Step up to leadership

This item contains selected online content. It is for use alongside, not as a replacement for the module website, which is the primary study format and contains activities and resources that cannot be replicated in the printed versions.

About this free course

This version of the content may include video, images and interactive content that may not be optimised for your device.

You can experience this free course as it was originally designed on OpenLearn, the home of free learning from The Open University –

There you'll also be able to track your progress via your activity record, which you can use to demonstrate your learning.

Copyright © 2019 The Open University

Intellectual property

Unless otherwise stated, this resource is released under the terms of the Creative Commons Licence v4.0 http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en_GB. Within that The Open University interprets this licence in the following way:

www.open.edu/openlearn/about-openlearn/frequently-asked-questions-on-openlearn. Copyright and rights falling outside the terms of the Creative Commons Licence are retained or controlled by The Open University. Please read the full text before using any of the content.

We believe the primary barrier to accessing high-quality educational experiences is cost, which is why we aim to publish as much free content as possible under an open licence. If it proves difficult to release content under our preferred Creative Commons licence (e.g. because we can't afford or gain the clearances or find suitable alternatives), we will still release the materials for free under a personal end-user licence.

This is because the learning experience will always be the same high quality offering and that should always be seen as positive – even if at times the licensing is different to Creative Commons.

When using the content you must attribute us (The Open University) (the OU) and any identified author in accordance with the terms of the Creative Commons Licence.

The Acknowledgements section is used to list, amongst other things, third party (Proprietary), licensed content which is not subject to Creative Commons licensing. Proprietary content must be used (retained) intact and in context to the content at all times.

The Acknowledgements section is also used to bring to your attention any other Special Restrictions which may apply to the content. For example there may be times when the Creative Commons Non-Commercial Sharealike licence does not apply to any of the content even if owned by us (The Open University). In these instances, unless stated otherwise, the content may be used for personal and non-commercial use.

We have also identified as Proprietary other material included in the content which is not subject to Creative Commons Licence. These are OU logos, trading names and may extend to certain photographic and video images and sound recordings and any other material as may be brought to your attention.

Unauthorised use of any of the content may constitute a breach of the terms and conditions and/or intellectual property laws.

We reserve the right to alter, amend or bring to an end any terms and conditions provided here without notice.

All rights falling outside the terms of the Creative Commons licence are retained or controlled by The Open University.

Head of Intellectual Property, The Open University

Contents

Introduction

> A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way.
>
> (John C. Maxwell, cited in Dempsey and Forst, 2011, p. 35)

Are you a leader? Do you – as Maxwell asserts in the quote above – know the way, go the way and show the way?

In recent years the concept of leaders and leadership has become increasingly popular, but what exactly is leadership? A quick search of Amazon.co.uk returns over 100,000 books relating to leadership and being a leader. Many of these books promise unique insights into the 'secrets' of leaders or organisations, while others outline a number of 'proven' steps that will transform anyone's approach to being a leader. Is being a leader really so simple?

In this course you will examine the idea of leadership and what it means to be a leader in a modern-day policing organisation or a leader in your community. You will also look at how effective Policing with the Community can be achieved with shared goals. You will step away from the jargon and hype to understand what leadership means in practice and on the ground. You will look not just at key concepts of leadership but also the way in which these can be applied in a practical and realistic way. Underpinning this will be the important recognition that anyone at any level within an organisation can step up to leadership. Being a leader is not about a title, rank or position, but rather is about the attitude, skills and behaviours you demonstrate.

Upon completing this course you will have:

- developed a clear understanding of the concept of leadership
- reflected on personal leadership style
- considered what leadership might mean in different contexts
- understood the role of a leader in developing others and creating a positive workplace culture.

1 What is leadership?

There are many ways of understanding leadership and what it means to be a leader – as already noted, there are literally thousands of books on the subject! Perhaps not surprisingly, therefore, there are numerous definitions of leadership, many of which contrast the related ideas of leadership and management. Some of these are outlined below.

- Management focuses on speed and methods – doing things right. Leadership focuses on direction and purpose – doing the right things. (Covey, 1989)
- Management is about coping with complexity. Leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change. (Kotter, 1990)
- Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. (Northouse, 2010)
- A leader shapes and shares a vision which gives point to the work of others. (Handy, 1992)

There are a number of themes of leadership running through these definitions, including:

- having a vision, direction and purpose
- developing and establishing a common goal
- working with change
- influencing others
- giving meaning to others.

On reading these definitions, you might have noticed something very important: none make any mention of rank, title, position or authority.

Leadership, and consequently being a leader, is something that exists separate to formal organisational structures and is about the behaviours you demonstrate. In practice, this means that leaders and those demonstrating leadership behaviours can be found at all levels of an organisation, irrespective of rank or title.

Activity 1 Who is a leader?

Allow approximately 5 minutes

Think of someone you regard as a leader – for example, your manager, a colleague or someone in your community. What is it about them that makes you consider them a leader?

