

12.11: Summary Learning Outcomes

12.1 The Nature of Leadership

1. What is the nature of leadership and the leadership process?

Leadership is a primary vehicle for fulfilling the directing function of management. Because of its importance, theorists, researchers, and practitioners have devoted a tremendous amount of attention and energy to unlocking the secrets of effective leadership. They have kept at this search for perhaps a greater period of time than for any other single issue related to management.

12.2 The Leadership Process

2. What are the processes associated with people coming to leadership positions?

Organizations typically have both formal and informal leaders. Their leadership is effective for virtually identical reasons. Leadership and management are not the same. Although effective leadership is a necessary part of effective management, the overall management role is much larger than leadership alone. Managers plan, organize, direct, and control. As leaders, they are engaged primarily in the directing function.

12.3 Leader Emergence

3. How do leaders influence and move their followers to action?

There are many diverse perspectives on leadership. Some managers treat leadership primarily as an exercise of power. Others believe that a particular belief and attitude structure makes for effective leaders. Still others believe it is possible to identify a collection of leader traits that produces a leader who should be universally effective in any leadership situation. Even today, many believe that a profile of behaviors can universally guarantee successful leadership. Unfortunately, such simple solutions fall short of the reality.

12.4 The Trait Approach to Leadership

4. What are the trait perspectives on leadership?

12.5 Behavioral Approaches to Leadership

5. What are the behavioral perspectives on leadership?

It is clear that effective leaders are endowed with the “right stuff,” yet this “stuff” is only a precondition to effective leadership. Leaders need to connect with their followers and bring the right configuration of knowledge, skills, ability, vision, and strategy to the situational demands confronting the group.

12.6 Situational (Contingency) Approaches to Leadership

6. What are the situational perspectives on leadership?

We now know that there is no one best way to be an effective leader in all circumstances. Leaders need to recognize that how they choose to lead will affect the nature of their followers’ compliance with their influence tactics, and ultimately impacts motivation, satisfaction, performance, and group effectiveness. In addition, the nature of the situation—contextual demands and characteristics of the follower—dictates the type of leadership that is likely to be effective. Fiedler focuses on leader traits and argues that the favorableness of the leadership situation dictates the type of leadership approach needed. He recommends selecting leaders to match the situation or changing the situation to match the leader. Path-goal theory focuses on leader behavior that can be adapted to the demands of a particular work environment and organizational members’ characteristics. Path-goal theorists believe both that leaders can be matched with the situation and that the situation can be changed to match leaders. Together, these theories make clear that leadership is effective when the characteristics and behavior of the leader match the demands of the situation.

12.7 Substitutes for and Neutralizers of Leadership

7. What does the concept of “substitute for leadership” mean?

Characteristics of followers, tasks, and organizations can substitute for or neutralize many leader behaviors. Leaders must remain aware of these factors, no matter which perspective on leadership they adopt. Such awareness allows managers to use substitutes for, and neutralizers of, leadership to their benefit, rather than be stymied by their presence.

12.8 Transformational, Visionary, and Charismatic Leadership

8. What are the characteristics of transactional, transformational, and charismatic leadership?

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in key leader traits and behaviors. As organizations face increasing amounts of chaos in their external environments, searches for “the right leader” who can bring about major organizational transformations has intensified. This search once again focuses our attention on a set of “key” motives, knowledge, skills, and personality attributes. Emerging from this search has been the identification of the charismatic and transformational leader.

12.9 Leadership Needs in the 21st Century

9. How do different approaches and styles of leadership impact what is needed now?

Leadership in the high-involvement organization differs dramatically from that in the traditional and control- oriented organization. Leaders external to the team have as one of their primary roles empowering group members and the teams themselves to self-lead and self-manage. Leaders internal to the team are peers; they work alongside and simultaneously facilitate planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and the execution of the team’s work.

Although we know a great deal about the determinants of effective leadership, we have much to learn. Each theory presented in this chapter is put into practice by managers every day. None provides the complete answer to what makes leaders effective, but each has something important to offer.

Finally, our understanding of leadership has many shortcomings and limitations. The existing literature is largely based on observations from a Western industrialized context. The extent to which our theories of leadership are bound by our culture, limiting generalization to other cultures, is largely unknown. Cross- cultural leadership research will no doubt intensify as the global economy becomes an ever more dominant force in the world.

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