

## **Snowball Questions**

### **Week Two**

1. ***Describe some of the problems/ Challenges in the study of leadership. Do you have any suggestions, which would help this situation?***

***Answer.***

The study of leadership as shown in both Northouse's Leadership book and Wren's Leadership Companion, show that there are many theories and studies, on leadership. The study of leadership is somewhat of a sociological study. I believe that much of the application of leadership studies rely on the environment. The culture of the organization adds a great deal of consideration when applying leadership theories. Also, few of the theories agree on one singular definition, which best describe leadership. Many theories are very similar and some are quite obverse. Almost all Leadership theories vary in the context of their research, and even those theories that do have commonality tend to disagree on their research criteria. The criteria used to evaluate the research efforts dealing with leadership tend to be very subjective and many are non-quantifiable, which makes the study of leadership, perhaps, less than a true-science, but more of a social study.

Although, many could argue that the study of leadership may have many problems and challenges. Few could argue that leadership is a fundamental key in a successful organization. I believe that leadership studies are beneficial for any member of all organizations. My suggestion for those studying leadership is to keep in mind the culture and challenges of one's own organization when studying leadership and apply the theories and philosophies that they feel fit. Also, to get more out of a leadership study a student should utilize the wisdom and experience of the professor and fellow-classmates throughout the study.

**2. Northouse, pp. 13-3- and Wren pp. 133-143, discuss Trait Theory of Leadership. Describe this theory to include what are the strengths and weaknesses.**

**Answer.**

The Trait theories began as theories designed to identify the characteristics of "great men." The theories believe that individuals are born with certain innate character traits that define our leadership abilities. They go on to say that certain character traits are common among leaders. Of the numerous theories on leader traits, there are five major character traits found within most the theories; intelligence (defined as the ability to effectively communicate and reason), self-confidence (defined as the ability to be certain on your capabilities and skills, determination (defined simply as the desire to excel), integrity

(defines as the honest and trustworthy), sociability (defined as desire for relationships).

Leaders who exhibit these traits tend to believe these traits are crucial to effective leadership. In fact, some businesses use personality assessment tools, such as the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator, to determine which people may be suited for certain jobs, such as mid-level management positions.

The first strength of this theory is it appeals to many leaders. If a leader has these specific traits, it makes common sense you'd want your other leaders to have the same traits. Second, there has in one form or another has been over a hundred years of research in the area leader characteristics. Third, these theories tend to focus on the leader aspects of the leadership process. All though there appears to be several strengths, there are also appears to several weaknesses.

The first of these weaknesses within these theories is there tends to be no specific set of traits, which define successful leaders. Second, the traits themselves tend to be very subjective. What means something to one researcher may not be the mean the same to another. Third weakness in these theories is they tend to not take into account the situation and the effects the situation have on the leader. Finally, these theories tend to not look at were the final results of leaders based on their and his leadership styles.

**3. Northouse, pp. 159-182 discusses Team Theory of Leadership. Describe this theory to include what are the strengths and weaknesses.**

**Answer.**

In the Team Theory of leadership organizations are developed as groups to accomplish definable goals or objectives. Within these groups, an individual is usually identified as the group's team leader. The team leader's functions are to provide for, or take care of all the needs of the group. The leader at times is a coach, one who or encourage the members the team. At other times he may serve as a mediator, mediating the behavior or actions of the team. The team leader also serves as the conduit between the team and its external environment, responsible for obtaining the required resources for the team to accomplish its intended mission.

Qualities of a good team leader include; objectivity – making decision based on the information provided by the team, not personal judgment, a good listener – he or she must listen to the needs of the team and take necessary actions to correct any problems, and he or she must always be team focused, not self focused. Being good team leader alone is not enough.

If a team is to be effective certain elements must be in place to allow the team to accomplish there assigned task or mission. These

elements include, first and perhaps most importantly, clear and well-defined objectives – what are the teams output product(s).