> *Provide your answer...*

Discussion

There is no simple answer to the question of who is a leader. As you reflect on your answers to this task you might note real differences between the people you have mentioned. Some might be leaders by virtue of their role, title or position in an organisation, while others might be leaders as a consequence of their personal or other qualities.
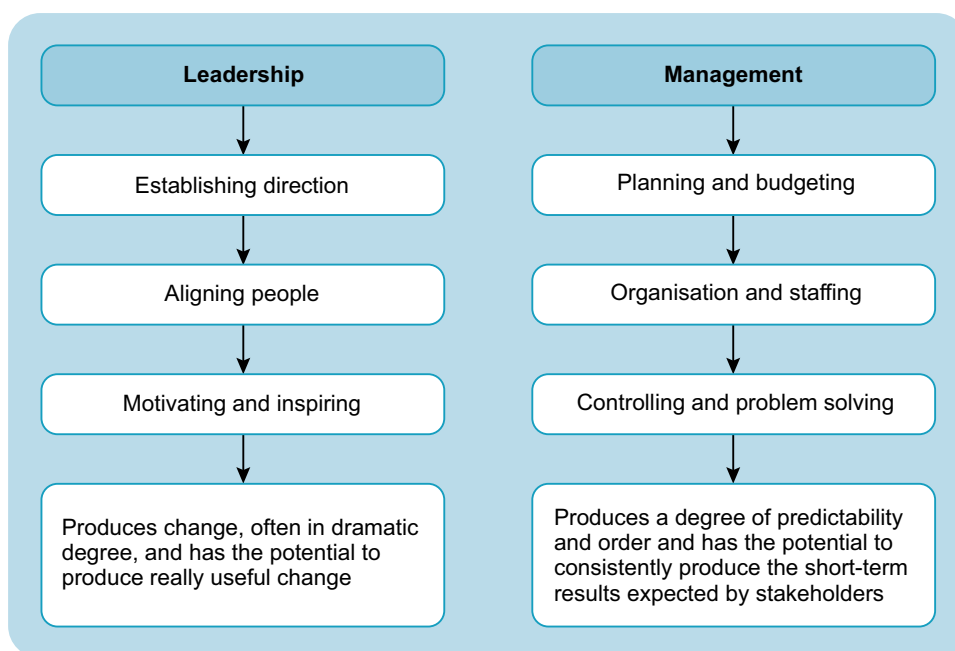
---

2 Leadership or management?

Another theme emerging from the definitions already identified is a distinction between leadership and management.

Do leadership and management overlap, or is there a clear distinction between the two? Current thinking on this varies.

While leadership might typically be about creating a vision, providing a sense of direction and gaining the commitment of others, management is often seen as being much more mundane and involved with the day-to-day work of organising people and resources to achieve given goals, including activities like planning, budgeting, staffing and so on. The key differences are summarised in the table shown in Figure 1.

Leadership	Management
Establishing direction	Planning and budgeting
Aligning people	Organisation and staffing
Motivating and inspiring	Controlling and problem solving
Produces change, often in dramatic degree, and has the potential to produce really useful change	Produces a degree of predictability and order and has the potential to consistently produce the short-term results expected by stakeholders

Figure 1 The key activities of leadership and management

Unfortunately, and despite being critical for organisational success, the practice of management and being a manager is often undervalued and even regarded negatively. As management guru Peter Drucker once put it, 'Most of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to get their work done' (The Economist, 2014). Consequently, the challenge for anyone in a management position is to get the best out of being a manager while also striving to engage with some of the very positive aspects of leadership.

Activity 2 Leadership and management in policing with the community
Allow approximately 10 minutes

Considering the descriptions of leadership and management given earlier in this section, which aspects of both do you think are most relevant for successful partnerships between leaders in the police and the community?

Provide your answer...

Discussion

The key qualities of leadership and management required for successful community partnerships will vary both over and between different situations. As a leader – or manager – you must be prepared to draw upon the key skills of either as situations demand.

3 Leadership in a policing context

Leadership is one of the most important predictors of whether organizations are able to effectively function in dynamic environments … and as such the need for effective police leadership is greater than ever.

(Pearson-Goff and Herrington, 2013, p. 14)

Curiously, while much energy and effort has been spent on considering leadership in a range of other contexts, leadership in policing has not been studied to the same extent (Schafer, 2009). One recent study argued that there are seven key characteristics and five key activities which define effective police leadership:

Characteristics	Ethical behaviour
	Trustworthiness
	Legitimacy
	Being a role model
	Communication
	Decision making
	Critical, creative and strategic thinking ability
Activities	Creating a shared vision
	Engendering organisational commitment
	Caring for subordinates
	Driving and managing change
	Problem solving

(Adapted from Pearson-Goff and Herrington, 2013, pp. 20–21)

To put this in some context, it is worth considering comments made by Edward Flynn, a former chief of police in Milwaukee, and noted scholar Victoria Herrington, who argue that:

Leaders require a blend of management skills (e.g., planning, organizing, budgeting, staffing and directing), personal skills (e.g. the ability to communicate, motivate and inspire others), leadership skills (e.g., strategic focus, analytical competency and cognitive flexibility), and, in policing, a healthy dose of operational experience. … Leadership requires the organization to support the use of these skills to create a learning environment.

(Flynn and Herrington, 2015, p. 14)

Activity 3 Reflecting on leadership in policing

Allow approximately 10 minutes

This activity requires you to watch and reflect on the following video, in which Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) Constable Michael Allen talks about his experience of leadership in a policing context. In the video, he focuses on the following areas:

- What is leadership in a policing context?
- How does this differ from leadership in other contexts?
- What do good police leaders do?
- What do bad police leaders do?
- How can people step up into leadership?

Video content is not available in this format.

Video 1 Constable Michael Allen talks about his experience of leadership

After you have watched the video, take some time to reflect on the points made by Constable Allen. As you do so, consider the following questions:

- Does Constable Allen's experience of leadership in policing match yours or would you view things quite differently?
- If you're viewing this clip from a policing point of view, what leadership qualities do you admire in a police or police-staff leader?
- Alternatively, if you're viewing it from a community point of view, what leadership qualities do you admire in a police or police-staff leader? What could be improved?

Make notes of your observations in the box below.

Provide your answer...

Discussion

Leadership is a very personal concept. Our individual views of leadership and leaders can differ greatly and very much depend on our experience of the leadership behaviours demonstrated by each person, not just the title or position that they hold.

