

A Brief History of Leadership

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Theories in Context

- Background is in higher education and working with the non-profit sector
- The people I work with are motivated through passion
- Some are highly intelligent – they ask why a lot
- Some are still developing (college students don't develop the frontal lobe, where moral reasoning resides, until age 25)
- Therefore, my lens on these theories and leadership concepts are framed within this context

A Brief History of Leadership Theory

- First a look at different theories
- Examining the context of today
- New and emergent ideas on leadership which aren't at the "theory" stage



Trait Leadership

- Leadership is a function of biology – you're born with it.
- Leadership is developing what you're born with.
- Leadership is building on your strengths.



Situational Leadership

- Leadership is matching different styles to different situations.
- Leadership is a function of the market.
- Leadership is a function of matching the resources of the group with the resources of the leader.

Organizational Leadership

- Leadership is a function of position and role responsibility.
- Leadership is developing the skills to move up through the hierarchy.
- Leadership is understanding an organization's values and culture.

Power As Leadership

- Leadership is power.
- Leadership is making a difference.
- Leadership is effective use of power to make a difference.
- Leadership is the capacity to get things done.
- Leadership is challenging others to do their work (empowerment).
- Leadership is community organization.

Visionary Leadership



- Leadership is vision – looking at trends and patterns for future direction.
- Leadership is doing what has never been done before.
- Leadership is clarifying trends and patterns for future direction.
- Leadership is seeing the problems in the present and being able to imagine a different future

Social Ethics Leadership (1)

- Leadership is clarifying trends and patterns and bringing them ethical scrutiny for future direction.
- Leadership is assessed vision that enhances the human community.
- Leadership involves dialogue with followers rather than dictating to them.

Social Ethics Leadership (2)

- Leadership raises the question: leadership toward what?
- Leadership examines why things should be done as well as what is to be done and how to do it.
- Leadership goes beyond accepting – tolerance is not enough.
- James MacGreggor Burns *Leadership*

The Moral Dimension of Leadership

People who transgress our moral standards:

- The “bad king” ... the ruler who inflicts cruelty on his own subjects.
- Leaders who may treat their own followers well but encourage them to do evil things to others.
- Leaders who reach for and use as a source of motivation, our bigotry, our capacity to hate, our desire for revenge, our fear and paranoia, our superstitions.

The Moral Dimension of Leadership

- Leaders who diminish their followers, rendering them dependent and childlike.
- Leaders who destroy the processes that civilized peoples have created over the centuries to preserve freedom, justice, and human dignity.
- John Gardner *On Leadership*

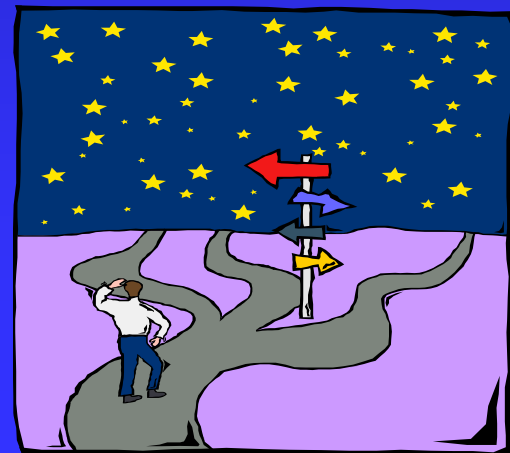
Reflective Leadership

- Leadership is all (traits, situations, power, vision, social ethics) and more.
- A leader must be grasped.
- A leader must be authentic.
- Leadership is a profound engagement with the world and human condition.



Adaptive Leadership (1)

- Authority identifies the adaptive challenge, provides diagnosis of condition, and produces questions about problem definition and solution.
- Authority discloses external threat.



Adaptive Leadership (2)



- Authority disorients current roles, or resists pressure to orient people in new roles too quickly.
- Authority exposes conflict, or lets it emerge.
- Authority challenges norms, or allows them to be challenged.
- Ron Heifetz *Leadership without Easy Answers*

Networked Leadership



- Leadership is a process that emerges from many individuals' actions.
- Leadership is organic rather than mechanical in nature.
- New ways of relating, influencing change and learning are required.
- Allen and Cherrey *Systemic Leadership: Enriching the Meaning of our Work* (2000)



The context in which Leadership is practiced today

- United Nations survey – 280 countries were asked to identify their top problems

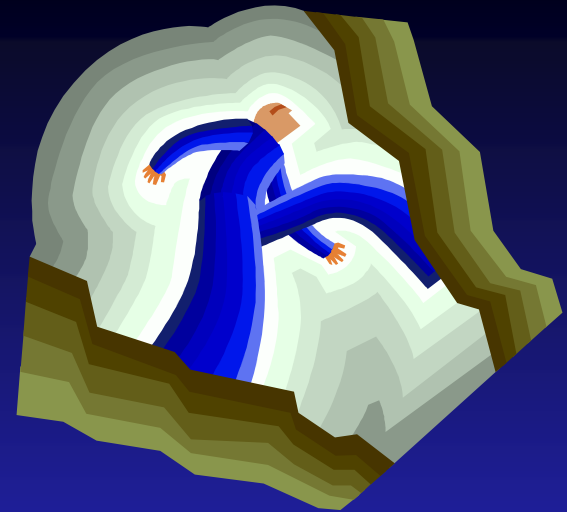
Politics / Power - Powerlessness

Economics - Ruthlessness

Culture - Rootless ness Meaninglessness

Environment - Futureless ness

Adaptive Challenges



- Globalization
- Living within environmental limits
- Transforming information into wisdom
- Developing wisdom and ethics to respond to scientific discoveries
- Developing the capacity to adapt to changes in the social ecology

Implications for Leadership

- Increased diversity
- Increased amount of change
- Increased tensions around value differences
- Increased power of relationships / interdependence
- Increased complexity / requires more complex processes
- Increased requirement for learning
- Increased need for long term perspective

The Purpose of Leadership in the 21st Century Is:

- To create a supportive environment where people can thrive, grow, and live in peace with one another;
- To promote harmony with nature and thereby provide sustainability for future generations; And.
- To create communities of reciprocal care and shared responsibility – one where every person matters and each person's welfare and dignity is respected and supported.

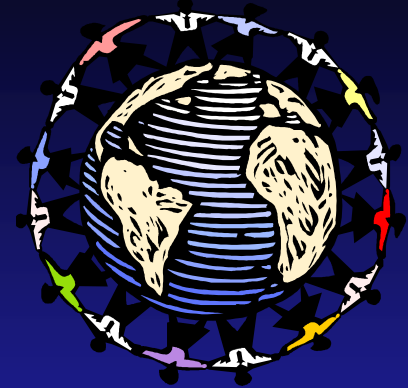
Ecological Leadership

- Interdependence
- Open systems and feedback loops
- Cycling of resources
- Adaptation



Leadership and Optimizing Energy

Questions to Ponder



- What is a grandchild worth?
- What are millions of grandchildren worth?
- What is the worth of all their children, and the children's children?
- And what is the worth of a beautiful, safe, productive earth on which they all can dwell?