Second, an organizational structure that desires competence, willingness to excel, and providing the proper information or experts that allows the task to be accomplished. The third element is resources—materials, money, manpower ect. Without the resources, the best team in the world would accomplish nothing.

Again, the Team Theory of leadership is designed by an organization and formed as a group to accomplish a definable goal or objectives.

Some of strengths on this type of organization are 1) a real life focus on accomplishing and performing task. 2) the groups or teams be evaluated using the Leadership and Group Effectiveness Model. A model designed to evaluate the group's effectiveness using a series of inter related input and output action/event checklist. 3) the model takes into account the roles of the leaders and followers and their changing as situation changes.

The first weakness of this theory is the model used to evaluate group effectiveness is not completely supported or tested. Second is the team dynamics can be complicated making it difficult for the leader to difficult decisions. Lastly, training leaders may be difficult because of the many issues the leader is required the handle.

**4. Spear, pp.197-208, has an article entitled "Leading from Within." After reading the article list and discuss each of the five shadow lives of leaders.**

**Answer.**

First, is insecurity, all people tend to be insecure about their abilities or self worth, and as result may we overcompensate in areas to mask these self- imposed beliefs. Second, the perception that the universe and the world are against us and that day-to-day life is a battle. Thus, we charge out after the world in the most competitive manner as possible. Knowing good and well if we don't beat the other guy to the punch we'll be punched out or phased out. Third, is the fear that the responsibilities for all things that happen rest solely ones own shoulders. As a result, we may tend to over manage our people and families and rule them with an iron fist. This fear can lead to dysfunctional organizations and families. Fourth, fear of natural chaos or randomness. Thus, we tend to want to control our environment, and manage it and put it series of events we can control. Lastly, the fear of death, or the fear of letting go. This fear is the one that makes us fear the negative issues of life or the job. We become scared of receiving the negative report card or evaluation. This fear also comes us from admitting when a project dead or has no additional value, thus we perpetuate the system or program.

**5. Wren, pp. 355-358, discusses the "Development Sequence in Small Groups," list the different stages and briefly discuss them.**

**Answer.**

First, stage is the testing and dependence phase. In this phase, we tend to test each other to determine our own position within the group and that of others.

The first stage of task-activity development is orientation. During this step group tries to identify the problem and begin to gather the information they feel necessary to solve the problem. Second stage of group development is intra-group conflict. During this phase, individuals begin to disagree on the proposed methodology. Tied to this phase is emotional response to task demands. During this stage, the group begins to defy the demand of the group leader. Third, phase of group development is group cohesion. This is marked by the group acceptance of one another and the group begins to have an identity. Third stage of task activity development is open exchange of information about ones self and the task information. Fourth phase of group development is functional role relatedness. The group becomes a problem- solving instrument. Members can now take on specific element of the problem and coordinate amongst him or herself to resolve portions of the equation. Final stage of task-activity is the emergence of solutions. The efforts of the group are all moving toward a solution to the problem.

**6. Describe a leadership study you think would be meaningful. Describe what hypothesis would be. How would you conduct the study (measurement tools, data collection ect.)?**

**Answer.**

For a long time, I have been interested in CEOs and being a CEO. My proposed study of leadership would be to study leadership philosophies and beliefs of successful CEOs. I would conduct the study through interviews with each CEO and his/her subordinates. My hypothesis: Top Leaders of business organizations have similar "winning formulas of success." These formulas and philosophies are practical in any organization. Surveys would be conducted by through a series of same questions developed by a research team, comprised of members of each organization, who would be familiar with the organization and its CEO.

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Learning Log  
OL 600

### **Week two—Trait and Team Theories**

**Blake and Mouton's Managerial** (Leadership Grid)

-Designed to explain how leaders help organizations to reach their purposes through two factors: 1) Concern for production and 2) concern for people.

### **Authority-Compliance 9,1**

Style of leadership, seen as controlling, demanding, hard-driving, and overpowering. Heavy emphasis on task and job requirements and less emphasis on people.

### **Country Club Management 1, 9**

-Low concern for task accomplishment and high concern for interpersonal relationships.