4 'Being' a leader

So what does it mean to be a leader? As you have already learned, leadership and being a leader is less about your title, rank or position than it is about what you do and how you do it. DuBrin (2010) outlines a number of key personality traits of effective leaders, dividing them between general personality traits (i.e. those that are generally displayed both in work and outside of work) and task-related personality traits (i.e. those that are more directly related to getting the job done):

General personality traits	Self-confidence
	Humility
	Trustworthiness
	Sense of humour
	Authenticity
	Enthusiasm, optimism and warmth
	Assertiveness
	Extraversion
Task-related personality traits	Passion for the work and the people
	Courage
	Internal locus of control (i.e. the degree to which a person feels they have control over events impacting on them)
	Flexibility and adaptability
	Emotional intelligence

(DuBrin, 2010)

Activity 4 Self-assessment
Allow approximately 5 minutes

Take a moment to rate your 'work self' on a scale of one to ten against each of the traits listed above. (You might like to have a friend or colleague evaluate you against the key criteria too.) What do your results tell you about your own approach to leadership? How might this vary from situation to situation?

Provide your answer...

Discussion
It can often be challenging to evaluate yourself and rate yourself against key behavioural traits. It can consequently be useful to compare notes with someone who knows you well to get their perception of you. Flagging and exploring any big gaps between your perception of self and their perception of you could be helpful for your development as a leader.

4.1 Being a leader might depend on context

Looking beyond traits, it's also important to consider the context in which leadership takes place. First developed in the 1960s by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969), the situational leadership model is based on the idea that how an individual leader acts depends on the nature of the situation in which they find themselves. Consequently, the most relevant and appropriate behaviours can vary greatly from situation to situation. As shown in the diagram in Figure 2, this model is based on the combination of both *directive* behaviours (i.e. those designed to help group members achieve goals using guidance and direction) and *supportive* behaviours, which provide motivation that helps to keep group members focused on their objectives.
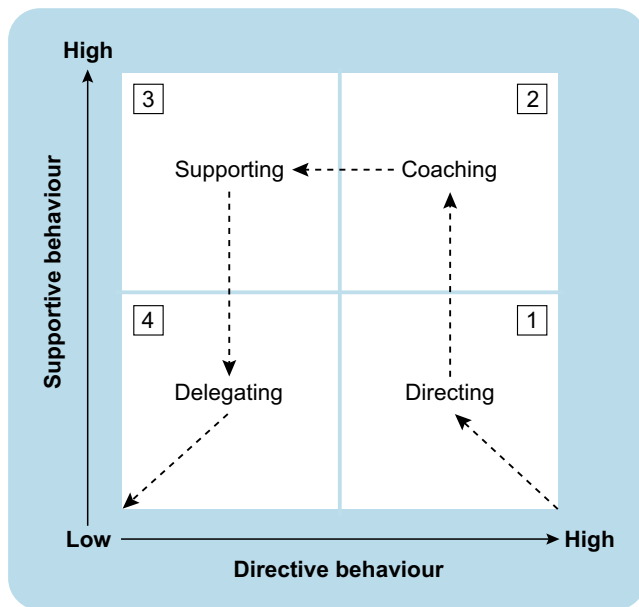
Figure 2 Situational leadership

The underlying ethos of the situational leadership model is that you can maximise leadership effectiveness by being aware of the relationship between 'people behaviour' and 'task behaviour', and therefore help people to be more productive and fulfilled in their roles. Each person with whom the leader interacts will be at a different stage of need and will therefore require a different leadership style in order for that interaction to be effective.

5 Are you seen as a leader?

Beyond the traits and behaviours they demonstrate, leaders also need to remember that they are being judged and evaluated constantly by those around them – and this can have an impact on their effectiveness as a leader. On a certain level, this might seem to be common sense; after all, leaders of all types have often sought to dress or look the part.

Activity 5 Who do you see as a leader?

Allow approximately 10 minutes

Leadership comes in many guises. Which of the following would you see as a leader, and why?

Figure 3 Which of these are leaders? Top, left to right: Bill Gates, Nelson Mandela, Taylor Swift. Bottom, left to right: Norman Foster, Michelle Obama, Angela Merkel

Provide your answer...

Discussion

Which of these famous faces did you consider to be a leader? You might wish to compare your responses to a friend, colleague or family member and explore the differences. Understanding not just what those differences are but the reasons for them can be quite revealing.

Recent research in the field of neuroscience has determined how we are judged not just for who we are but for how we are perceived by others. Lyons and O'Mara explain this process as follows.

> We make person judgements on the basis of two simple processes. First, a snap judgement of how cold or warm we feel toward the person. Does this person elicit feelings of kindness, affection, admiration? The feeling of cold or warmth that another elicits is intuitively easy to understand – to label someone as 'very cold' is to condemn them. It suggests they are devoid of emotions, that they are selfish, and probably untrustworthy in some core respect. Second, a snap judgement of the competence or incompetence of the person. Competence is less intuitively obvious, but refers to the judgement that the person is capable of acting on their wishes and desires – and further, whether they mean us harm or not.

> We then combine these judgements quickly. These rapidly-formed composite judgements (Cold/Warmth and Incompetence/Competence) reliably and rapidly

elicit particular emotions, and these emotions in turn directly and indirectly drive our behaviour toward the other person.

(Lyons and O'Mara, 2016, p. 25)

In this way, leaders are judged in a similar way to brands:

Leaders are judged as both persons and as brands. Being judged as both a person and as a brand has profound implications for how leaders should manage and present themselves within the groups and organizations they lead.

(Lyons and O'Mara, 2016, p. 23)

These thoughts from Lyons and O'Mara (2016) are developed from the work of Fiske (2011) who created a model called the 'Stereotype Content Model of Perception'. In the following activity you will learn more about how this model works in practice.

Activity 6 The Stereotype Content Model of Perception
Allow approximately 10 minutes

Watch the animation in Figure 4 which describes the Stereotype Content Model of Perception, based on the work of Fiske (2011).

