LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is such a complex subject that rather than decoding the principles of leadership and quantificating it by theoretical aspects of what this language of leadership is,apparently there is no single language of leadership, one side there is all the new thoughts and ideas claimed to put together by the organization about leadership while on the other side there is another conflicting situations within the organization that there is not enough support for the people which somewhere prevents them to emerge as global leaders. They don't know which program to align themselves to become a global leader. They have the dilemmas of whether and when to use, if at all, their technical skills to switch from one area to a different area. This paper describes the traits and styles to understand about various approaches that help the person to emerge as a leader as even minor incremental refinement brings a huge difference.

Key words: Leadership, Influence, Power

Introduction

Mostly there are queries generally from engineers that whether there should be a job description for leadership or not. Job description misleads at times. It mentions the important ten tasks a job holder is expected to do and take care of, skills that are expected and required to be shown but

actually never talks about or describes the potential. A job description never tells about or supports the aspirations of an individual, at the same time it limits the scope of performance. At times it just restricts the opportunity firstly to grow and secondly no bigger responsibilities that brings frustration among the leaders at different levels in the organization.

Every company starts with a goal and works for a purpose. Every single effort or contribution that bring value to the organization should always be appreciated and encouraged e.g new benchmark set for customer satisfaction or development of a better quality product is always welcomed and expected, which may or may not fall under the targeted tasks described in a JD.

Setting our own aspirations is very important in our professional life and a job description never teaches anyone to do that. Each individual in an organization consciously or subconsciously want his own blank canvas to draw his picture, write his own job description as long as it meets and contribute the organizational purpose. There are good things down the line as we step out of the limit of this Job description. Going beyond job description is not risk taking.

Leadership is something that comes from inside and is within and cannot be given to anyone. The Three major dimensions of leadership are:

I-   stands for Inspiration. A leader has to inspire not just oneself but others and help people to set higher, bigger goals. It's not just defining the journey but setting the inspiration

C-   stands for Communication. Networking, customer satisfaction and what not should be well communicated, and well understood.

E-   stands for Execution, which is all about showing the results.

To take on leadership role at whatever level it might be it requires exercising new set of skills, thinking little bit differently, having more empathy for those around them, willing to take new challenges, new risk, more open to ambiguity, putting themselves in a situation, where they are not comfortable as they used to be. Leadership is more about team work so it

is more about communicating and networking. Leadership is more about 'leaning in' philosophy, being able to understand others point of view.

Influence and Leadership

Influence is defined as a force one person exerts on someone else to induce a change in the target, including changes in the behavior, opinions, attitudes, goals, needs and values" and the ability to affect the behavior of others in a particular direction."

Leadership is the act of influencing others to get the support and implement the decisions which are perceived as necessary. In other words leadership is the act of influencing outcomes. One of the most important trait that is being identified with an effective and great leader is Empathy, which means if the person really knows how to put himself in other shoes or not. Many of the traits e.g. good listeners can happen only if a leader has the ability to empathize. Empathy just not means to feel for somebody but it is getting out of one's skin to understand others. Once a person is capable to do that, he inevitably becomes curious,becomes a good listener, he inevitably wants to get more information from others and can sympathize with different point of views. The moment it happens the person can hear and integrate all the information and become a constant learning machine.The entire good thing about manager that is required be it understanding, sympathy to people's need and desires, all those come to play if the person has this one quality and i.e. Empathy.

The other trait that sounds like a cliché at times is about the quality where a person is capable of both right and left brain thinking. The people just with the huge spectrum knowledge not necessarily become a good leader, whereas the people who know and understand how to think visually, how to understand creatively, the people who can visualize different world, capable to understand different perspective, can integrate different points together. People who can cope with the volatile and uncertain world, people who are capable of joining the dots, people who can see the desperate points of view, weigh them and find an ability to integrate them.

Leadership is about influence. If a person understands how to influence others and influence them correctly, that person can increase the influence and at the same time can increase the

leadership with that person. The different levels of leadership are actually the levels of influence and with the increase in each level of influence results in the increase in levels of leadership. The higher people go on this ladder, they expand their leadership, they expand their influence and they expand their effectiveness.

The different levels of leadership are also the levels of Influence that determine how effective a person is in his leadership role. These levels identifies not only the leadership effectiveness but also the extent of influence that leader has over his followers. These levels are described as:

Level 1: Position

It is the level from where everyone starts in an organization or otherwise. Almost everyone starts with a title, a Job description and a position. The key word at level number one is 'Right'. People follow because the person is the boss. A manager is being followed because he/she is the boss. The journey of leadership starts from here, but the position does not make a person a leader. The upside of this process is that people get a chance to shape and define their leadership. People can work on themselves and define who they are. The downside is the people who follow, give the least amount of their energy, their time, their ability and their effort. People do not like to follow just because they have to follow people because of their position. The positional leaders are being followed only because they have got the position and not being followed in a true sense.

Level 2: Permission

The key word at this level is 'relationship'. At this level people follow because they want to follow. The difference between first and second level is that at second level liking comes along with position. A connection between leader and the follower established and they start liking each other. Relationships with the people are foundation of leadership. Leadership is built out of relationship because relationship is all about influence. At level two, there are three things that leaders do extremely well: a) They listen well b) they observe c) they learn, and in the process of doing all these, they have an attitude to serve which they love to do.If an individual has to grow as a leader, he has to grow beyond position.

Level 3: Production

The key word at this level is 'Results'. The leaders start to help the bottom line of the organization. They become effective as a leader at this level because they produce. At this level they show the following characteristics: a) They produce by setting example how to be effective and how to be productive. They believe in the motivational principle of "people do what people see". b) They model themselves to gain credibility. c) They attract and followed by those who possess the same attitude and characteristics, which contribute to gain that momentum, where they don't resolve the problem but create that momentum that solve problems.

Level 4: People Development

An organization grows when the people in that organization grow. At this level leaders understand the most important asset of any organization 'the people'. Leaders commit to themselves to develop people. They increase their peoples' capacity. They equip people to become successful. Successful leaders discover what the other person is good at and position them accordingly, because they know no matter how much talented a person is, if he is out of position he will never reach to his potential. The leaders at this level recruit well, position well and equip well and this is how fine tune the people.

Level 5: Pinnacle

The key word at this level is 'Respect'. The people follow a leader for who they are, what they have done.

A leader cannot be at the same level with all the people around. An effective leader analyses at what level he is with different people, they only he can know how to lead them. Every leader is viewed through this five level grid. A person at level one looks at a leader in an entirely different way than a person at level four. The commitment level gets higher at higher levels. So when a leader has to cast a vision or tell everyone what has to achieve, they should always understand the level of influence so they can lead well.

Global leaders have that right attitude, understanding and respect for their team. They know and understand the power of influence and identify at what level they are with the people they lead.

Conclusion

Mastering the art of influence is a key leadership component. A person who understands the importance of influence only can understand his level of leadership with the other person and lead effectively. An effective leader will understand what influence tactic work best for the situation and the person or a group of people.No longerdo legitimate and coercive powers hold the edge. More often the potential leaders use same influentialtactics over and over again getting few results because the tactics applied inappropriately and not aligns with the desired results. If ideas are to be accepted toward a given change, the leaders must learn the art of influence.

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