### **Impoverished Management 1,1**

-Leader is unconcerned with both the task and interpersonal relationships: noncommittal, resigned, and apathetic.

### **Middle-of-the-Road Management 5,5**

-Leaders who are compromiser, have an intermediate concern for the task and an intermediate concern for the people who do the task. This type of leader is often described as one who is expedient, prefers the middle ground, soft-pedals disagreement, and swallows convictions in the interest of "progress."

### **Paternalism/Maternalism**

-Leader who uses both 1,9 and 9,1 styles but does not integrate the two. A "benevolent dictator."

## **Trait Theories**

-- Basic belief is that leader's exhibit certain innate character traits that allow them to be effective leaders.

- This theory suggests that organizations work better when managers have the traits that considered desirable by the organization.
- Organizations use various personality assessment tools like the Keirsey Temperament Sorter and the Meyers Briggs Personality Assessment to select the right people to increase productivity.

Common Traits considered desirable are;

Intelligence- The ability to effectively communicate and reason.

Self-confidence- Sense of confidence in ones own abilities and skills.

Determination- Desire to get the job done.

Integrity- The trustworthiness and honesty of an individual.

Sociability- Leader desire to seek out friendly social relationships.

The assessment tool indicates I live my outer life with thinking and my inner life with sensing. I tend to agree with that statement.

- A problem with these theories is they look only at leader traits. They do not take into consideration the followers or the situations which impact leadership. Additionally, different theories do not agree on one specific set characteristics, and the theories never looks at the outcomes of leaders, which have displayed these " desired traits".

## **Team Theory Concept**

Basic belief is teams are productive, because they use the multiple talents of the individuals within the team to solve problems and develop strategies that increase productivity.

Teams are organizational groups composed of members who are independent, who common goals, and their success is dependent on their ability to coordinate their activities in a means, which accomplishes goals. Teams usually perform specific functions, within the organization. These functional may include creative teams, problem-solving teams, and crisis action teams.

Leaderships' role is focusing on the needs of the group. Leaders focus on the internal behavior of the group and the external resources needed by the group. Major functions of leaders include, diagnosing group problems, taking action to correct problems within the group, forecasting environmental changes which may impact the groups abilities, and taking action in response to environmental change.

Key to effective team leadership is the leaders' ability to mediate among the various environments, actions within the group, and the performance outcomes. Leaders make their decisions based on the information presented and not by personal beliefs.

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Hackman and Walton (1986) suggested the components necessary for **effectiveness of task-performing** teams in organizations:

1. Clear, engaging direction
2. An enabling performance situation

A group structure that fosters competent task work

An organizational context that supports and reinforces excellence

Available, expert coaching and process assistance

3. Adequate material resources

### **Internal Task Leadership Functions**

- Goal focusing (clarifying, gaining agreement)
- Structuring for results (planning, organizing, clarifying roles, delegating)
- Facilitating decision making (informing, controlling, coordinating, mediating, synthesizing, issue focusing)
- Training team members in task skills (educating, developing)
- Maintaining standards of excellence (assessing team and individual performance, confronting, inadequate performance)

### **Internal Relational Leadership Functions**

- Coaching team members in interpersonal skills
- Collaborating (including, involving)
- Managing conflict and power issues (avoiding confrontation, questioning ideas)
- Building commitment and esprit de corps (being optimistic, innovating, envisioning, socializing, rewarding, recognizing)

- Satisfying individual member needs (trusting, supporting, advocating)
- Modeling ethical and principled practices (fair, consistent, normative)