Video content is not available in this format.
Figure 4 The Stereotype Content Model of Perception (adapted from Fiske, 2011)

	Low Competence	High Competence
High Warmth	a Pity	b Pride
Low Warmth	d Disgust	c Envy

The way we evaluate people on the basis of perceived warmth and competence can apply equally to fictional characters and even brands. Figure 5 shows the images of some well-known fictional characters.

What is your visceral reaction to each of these characters? How might you rate each of them in terms of warmth or competence, as explained in the Stereotype Content Model of Perception?
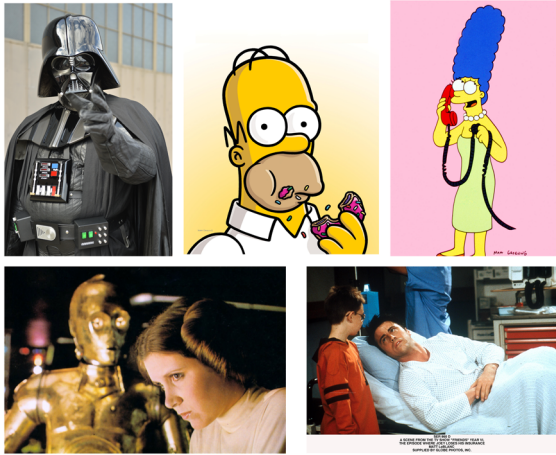
Figure 5 Some well-known fictional characters. Top, left to right: Darth Vader, Homer Simpson, Marge Simpson. Bottom, left to right: Princess Leia, Joey from *Friends*

> *Provide your answer...*

Discussion

While there is no one right answer – they are fictional characters after all – it might be worth reflecting on how you responded to each. Some typical responses might be as follows:

- Darth Vader – low warmth and high competence
- Homer Simpson – high warmth and low competence, or low warmth and low competence
- Marge Simpson – high warmth and high competence
- Princess Leia – high warmth and high competence or low warmth and high competence
- Joey from *Friends* – high warmth and low competence.

Curiously, as you have heard, research has found that this model of perception also applies to our engagement with brands. You might wish to think of some well-known brands with which you are familiar – how would you engage with them?

A key lesson – for individuals, for organisations, and for individuals as representatives of organisations – is that, whether we like it or not, people will always develop a perception of us based on an evaluation of their warmth of feelings towards us or their perception of our competence. While we might strive to overcome this, the recognition that this happens on a deep, visceral level is crucial.

Leading neuroscientist Shane O'Mara makes the point that, beyond simply assessing people based on our perception of their relative warmth and competence, this same cognitive process helps us to allocate roles and positions to people within a group. As O'Mara puts it:

> Think about the first time you walked in to a group of people that you didn't know. Quickly, people rank each other as leaders, as followers, as wise voices,

as slightly off-beam, along all sorts of dimensions, and we do this rapidly and quickly.

(O'Mara, 2017, p. 85)

The implications of this for leaders at all levels of an organisation are significant. On the one hand, it is critical that you are aware of both the conscious and subconscious assessments that you are constantly making of others; on the other, you should also be aware of the assessments that others are making of you. In each case, these might or might not be entirely correct – as the old saying 'Don't judge a book by its cover' would suggest – but they happen nonetheless.

6 Leading with a purpose

It's time to end the myth of the complete leader: the flawless person at the top who's got it all figured out. … Only when leaders come to see themselves as incomplete – as having both strengths and weaknesses – will they be able to make up for their missing skills by relying on others.

(Ancona et al., 2007, pp. 92, 94)

These days, traditional 'command and control' leadership is no longer enough. The world is too complex, organisations are too big and the range of situations in which people might find themselves is simply too diverse for one person to manage. One way of addressing this is through the practice of **distributed leadership**, sometimes known as shared or collaborative leadership.

The idea of distributed leadership first emerged in an educational context but has subsequently spread to other areas including the NHS and policing. It builds upon the realisation that the leader of any organisation cannot be everywhere and do everything. If you think about a typical school, this makes sense: while the teachers are busy in their classrooms, 'leading' their pupils and making decisions about their learning, well-being and behaviour, the principal or head teacher is elsewhere, making sure that the school is properly managed overall. While they might check in from time to time, they cannot and should not be in every classroom, managing and controlling the activities of the teachers. To do so would be unnecessary and, frankly, impossible.

In a similar vein, the constables in a local policing team must be in a position to make real-time decisions based on what they see and understand on the ground. Their senior officer must be kept informed, of course, but they might be several miles away at the local police station, dealing with a myriad of other pressing issues. They cannot simply step in to engage with every question that arises on the street corner.

So what does distributed leadership mean in practice? As Dr Alma Harris, a leading educationalist and theorist, explains:

Distributed leadership is primarily concerned with the practice of leadership rather than specific leadership roles or responsibilities. It equates with shared, collective and extended leadership practice that builds the capacity for change and improvement …

When distributed leadership works well, individuals are accountable and responsible for their leadership actions; new leadership roles created, collaborative teamwork is the modus operandi and inter-dependent working is a cultural norm. Distributed leadership is about collective influence – it is not just some accidental by-product of high-performing organisations.

(Harris, 2014)

But what are the practical implications of this for leaders seeking to develop a greater degree of distributed leadership within their teams or the community? Harris continues:

In very practical terms, to be most effective, distributed leadership has to be carefully planned and deliberately orchestrated. It won't just happen and if it

does, there is no guarantee that it will have any positive impact. Letting a thousand flowers bloom is not distributed leadership.

The implication for those in formal leadership roles is that they have a key role to play in creating the conditions for distributed leadership to occur. They have to create the opportunities for others to lead.

