarity among definitions to permit a rough scheme of classification. Leadership has been conceived as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as a matter of inducing compliance, as the exercise of influence, as particular behaviors, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, as initiation of structure, and as many combinations of these definitions.

*WORKS CITED*


4. Different definitions and conceptions of leadership have been reviewed briefly by Morris and Seeman (1950), Shartle (1951a, 1951b, 1956), L. F. Carter (1953), C. A. Gibb (1954, 1969), Bass (1960), Stogdill (1975), and Schriesheim and Kerr (1977).
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