**External Environmental Leadership Functions**

- Networking and forming alliances in environment (gathering information, increase influence)
- Advocating and representing team to environment
- Negotiating upward to secure necessary resources, support and recognition for team
- Buffering of team members from environmental distractions
- Assessing environmental indicators of team’s effectiveness (surveys, evaluations, performance indicators)
- Sharing relevant environmental information with team

| <b><u>A Model</u></b>   | <b><u>for Team</u></b>  | <b><u>Leadership</u></b>                  |   |
|---|---|---|---|
|   | <b>Leader Mediation Decisions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of intervention</li> <li>• Level of intervention</li> <li>• Function of intervention</li> </ul> |   |   |
| <b>Internal Team Leadership Functions</b>                     |   | <b>External Team Leadership Functions</b> |   |
| <b>Task</b>   | <b>Relationship</b>   |   | <b>Environmental</b>                            |
| Clarifying Goals<br>Establishing Structure<br>Decision Making | Coaching<br>Collaborating<br>Managing Conflict  |   | Networking<br>Advocating<br>Negotiating Support |



- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 12. Communicates actively with group members.            | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 13. Clarifies his/her own role within the group.         | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 14. Shows concern for the personal well-being of others. | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 15. Provides a plan for how the work is to be done.      | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 16. Shows flexibility in making decisions.               | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 17. Provides criteria for what is expected of the group. | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 18. Discloses thoughts and feelings to group members.    | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 19. Encourages group members to do quality work.         | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |
| 20. Helps group members get along.                       | <b>1 2 3 4 5</b> |

Add odd questions to get Task score. \_\_\_\_\_

Add even-numbered to get Relationship score. \_\_\_\_\_

**Scoring interpretation:**

- |                             |                            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 45-50 Very high range       | 30-34 Moderately low range |
| 40-44 High range            | 25-29 Low range            |
| 35-39 Moderately high range | 20-24 Very low range       |
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Team Effectiveness Questionnaire

Key:

1 False      2 More false than true    3 More true than false    4 True

\_\_\_\_\_ 1.      There is a clearly defined need—a goal to be achieved or a purpose to be served—that justifies the existence of our team. (clear elevating goal)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2.      We have an established method for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback. (results-driven structure)

\_\_\_\_\_ 3.      Team members possess the essential skills and abilities to accomplish the team’s objectives. (competent team members)

- \_\_\_\_ 4. Achieving our team goal is a higher priority than any individual objective. (unified commitment)
- \_\_\_\_ 5. We trust each other sufficiently to accurately share information, perceptions, and feedback. (collaborative climate)
- \_\_\_\_ 6. Our team exerts pressure on itself to improve performance. (standards of excellence)
- \_\_\_\_ 7. Our team is given the resources it needs to get the job done. (external support/recognition)
- \_\_\_\_ 8. The team leader provides me the necessary autonomy to achieve results. (principled leadership)
- \_\_\_\_ 9. Our leader is willing to confront and resolve issues associated with inadequate performance by team members. (principled leadership)
- \_\_\_\_ 10. Our leader is open to new ideas and information from team members. (principled leadership)
- \_\_\_\_ 11. Our leader is influential in getting outside constituencies—industry, board, media, the next level of management—to support our team’s effort. (principled leadership)

OL 600 -- Abstract #2

Article reviewed: New contract offers Disney workers clean undies

Author: Mike Schneider - Publisher: Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Date: June 8, 2001

### **Summary of the Article**

A union contract between Disney workers and Walt Disney World allows workers to take home undergarments for cleaning, as opposed to trusting that they are being cleaned by the Disney launderers. The article

stated that workers complained about getting pubic lice and scabies. Workers also complained that many undergarments were stained or smell. Company issued under is reportedly mandatory, because regular underwear bunches up and is noticeable. As the article stated, union workers, who portray characters, such as Donald Duck, Goofy, and Minnie Mouse will get to vote on the new contract next week.

**My personal view of this article:**

There are two representations of leadership mentioned in this article; Disney management and Union Leaders. The followers are the Disney union workers. The dispute is a representation of workers not having proper resources and a leadership style seemingly Middle-of-the-Road, 5,5. I say middle-of-the-road, because the company stood for mandatory company cleaned underwear and an emphasis on work requirements and then caving in and allowing a change in contract to satisfy the workers, with first a little bit of a skirmish. This giving in satisfies morale of workers.