(Harris, 2014)

Beyond creating the opportunities for others to lead, as Harris suggests, leaders must be sure to create an effective team culture which supports a distributed approach to leadership. Key to this is the establishment of a clear purpose and an effective team culture integrating critical practices such as empowerment.
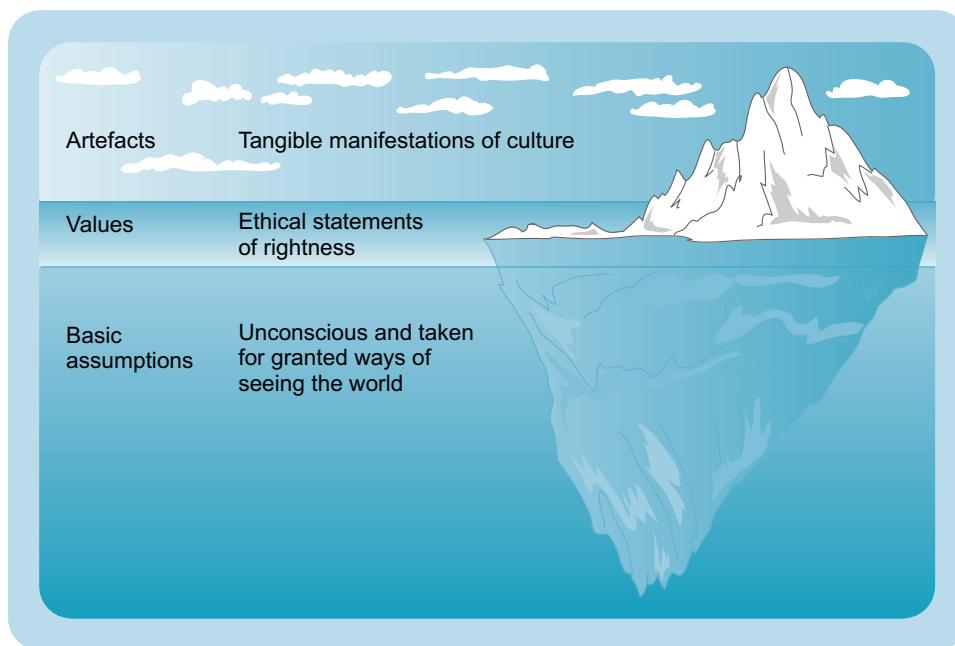
7 Developing an effective team culture

The concept of culture can be understood in many ways. It is often one of those things that you recognise when you see it yet can be problematic to define clearly.

Perhaps the most straightforward definition of culture is that proposed by Deal and Kennedy (1982), who asserted that culture is 'the way we do things around here'.

Intuitively this might make sense. You might know, for example, that titles for ranks or positions should be used in particular situations, or that in some contexts certain dress is required. Equally, you might have an unstated routine that your team always goes for lunch together at a certain time each day and always sits at the same table. All of these things are aspects of culture.

Yet the very simplicity of this definition masks the underlying complexity of organisational or community culture. Culture can exist at different levels and in different ways within an organisation, or the community, or the people they serve, relating to a range of both tangible and intangible elements, as the iceberg model of culture developed by Edgar Schein, shown in Figure 6, demonstrates.

Artefacts — Tangible manifestations of culture

Values — Ethical statements of rightness

Basic assumptions — Unconscious and taken for granted ways of seeing the world

Figure 6 Schein's iceberg model of culture

Schein's iceberg model (Schein, 1992) is useful in that it illustrates that some cultural aspects of an organisation are visible while some are hidden and difficult for outsiders or even new members of an organisation to interpret. Examples of visible cultural aspects include written documents – strategic plans, job descriptions and disciplinary procedures. Less visible, however, are a culture's values, beliefs and norms, which can be much harder to identify and interpret. The key to Schein's model is that, through analysing the three levels shown in Figure 6, a better understanding of the different components of culture in organisations can be achieved.

7.1 Where does culture come from?

One of the most important factors influencing the culture of a team – and, for that matter, of an organisation – is its leader. The leader's influence can be both overt – for example, by publicly recognising those people demonstrating the desired behaviours – or less obvious, which might include demonstrating those fundamental beliefs and assumptions which are felt to be shared by all members. This hints at a very important underlying aspect of leadership and culture: that leaders play a key role not just in creating and changing culture but also in maintaining it (Trice and Beyer, 1991)

With particular reference to the culture of policing organisations, Angela Workman-Stark, a former senior member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, highlights the way in which different subcultures can develop within different departments and at different grades within policing organisations.

> In policing, different cultures may arise across functions and teams …
> However, distinctions by rank or level within the organization continue to represent the more prominent descriptions of cultures in policing.

> (Workman-Stark, 2017, p. 24)

When culture is considered across ranks or levels, Workman-Stark highlights the differences as follows:

> In contrast to the street cop culture, which is focused on the immediate aspects of the job and the risks of the street, the middle management culture is more concerned with management functions and acts as a buffer between patrol officers and upper management. In turn, the top command is consumed with the politics of managing police organizations and being accountable to external stakeholders.

> (Workman-Stark, 2017, p. 25)

So what sort of culture should you seek to develop?

Looking beyond the various subcultures that can emerge, it is worth considering what the positive characteristics of a culture might look like. Unfortunately for anyone in a leadership role, there is no single ideal culture which can be aspired to; cultures are by definition very context-specific and rely on the particular needs of an organisation, its people and those it serves. This is one of the reasons why cultural change can be so difficult.

American psychologist Carol Dweck (2017) provided an interesting perspective on culture, arguing that the way we approach challenges and opportunities very much depends on our 'mindset'. This is described in greater detail by Knell and O'Mara (2017) as follows:

> Your mindset is the characteristic way you face challenges and adversity: as opportunities to learn and grow, even from failure (a 'growth' or 'incremental' mindset), or by retreating to safety, and being wary of failure (a fixed 'mindset'). Mindsets manifest themselves in how you talk to yourself ('I can't do that, because …' or 'I'd like to try that, because …'), and in your behaviour (going

forward to the challenge, with a determination to learn, or avoiding the challenge because of fears about the stigma of failure).

<div align="right">(Knell and O'Mara, 2017, p. 10)</div>

Research has also found that, rather than simply relating to individuals, mindsets also exist on an organisational level and are reflective of an underlying culture.

> An organization's mindset is the belief that it and its workforce have about the nature of talent and ability. … Some companies foster a fixed mindset 'culture of genius,' in which talent is worshipped. This type of organizational culture asserts that employees either have it or they don't, when it comes to skills and learning capabilities.
>
> Other organizations, however, foster a growth mindset 'culture of development.' This type of organizational culture asserts that people can grow and improve with effort, good strategies, and good mentoring. Culture-of-development organizations foster growth mindset, actively seeking to stretch their employees and promote new skills.

<div align="right">(Senn-Delaney, 2014)</div>

This same research has found that organisations with a growth-mindset culture tend to perform better than those with a fixed-mindset culture and are better able to cope with challenge, change and adversity. There are consequently important lessons here for leaders (in terms of how they approach the challenges facing them), their team and organisations like the police in working with the community.

Activity 7 Developing an effective team culture
Allow approximately 10 minutes

In the following video, former Olympian Lady Mary Peters talks about the challenges of developing an effective team culture and, most particularly, the role of a leader in this process.

As you are watching, reflect on your own experience and understanding of team culture and the role that team leaders have played.

Make some notes about your own experience of positive and less positive team cultures and the impact that this had on performance within the team.

Video content is not available in this format.
Video 2 Former Olympian Lady Mary Peters discusses developing an effective team culture

Provide your answer...

Discussion

There is no one simple answer to this activity – everyone's experience will be different although, if you were to discuss this with colleagues, you may well find you have identified similar ideas. Reflecting on any similarities or even differences can help you to understand the perspectives of others and act as an important bridge towards a shared and effective team culture. This is not so much about ignoring differences but rather recognising that different perspectives are a natural component of all teams.

8 Leaders, empowerment and accountability

> It's not the tools that you have faith in – tools are just tools. They work, or they don't work. It's people you have faith in or not.

(Steve Jobs in Goodell, 1994)

A key element of an effective culture that supports distributed leadership, a growth-mindset culture and leadership at every level within an organisation or community, is *empowerment*. Empowerment can be understood as a reflection of increased motivation 'resulting from an individual's positive orientation to his or her work' (Bowditch and Buono, 2005, p. 222).

There are two basic forms of empowerment, each of which can play a critical role in the success of an organisation:

- structural empowerment
- psychological empowerment.

Structural empowerment relates to the extent to which people are empowered to make decisions within the scope of their job. It implicitly assumes, therefore, that power and decision making are shared through an organisation, most particularly by managers with their teams. To be successful, structural empowerment relies on participative decision making and an open flow of information up and down the chain of command within an organisation, or backwards and forwards between the police and communities.

Psychological empowerment, on the other hand, relates to the beliefs that people hold about their job and employer. It is very much about how people view their organisation and the extent to which they identify with the organisation and its mission. In organisations with high levels of psychological empowerment, people are encouraged to

- identify with the **purpose** and **values** of the organisation
- develop their **self-belief** in their competence to carry out their job and their ability to impact on organisational outcomes.

Additionally, in organisations with high levels of psychological empowerment, individual autonomy over *how* work tasks are completed is fostered.

Critically, these two forms of empowerment are not mutually exclusive and can (and do!) reinforce each other.

Activity 8 Quiz: How empowered are you?
Allow approximately 10 minutes

In this activity, you are required to complete a poll designed to gauge how empowered you actually feel in your own work or community context. The results of the poll will also help to shed light on your understanding of the different forms empowerment can take. (People can be more empowered in some aspects of their professional life than others.) The goal of the poll is to provide you with a personal snapshot of your own level of empowerment that you can then reflect on with others.

Think about your current or most recent job or role within a community organisation. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. (You can download a copy of this poll if you wish to mark up your answers.) PDF version here

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am involved in decisions that affect my work.	1	2	3	4	5
Decisions are made at the lowest appropriate level.	1	2	3	4	5
I am not closely supervised at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I can decide how I perform my work tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
I am easily able to access all the information I need to perform my work tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
Information flows freely up and down the hierarchy of my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
I can suggest improvements to work processes.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel my opinions about how best to perform my work tasks are listened to.	1	2	3	4	5
My manager is more concerned with my output than with how I do my job.	1	2	3	4	5
I can influence the goals and objectives of my job.	1	2	3	4	5

Add up your scores for each item to see your total score out of 50.

Provide your answer...

Discussion

In this poll, the higher your score, the more you are empowered within your current role or community position. You might wish to reflect on this and consider what it is that makes you feel so empowered. Is it the opportunities you have or perhaps your role and title? Or are you empowered by being given permission – whether implicit or explicit – to take responsibility?

Looking beyond outcomes for individuals, why should organisations and leaders care about empowerment? There are a number of different perspectives on this.

Recent research by Lee, Willis and Tian (2018) found a number of important implications for leaders that can stem from taking a more empowering approach.

First, empowering leaders are much more effective at influencing employee creativity and citizenship behavior (i.e., behavior that is not formally recognized or rewarded like helping coworkers or attending work functions that aren't mandatory) than routine task performance. Second, by empowering their employees, these leaders are also more likely to be trusted by their subordinates, compared to leaders who do not empower their employees.

(Lee, Willis and Tian, 2018)

In a similar vein, Armstrong (2012, p. 396) observes that leaders highlight a number of important reasons for taking an empowerment-based approach to leadership.

- It engenders greater trust, fairness and openness in the workplace.
- It leads to more harmonious relationships and conflict is resolved through 'win-win' approaches.
- It supports greater employee engagement.
- Employees are treated as stakeholders.
- Employees are more committed to the interests of the organisation.

One organisation that focuses very much on empowerment is the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Group. Their approach is discussed in Box 1.

Box 1: Seven advantages of employee empowerment

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Group is famous the world over for its superior levels of customer service. Less well known, however, is the fact that they are strong advocates of employee empowerment as a way of enhancing the customer service of which they are so proud. So what do they see as the key benefits of empowerment? The following are just some of the benefits they have experienced:

- Employees are more accountable
- Employees are more attentive
- Employees will feel more valued
- Employees will be more invested in work
- Problems are resolved faster
- Customers experience better service
- Organizations are more nimble.

(Ritz-Carlton Hotel Group, 2015)

So how can an organisation drive greater empowerment? Bowditch and Buono (2005, p. 222) suggest four key approaches:

- Employees must have information on organisational performance and outcomes.
- Employees must be rewarded or recognised for their contributions to organisational performance.
- Employees must have the knowledge and skills to enable them to understand and contribute to organisational performance.

- Employees must be given the power to make decisions that influence work procedures and organisational direction.

Activity 9 How empowered is your team?

Allow approximately 30 minutes

In an earlier activity you were asked to assess your own level of empowerment. In this activity, you are required to ask yourself (or even your team!), as team-leader, how empowered your team feel that they are. You might be positively surprised, but either way the activity will provide useful feedback on your own approach to leadership.

> *Provide your answer...*

Discussion

While reflecting on your empowerment can be difficult, reflecting on feedback from your own team members can be even more challenging. Nonetheless, it can be very much worth doing as a way of learning about your own impact as a leader and how you might become more effective by further empowering your team members.

---

9 Leading through change

No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main.

(John Donne, 1624 (2014) *Meditation XVII*)

Change is a seeming constant these days. Whether it is a political change, social change or organisational change, the world appears to be becoming more and more dynamic. The fixed points that we felt we could rely on are no more, and there is constant pressure on organisations and individuals to change, improve and adapt.

Activity 10 What is changing in your world?
Allow approximately 15 minutes

Think about and note down some of the things that are changing in your world. These could relate to any of the following areas:

- personal
- work
- national.

What is the impact that each of these is having on you and your role as a leader?

> *Provide your answer...*

Discussion

In many ways change is a constant and something that might seem to be out of our immediate control. Taking a moment to step back and understand both what is changing and the impact of these changes can help us to more effectively grapple with the challenges that emerge. This is most especially so if we are able to take back a sense of control and even pre-empt or 'get ahead' of the changes that might be coming our way in the future.

When considering change at all levels, the role of leadership cannot be ignored. Comparative research for CEPOL, the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training, found that successful change processes in policing have several factors in common (Christe-Zeyse, 2013):

- They are usually originated from within the police
- The need for the change can be expressed in police terms
- Good leadership is critical.

Whatever changes you and your organisation experience, the chances are that they will lead to a degree of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, or **VUCA** – a term which has become increasingly popular as a way of describing the changes organisations have experienced. VUCA looks at those changes in terms of how much might be known

about a situation (ranging from not very much to quite a bit) and how predictable the results are from actions you might take (ranging from completely unpredictable to highly predictable).

The VUCA diagram below has been completed from the perspective of a retailer experiencing change. It outlines characteristics and examples of each of the four elements of VUCA – volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity – as well as potential approaches to coping with those changes.

Figure 7 The four VUCA challenges (adapted from Bennett and Lemoine, 2014, p. 27)

Activity 11 How might VUCA events impact on you?
Allow approximately 10 minutes

As you reflect on the VUCA model consider the characteristics, example and approach in each quadrant. Can you envisage how these kinds of event might impact on you, your role or your organisation overall? You might wish to capture your thoughts in the box below.

Provide your answer...

Discussion

Considering the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity inherent in the external environment can help you to pre-empt future challenges and also future opportunities.

An awareness of the relative degrees of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity in any one situation, and particularly changes in that situation, can help you to evaluate any steps you might need to take as a leader to better support yourself and your colleagues. To any extent, your approach to leading through change will also depend on the nature of the change taking place. Is the change emergent (i.e. ongoing and fluid or spontaneous in nature) or is it planned? Is it simply one of fine-tuning (i.e. incremental) or does it involve a significant transformation of how policing services are delivered?

At the same time, however, your approach to leading through change will depend on the people within the organisation. How people respond to change can very much depend on their prior experiences and whether they are perhaps feeling 'change fatigue', defined by Stensaker et al. (2002, p. 298) as 'the individual's response of becoming disorientated or dysfunctional as a result of too much stimulation' – or, in other words, feeling overwhelmed, exhausted and demoralised as a consequence of an ever-changing context and a perceived lack of control.

Ultimately, organisational change rarely goes according to plan. Given that you can never fully isolate the effects of uncertainty and change (Dawson, 1996), the leader's role is today more critical than ever.

Activity 12 Your role as a leader in change

Allow approximately 10 minutes

In the following video, Temporary Assistant Chief Constable (T/ACC) Tim Mairs of the Police Service of Northern Ireland talks about the challenges of leading change.

As you are watching, reflect on your own experience of change – whether as someone leading change, someone who has been a member of a team or organisation which has undergone change or perhaps as a service user who has had to adjust to a changing context.

Make some notes about how effectively you feel the change was managed and how it might have been managed differently.

Video content is not available in this format.

Video 3 Temporary Assistant Chief Constable Tim Mairs discusses the challenges of leading change

Provide your answer...

Discussion

As T/ACC Mairs highlights, leading change can be both challenging and difficult. Nonetheless, there are times when we all need to adjust to a changing context and it is in these situations that leadership skills are required. For leaders, the challenge is two-fold: first, leaders must be able to recognise and themselves work with a changing context; second, leaders must be able to draw upon a repertoire of leadership skills and employ them appropriately depending on the needs of the situation and their

team. Yet, more than just a challenge, this is an opportunity for individuals at all levels to really step up to leadership.

Summary

In this course you have examined the question of leadership. You learned that, when considering leadership, a key point to remember is that 'being a leader' is less about position, rank or title and more about behaviours and attitudes. You learned that leaders are found at all levels within organisations, and that it is up to each individual to decide how they are going to step up to leadership.

References

Ancona, D., Malone, T., Orlikowski, W. and Senge, P. (2007) 'In Praise of the Incomplete Leader', Harvard Business Review, vol. 85, no. 2, pp. 92–100 [Online]. Available at https://hbr.org/2007/02/in-praise-of-the-incomplete-leader (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Armstrong, M. (2012) Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice, 12th edn, London, Kogan Page.

Bennet, N. and Lemoine, G. (2014) 'What VUCA Really Means for You', Harvard Business Review, January–February [Online]. Available at https://hbr.org/2014/01/what-vuca-really-means-for-you (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Bowditch, J. L. and Buono, A. F. (2005) A Primer on Organizational Behaviour, 6th edn, Hoboken, NJ, Wiley.

Christe-Zeyse, J. (2013) 'Effective Change Management in the Police: Insights From a European Research Project' [Online]. Available at: https://www.cepol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/22-change-management.pdf (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Covey, S. (1989) Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, New York, Simon and Schuster.

Dawson, S. J. N. D. (1996) Analysing Organisations, Hampshire, Macmillan.

Deal, T. E. and Kennedy, A. A. (1982) Corporate Cultures: The Rites and Rituals of Corporate Life, Harmondsworth, Penguin.

Dempsey, J. and Forst, L. (2011) Police. Clifton Park, NY, Delmar.

Donne, J. (2014). Devotions upon Emergent Occasions. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Dubrin, A. J. (2010) Principles of Leadership, 6th edn, Boston, South-Western.

Dweck, C. (2017) Mindset-Updated Edition: Changing The Way You think To Fulfil Your Potential, Hachette UK.

The Economist (2014) 'Decluttering the Company', 2 August [Online]. Available at: https://www.economist.com/business/2014/08/02/decluttering-the-company (Accessed 17 April, 2019).

Fiske, S.T. (2011) Envy up, scorn down: How status divides us. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Flynn, E. A. and Herrington, V. (2015) 'Towards a Profession of Police Leadership', pp. 1–18, US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice [Online]. Available at https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/248573.pdf (Accessed 17 Apriil 2019).

Goodell, J. (1994) 'Steve Jobs in 1994: The Rolling Stone Interview', Rolling Stone, 17 January [Online]. Available at https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/steve-jobs-in-1994-the-rolling-stone-interview-231132/ (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Handy, C. (1992) 'The Language Of Leadership' in Syrett, D. (ed.) Frontiers of Leadership, Oxford, Blackwell.

Harris, A. (2014) 'Distributed Leadership', Teacher, 29 September [Online]. Available at https://www.teachermagazine.com.au/articles/distributed-leadership (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Hersey, P. and Blanchard, K. (1969) 'Life cycle theory of leadership', Training and Development Journal, vol. 23, pp. 26–34.

Knell, L. and O'Mara, S. (2017) Changing Mindsets in Organisations, One Brain at a Time. Issue 26 [Online]. Available at: https://iedp.cld.bz/ Developing-Leaders-issue-26-Spring-20171/ 10. (Accessed 17 June, 2018).

Kotter, J. (1990) 'What leaders really do?', Harvard Business Review, vol. 68, no.3, pp. 103–111.

Lee, A., Willis, S. and Tian, A. W. (2018) 'When Empowering Employees Works, and When It Doesn't', Harvard Business Review [Online]. Available at https://hbr.org/2018/03/when-empowering-employees-works-and-when-it-doesnt (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Lyons, A. and O'Mara, A. (2016) 'People as Brands, Brands as People', Developing Leaders, issue 22, pp. 23–28.

Northouse, P. (2010) Leadership: Theory and Practice (5th edn), Thousand Oaks, Sage.

O'Mara, S. (2017) A Brain for Business, A Brain for Life, Switzerland, Palgrave MacMillan.

Pearson-Goff, M. and Herrington, V. (2013) 'Police leadership: A systematic review of the literature', Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 14–26.

Ritz-Carlton Hotel Group (2015) 'Seven Advantages of Employee Empowerment' [Online]. Available at http://ritzcarltonleadershipcenter.com/2015/11/seven-advantages-of-employee-empowerment/ (Accessed 17 April 2019).

Schafer, J. A. (2009) 'Developing effective leadership in policing: perils, pitfalls, and paths forward', Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 238–260.

Schein, E. (1992) Organizational culture and leadership, San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

Senn-Delaney (2014) Stanford organisational mindset study findings. Availableat http://knowledge.senndelaney.com/docs/thought_papers/pdf/stanford_agilitystudy_hart.pdf (Accessed 21 April, 2018).

Stensaker, I., Falkenberg, J., Meyer, C. B. and Haueng, A. C. (2002) 'Excessive change: coping mechanisms and consequences', Organizational Dynamics, vol. 31, no. 3, pp. 296–312.

Trice, H. M. and Beyer, J. M. (1991) 'Cultural leadership in organizations', Organization Science, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 149–169.

Workman-Stark, A. L. (2017) Inclusive Policing from the Inside Out, New York, NY, Springer.

Acknowledgements

Don't miss out

If reading this text has inspired you to learn more, you may be interested in joining the millions of people who discover our free learning resources and qualifications by visiting The Open University – www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses.