

6

Visions of Leadership

One of the surprises Kelly Marshall discovered during her first year is that as a principal, she is often expected to appear and give talks to a variety of groups. On one such recent occasion, she was invited to speak in front of the merchants' association in the neighborhood served by her school. The topic for the session was "Leadership for Our Community," and Kelly was joined by the president of the association, the administrator of a local hospital, and the pastor of the largest church congregation in the area. Each person was asked to present a personal definition of leadership and then talk about how that view was likely to have a positive effect on the neighborhood.

As Kelly prepared for her presentation, she thought very seriously about a topic that she believed to be critical in terms of her ability to serve as an effective principal. She looked over notes she had taken in graduate courses at the university, glanced at a few of the many books about leadership she had read during the past few years, and recalled the comments she made during the interviews she went through during the application process for her present job. All the questions about whether or not "leaders are born, not made" and what constitutes effective leadership returned to her as she organized her thoughts on the subject. But the core question, "What is leadership?" was not completely settled as she awaited her turn to talk to the community group.

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The speaking engagement for the neighborhood association caused Kelly to do something most beginning principals are likely to do after stepping into their jobs. People make continued reference to school administrators as "leaders" or as people who will provide "leadership." As those words become more than mere academic terms, however, the truth often begins to sink in

that those who are called on to lead often need an opportunity to consider just what that responsibility involves.

In this chapter, we consider the concept of leadership from a variety of perspectives. I begin by developing a broad view of this complex topic, seeking a definition that appears in a variety of contexts. Then I review theoretical perspectives of leadership behavior from both descriptive and normative points of view. The chapter concludes with an examination of the concept of instructional leadership.

Before beginning the review of what others have said about the topic, how do you personally define *leadership*?

Alternative Definitions

When people talk about how an organization works, the issue of leadership almost always becomes a part of the dialogue. The presence or absence of this characteristic has a strong and direct impact on the effectiveness of the organization. Organizational analysts struggle to find a basic definition of the concept of leadership. In this section, I present a number of different definitions to help you determine some basic characteristics that you need to analyze your own sense of leadership behavior as it may relate to your future work in schools.

Gary Yukl (1991) pulled together several different definitions of leadership as part of a comprehensive review of this topic. Leadership can be defined in following ways:

The behavior of an individual when he is directing the activities of a group toward a shared goal (Hemphill & Coons, 1957, p. 7)

Interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals (Tannenbaum, Weshler, & Massarik, 1961, p. 24)

The initiation and maintenance of structure in expectation and interaction (Stogdill, 1974, p. 41)

An interaction between persons in which one presents information of a sort and in such a manner that the other becomes convinced that his outcomes (benefits/cost ratio) will be improved if he behaves in the manner suggested or desired (Jacobs, 1970, p. 232)

A particular type of power relationship characterized by a group member's perceptions that another group member has the right to prescribe behavior patterns for the former regarding his activity as a group member (Janada, 1960, p. 358)

An influence process whereby O's actions change P's behavior, and P views the influence attempt as being legitimate and the change as consistent with P's goals (Kochran, Schmidt, & DeCotiis, 1975, p. 285)

Two additional definitions of leadership are "the process of influencing others to achieve mutually agreed upon purposes for the organization" (Peterson, 1987, p. 3) and "that behavior of an individual which initiates a new structure in interaction within a social system; it initiates changes in the goals, objectives, configurations, procedures, inputs, processes, and ultimately the outputs of social systems" (Lipham & Hoeh, 1974, p. 196). Although all these definitions represent a wide range of ideas about organizational leadership, they display some common themes: (a) All suggest that the central feature of leadership is an interpersonal relationship in which one individual influences, guides, or controls the behaviors of others and (b) most definitions suggest that leadership implies some sort of change—that leaders promote movement in the organization or in the behaviors of people in the organization.

Recent research on leadership has also emphasized another simple but important fact: Leaders must have followers. The result of this has been the analysis of a set of behaviors often described in the literature as "follower-ship." This is a critical issue to consider in light of the view that effective instructional leaders are people who empower others.

Regardless of the definition, leadership is a critical issue both in schools and in other organizations. Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (1985) studied leader behavior in many different settings and concluded that this topic has relevance for at least three major reasons:

1. Organizations are suffering from a "commitment gap"; people do not believe in what their organizations stand for because leaders have not developed that sense of belief in their followers.

2. The level of complexity in modern society is higher than it has been before. Predictability and stability are characteristics that are actually absent from most organizations today.
3. Organizational credibility is disappearing. Generally accepted authority figures are being questioned and challenged more often today because so many leaders have disappointed their followers in recent years.

Bennis and Nanus also suggest that leadership is no longer a simple academic term to be understood by social scientists but a very real concept that has meaning for everyone. As an educational leader, it is critical that you develop a genuine and personal definition of leadership as one important plank in your educational platform.

Descriptive Versus Normative Views

Leadership has been analyzed in two fundamentally different ways. The first of these is *descriptive*, in which leadership is defined as a particular set of identifiable, observable behaviors, actions, traits, or characteristics. No effort is made to suggest the correct or appropriate ways leaders may achieve these features. Descriptive views present "what is," not "what ought to be."

The second way of analyzing leadership is *normative*, in which an agenda is provided that is intended to shape future behavior and practice. Normative views suggest "what ought to be" or at least how things are likely to appear, given certain changes taking place in the environment. A normative analysis of leadership behavior might define those things an individual should do to appear as a certain type of leader under certain conditions.

Before moving forward with a review of either descriptive or normative views, let us consider how leadership has been conceptually developed from a historical frame of reference.

Historical Development of Leadership

The analysis of leadership in organizations has proceeded through at least four major stages: "great person," traitist, situational or sociological, and behavioral.

Great Person Approach

The great person perspective is a psychologically-based approach that suggests that leadership is determined primarily by the personality of the individual. If we wish to understand what characteristics constitute leadership,

then we should look to how a particular individual, or "great person," demonstrated leadership in the past.

A famous practitioner of this theory of leadership was General George Patton, who often determined how to deal with a military problem by reviewing what famous historical characters had done under similar circumstances. An avid student of military history, Patton often charted a path for the U.S. army during World War II based on the strategies of Caesar, Hannibal, or other great military leaders of the past. The great person approach to leadership analysis is seen more frequently than we might at first assume. Young children, for instance, have long been advised to read the biographies and autobiographies of famous people to learn how such people lived.

Although this approach to understanding leadership is tempting, it has severe drawbacks. For one thing, we can never find a single great person as a role model, because the exact circumstances of two lives will never be the same. Reading about the life of Abraham Lincoln does not enable us to follow in his footsteps, because so much of Lincoln's behavior was shaped by conditions in early 19th-century downstate Illinois.

A second limitation to the great person view is that the "person" has historically been defined in male terms. The net effect of this sexism is that women who aspire to leadership roles have been forced, usually in subtle ways, to find male role models; they have been trained to act like men. Ultimately, this ignores differences between how men and women might function most effectively, a major problem identified by Charol Shakeshaft (1987) in her analysis of gender differences in school administration.

Finally, great person approaches to leadership limit the creative behavior of present leaders. Instead of asking "What would Caesar have done under these circumstances?", the modern leader might more profitably explore new ways of facing a problem. By relying exclusively on the past behaviors of others for guidance, people in leadership roles will rarely bring about changes so often needed in dynamic organizations.

Traitist Approach

The great person approach suggests that we study individual leaders; a related view suggests that to understand how leaders behave, we should examine several individuals to determine common characteristics or traits. The student of leadership might note, for example, that leaders of successful corporations are tall, attended Ivy League universities, and drive big cars. We might conclude then that a way to the top of a major company would be to enroll at Penn, buy a Cadillac, and, if possible, grow a few inches (or at least buy a pair of elevator shoes!).

Once again, the traitist approach to the study of leadership is appealingly simple and straightforward. It suggests that an educational leader who

wants to be perceived as effective might constructively spend time figuring out which of his or her predecessors were viewed as effective and identifying and copying traits found in all those individuals. The realization that "dressing for success" sometimes produces an executive may make trait analysis seem like a reasonable strategy, but there are some obvious drawbacks.

Traits analyzed in this approach are frequently characteristics over which we have little control. A short follower wishing to acquire leadership characteristics cannot, of course, suddenly become tall. In addition, there is danger in generalizing from limited examples. The lives of Abraham Lincoln and Lyndon Johnson might reinforce the notion that physical height has a relationship to leadership ability, but how do we explain the ability of Napoleon in both the military and political spheres? And how could we appreciate the leadership skills of Ms. Smith, the local elementary school principal who is doing a great job, even though she is barely 5'2" tall?

Finally, traitist leadership approaches are highly restrictive. When people focus on specific, similar traits of past leaders, they tend to be unduly biased toward those traits. Perhaps the traits of the leader even overshadow other components necessary to run the organization. Thus, traits of past leaders should not be restricted to the traits of past leaders. Consider the following example: If we were to select school superintendents and principals based on traits common to past holders of these positions, we would limit our search to white, married males who had previously been coaches. The fact that the majority of present school administrators possess these traits is probably testimony to the popularity of the traitist perspective. Popularity, however, is no excuse for the maintenance of delimiting practice.

Situational Approach

In sharp contrast to the great person and traitist approaches, which emphasize physical and psychological characteristics, in the study of leadership, the situational approach maintains that leadership is determined by the characteristics of individuals than by the requirements of the group or the settings in which the individual works. According to this view, acts of leadership are the direct result of situations that arise in groups or organizations that call for those acts. Thus, an individual's exercise of leadership is brought about by the demands of the group with which the individual must interact. John Hemphill (1949) conducted a comprehensive sociological study of the impact of leaders according to differences of groups. He found such variables as viscosity (the feelings of cohesion in a group), hedonicity (the degree of satisfaction of group members), size of the group, homogeneity of group members, and intimacy among individuals in the group correlate significantly with leadership effectiveness. Inevitably, how

researchers realized that if the study of leadership focused purely on such situationally specific issues as how particular groups react to particular individuals, then the study of leadership would no longer be possible.

The actions of World War I hero Sergeant Alvin York provide examples for a good deal of situational leadership analysis. York might never have been recognized in history had he remained a poor Tennessee farmer who wanted to stay out of the war entirely. However, he was drafted and served in the army. He was in the right place at precisely the right time to capture more German prisoners of war than any other soldier. A clear limitation of the theory that situations alone evoke leadership behavior is that it ignores almost completely the individual's characteristics as a leader. Alvin York would not have been a military leader without World War I, but his leadership potential might have been realized in some other field. We have no way of knowing.

Behavioral Approach

More recent analyses of leadership examine the behavior of leaders and balance elements of both the psychological (great person and traitist) and situational approaches. This perspective recognizes that a leader's behavior is the result of a blend of both personal characteristics and the situations in which the leader must act. Basic assumptions in this view are the following:

- People behave according to different leadership styles. This occurs because people differ in how they perceive a situation, accomplish tasks, interact with others, and make decisions.
- People behave differently depending on contextual circumstances. As a result, behavior changes.
- There is no single "right way" for people to behave.
- What is comfortable and "right" for one person may feel uncomfortable and "wrong" for another.
- An organization functions best when it capitalizes on the strengths of each individual, encouraging the recognition and celebration of difference.

Alternative Descriptive Models

Three alternative leadership perspectives are presented below as illustrations of descriptive theories or models. These approaches all make use of behavioral terms. They were developed by Andrew Halpin and James A. Winer (1957), Robert House (1973), and popular recent descriptions by Stephen Covey (1991).

Halpin and Winer

According to these two researchers, a leader's behavior is composed of two basic dimensions: initiating structure and consideration, defined by Halpin (1957) as follows:

- *Initiating structure.* Behavior that delineates the relationship between the leader and members of the work group and endeavors to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure
- *Consideration.* Behavior that indicates friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and the staff

House

House (1973) used terms derived largely from the work of Halpin and Winer for describing leadership behavior: instrumental, supportive, and participative.

- *Instrumental leadership.* Behavior that delineates the relationship between the leader and members of the work group and attempts to clearly define fine patterns of the organization without autocratic or punitive control
- *Supportive leadership.* Behavior that indicates friendship and warmth toward the work group by the leader
- *Participative leadership.* Behavior that allows subordinates to influence decisions by asking for suggestions and including the subordinates in the decision-making process

Covey

Many popular authors have attempted to isolate, identify, and describe the qualities demonstrated by effective leaders of organizations. Among these are Peters and Waterman (1982), Bennis and Nanus (1985), and Kouzes and Posner (1987). Each of these perspectives represents a blend of analyses reflecting the traditional traitist view of leadership, although each works carefully to note that leadership behavior must be appreciated in light of specific contextual reality. As a result, it might be argued that many current descriptions of leadership are also behavioral in nature.

The example of popular leadership analysis selected for a brief review here is the work of Stephen Covey (1991). His work is founded on many of the same assumptions identified as central to effective educational leadership. Covey notes eight characteristics of "principle-centered leaders":

1. *They are continually learning.* They are constantly educated by their experience.
2. *They are service oriented.* They view their roles as providing for the needs of followers, as career stops.
3. *They radiate positive energy.* They are happy and enthusiastic people.
4. *They believe in other people.* They endeavor to find the best in others, not the faults of others.
5. *They lead balanced lives.* They are not married to their work; they enjoy a full range of social, intellectual, familial, and work-related experiences.
6. *They see life as an adventure.* They see things that occur in their lives as challenges, not problems.
7. *They are synergistic.* They are able to pull together the vast resources of talent and energy found in people and events that surround them so that they can make organizational life more productive, or as the sum of many individual parts.
8. *They exercise for self-renewal.* They engage in regular exercise to strengthen themselves physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. (pp. 33-38)

Each of these theoretical perspectives on leadership can help us to understand some of the basic characteristics of leadership behavior. All are descriptive in nature and as such are somewhat limited, because they only present ways of stating what can be observed concerning leadership. Of greater value to the educational leader are normative perspectives of leadership behavior, three of which are considered next.

Alternative Normative Models

The three analyses below extend the basic descriptions of leadership attitudes and behavior so that they can be used to predict more or less desirable ways in which people "ought" to behave. These three views are the Leadership Grid of Robert Blake and Anne Adams McCauley (1991), W. J. Reddin's 3-D Theory of Leadership (1970), and the Behavior Matrix developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (1980).

Leadership Grid

As is true of most conceptualizations of leadership, the Leadership Grid model of Robert Blake and Anne Adams McCauley suggests that leadership consists of two attitudinal dimensions: a concern for people (i.e., interpersonal relations) and a concern for tasks, production, or things. This conceptualization of leadership is based on earlier work by Blake and Jane Mouton (1985), who developed the Managerial Grid. Blake and Adams McCauley's

Leadership Grid (Figure 6.1) resembles Halpin and Winer's two-dimensional managerial theory.

The Leadership Grid permits the analysis of leadership attitudes in terms of both concern for people and concern for product on a continuum of 1 (low) to 9 (high). According to Robert Owens (1987), Blake and Mouton made clear in their earlier work that 9,9 (high in both areas) is the leadership attitude pattern thought to be most effective in most organizations to achieve the best results.

Results means the effectiveness of the organization in achieving its goals and maintaining a high level of morale. Goal achievement might be measured by such indicators (in schools) as test scores, number of dropouts, percentage of graduates going on to further education, employee-management relations, community support for bond issues, and feedback from employees on the performance of graduates. Morale may be indicated by absenteeism, number of grievances, employee-management relations, and cohesive behavior of the group (Owens, 1987, p. 134).

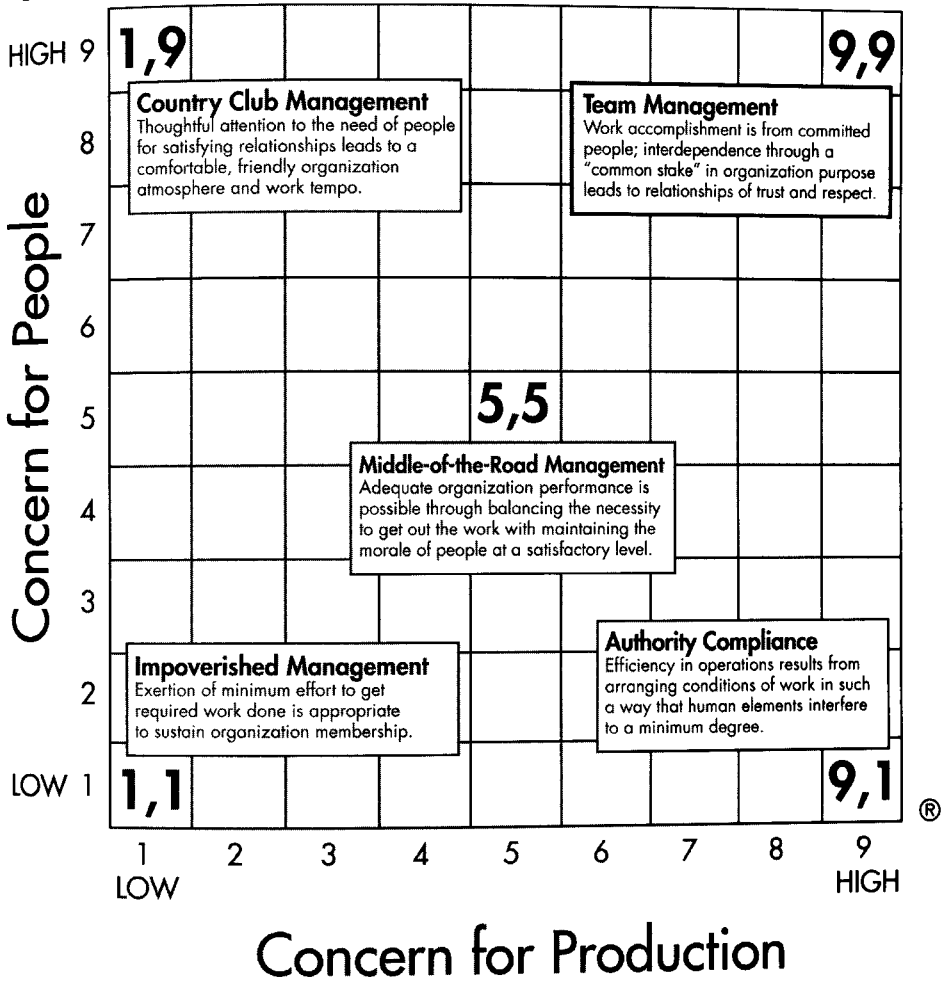
The Leadership Grid model does not simply provide more terms to describe leadership approaches; rather, its implications about the relative effectiveness of certain behaviors provide useful direction for any individual seeking to perform as an effective educational leader. A grid rating of 1,1 ("Impoverished Management"), for instance, would hardly be an appropriate pattern for an administrator called on to provide direction to a school staff. A 9,9 rating ("Team Management"), on the other hand—where equivalent emphasis is placed both on the needs of teachers, students, and staff and on school achievement—would be optimal. Variations on this most desirable level are limitless, of course. An administrator who is a proponent of human relations philosophies (see Chapter 5) would probably come closer to a 1,9 ("Country Club Management") attitude rating—high concern for people, low concern for production—whereas an administrator who believes in scientific management might achieve something closer to a 9,1 ("Authority Compliance") rating—low concern for people, high concern for production.

The Leadership Grid is widely used in both public and private management circles not only as a diagnostic, descriptive device to help individuals understand their attitudes but also as a way to appreciate points where a particular set of attitudes may be more or less appropriate than others.

Reddin's 3-D Theory of Leadership

The normative 3-D Theory of Leadership developed by W. J. Reddin (1970) goes a step beyond the Leadership Grid yet builds on the same basic concepts (concern for people versus concern for tasks). The major distinction between Reddin's view and the Leadership Grid is that any one single combination of behaviors is not necessarily better than any other combination. Figure 6.2

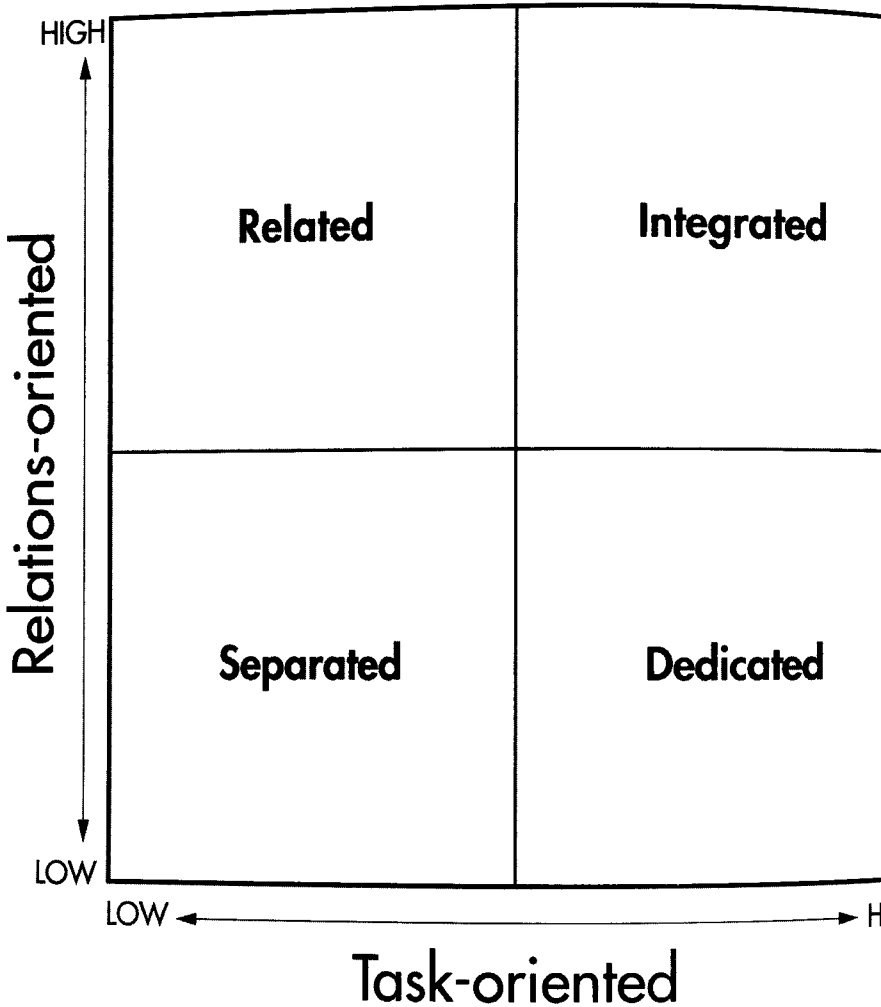
Figure 6.1. The Leadership Grid Figure



SOURCE: The Leadership Grid[®] Figure from *Leadership Dilemmas—Grid Solutions*, by Robert R. Blake and Anne Adams McCauley (formerly *The Managerial Grid Figure* by Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton). Houston: Gulf Publishing Company, p. 29. Copyright © 1991, by Scientific Methods, Inc. Reproduced by permission of the owners.

demonstrates Reddin's basic model, which simply provides descriptive classification in four quadrants: Separated (low in concern for people and task); Related (high in concern for people, low in task orientation); Dedicated (low in concern for people, high in task orientation); and Integrated (high in concern for people and task). The critical point to note is that at this basic stage, Reddin's quadrants are purely descriptive; none is better or worse than any other.

Figure 6.2. Basic Model of Reddin's 3-D Theory of Leadership



SOURCE: *Managerial Effectiveness* by W. J. Reddin (1970). Reprinted by permission.

Reddin's theory becomes normative, however, when it goes on to suggest that the basic four behaviors are more or less appropriate, depending on the unique characteristics of the situation that exists in the leader's organization. As the model in Figure 6.3 suggests, for example, the leader who demonstrates an "Integrated" style might appear to be inappropriately compromising in some circumstances. In other situations, the "high in concern for both people and task" style might be perceived as truly "executive." The "Separated" leader (low in concern for people and tasks), viewed as disconnected and a "deserter" in some situations, might be an effective and organizationally needed "bureaucrat" in other cases. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1983) summarized the overall value of Reddin's 3-D Theory of Leadership:

Figure 6.3. Effective and Ineffective Expressions of Leadership Style According to Reddin

| When Used Inappropriately | Basic Styles | When Used Appropriately |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Compromiser ← | Integrated | → Executive |
| Deserter ← | Separated | → Bureaucrat |
| Autocrat ← | Dedicated | → Benevolent Autocrat |
| Missionary ← | Related | → Developer |

SOURCE: *Managerial Effectiveness* by W. J. Reddin (1970). Reprinted by permission.

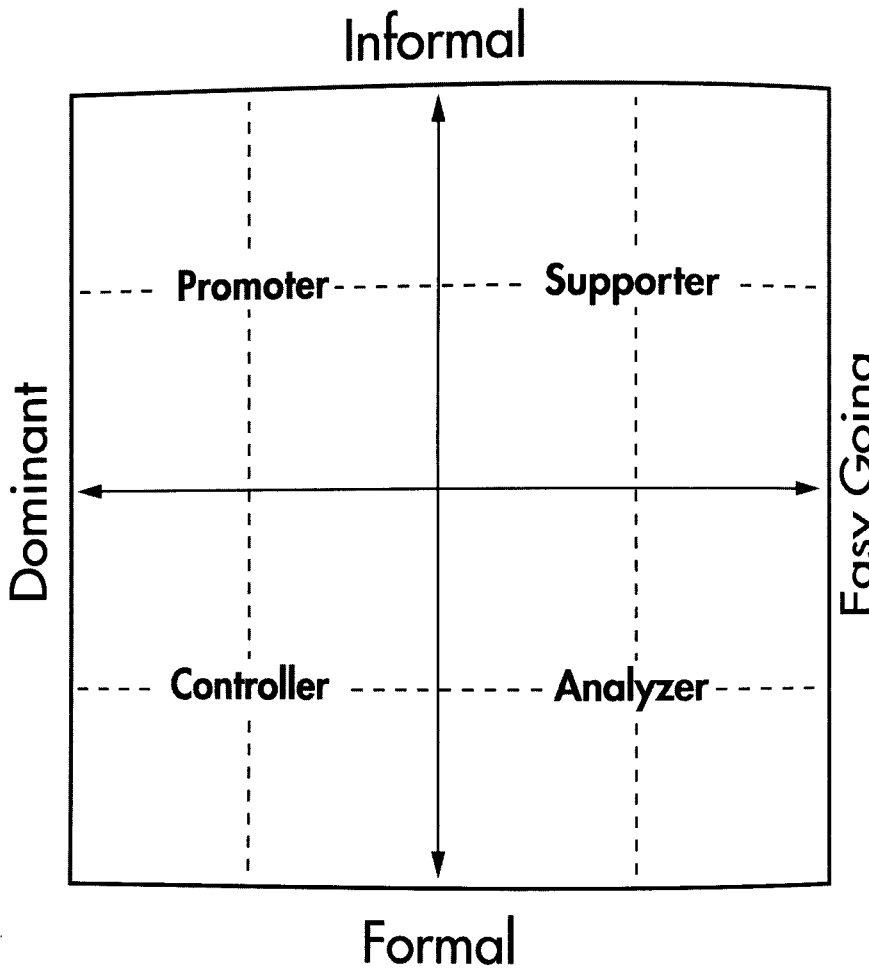
At first glance the theory seems complex and the labels chosen by Reddin confusing and on occasion inappropriate. But the language system is worth deciphering, for the concepts and ideas basic to the theory are powerful and important. A key to this theory is the notion that the same style expressed in different situations may be effective or ineffective. (p. 183)

The basic problem with Reddin’s theory is that “appropriate” and “inappropriate” situations are not clearly defined. Nevertheless, Reddin’s view of effective leadership behavior as a dynamic and situational, rather than static phenomenon is important.

Leadership Behavior Matrix

The final normative view of leadership behavior considered here is the Leadership Behavior Matrix developed by researchers at the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. This perspective is also based on the assumption that two dimensions make up leadership behavior. The major difference between this perspective and the ones reviewed earlier is that the Northwest Laboratory Matrix suggests that people are either task oriented or people oriented and either introverted or extroverted in terms of how they work with others. Figure 6.4 depicts the Leadership Behavior Matrix model, which classifies the behavior of an individual according to four distinct styles:

Figure 6.4. Leadership Behavioral Matrix Model



SOURCE: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Portland, Oregon. Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

1. *Promoters*. Extroverted and people oriented, these individuals get involved with others in active, rapidly changing situations. They are typically outgoing and friendly and can get things going but not settle for less than the best results. Promoters are highly competitive.
2. *Supporters*. Introverted, people-oriented types who value interpersonal relations, these individuals try to minimize conflict and promote the happiness of others.
3. *Analyzers*. Introverted, task-oriented people who are problem solvers and like to have all the data before making a decision. Thus, so many people get frustrated with their slow decision making.

4. *Controllers*. Extroverted and task oriented, these individuals love to run things and have jobs done their own way. They will make sure that the task is completed on time and to their satisfaction.

The critical point here is that no one leadership style is better than any other; there are no "right" or "wrong" styles. Individuals in each of the four quadrants have strengths and weaknesses that may be called on in different situations to create more effective organizational outcomes.

The Leadership Behavior Matrix is particularly useful in analyzing potential conflicts that are most apt to occur along the diagonals of the quadrants depicted in Figure 6.4. Thus, the most powerful conflicts tend to take place between promoters and analyzers and between controllers and supporters. Consider, for example, the possibility of conflict between a patient, quiet, and thoughtful analyzer, who wants more and more facts and data before acting, and the more impulsive promoter. Moreover, the action-oriented controller will no doubt have a difficult time dealing with more laid-back supporters. Conflicts are clearly going to take place in schools where all these various behavioral styles are represented, and these conflicts will be increasingly visible and powerful as people become more wedded to the predominant behavioral characteristics of a particular quadrant. More extreme promoters will probably have even more direct problems in dealing with more extreme analyzers.

The Leadership Behavior Matrix, like Blake and Adams McCauley's Leadership Grid and Reddin's 3-D Theory of Leadership, is a behaviorally based, normative model of leadership analysis. All three, properly understood, can provide direction and guidance for effective leadership practices.

Next, we consider how behavioral views of leadership have been applied to school settings by looking at the concept of instructional leadership.

Emerging Leadership Perspectives

In recent years, discussions of leadership in the context of educational organizations have built upon the behavioral theories of leadership reviewed earlier. Many of these theoretical bases have been directed toward the theme of administrator as an instructional leader (Austin, 1979; Brookover & Lezotte, 1980; Lipham, 1981; Smith & Andrews, 1989).

Instructional Leadership

Despite the number of discussions about, and support for, the concept of instructional leadership, little has been done to define the concept operationally. Few studies have been undertaken to determine the specific behaviors

of administrators who serve as instructional leaders. Early efforts tended to define leadership behavior in very narrow terms. As a result, most early descriptions focused only on how school principals became directly involved with instructional activities, and the perception grew that only those principals who spent nearly all their time either teaching classes or observing teachers were legitimately serving as instructional leaders. This view has more recently been rejected for at least two reasons: (1) We now recognize that individuals other than principals might engage in instructional leadership behaviors and (2) we have increasingly realized that instructional leadership can take forms that go well beyond direct intervention in classroom activities (Jensen, 1989; Weber, 1989). The definition of instructional leadership by Ching-Jen Liu (1984) is useful in describing this concept: "Instructional leadership consists of direct or indirect behaviors that significantly affect teacher instruction and, as a result, student learning" (p. 33).

Liu divided the tasks of instructional leadership into two categories: direct and indirect. In very broad terms, we might classify *direct leadership activities* as staff development and teacher evaluation and supervision and *indirect leadership* as instructional facilitation, resource acquisition and building maintenance, and student problem resolution. Examples of specific behaviors related to each of these categories are as follows:

Factor 1. *Staff Development*

- Work with a committee to plan and implement the staff development program.
- Survey staff members to determine topics and activities for a year-long staff development program.
- Provide inservice training for the support staff on how their roles relate to the instructional program.

Factor 2. *Teacher Evaluation and Supervision*

- Involve all staff members and people from the community in setting clear goals and objectives for instruction.
- Work according to the belief that all teachers can teach and teach well.
- Have conferences with individual teachers to review their instructional plans.

Factor 3. *Resource Acquisition and Building Maintenance*

- Acquire adequate resources for teaching.
- Allocate resources on the basis of identified needs according to a priority ranking.
- Maintain the building in order to provide a pleasant working environment for students and staff.

Factor 4. *Instructional Facilitation*

- Establish priorities so that instruction is always first in terms of the amount of time directed to it.
- Work according to the belief that all students can learn and achieve at high levels.
- Support teachers who are implementing new ideas.

Factor 5. *Student Problem Resolution*

- Assist teachers in dealing with discipline problems.
- Enforce school attendance policies to reduce tardiness and absentee rates.
- Interact directly with students to discuss their problems about school.

As you read this list, you might reflect on whether principals with whom you are familiar seem to devote time specifically to only a few of these factors while apparently ignoring others. You may wish to compare your observations to the findings of some additional research by Liu (1984), who studied two groups of midwestern high school principals, one "effective" and another "not effective." He found that the effective group engaged in instructional leadership behaviors more often than the other group and that those behaviors reflected both direct and indirect instructional leadership. As a result, we now recognize that the analysis of instructional leadership is considerably more complex than first thought and that administrators who strive to exhibit instructional leadership must be prepared to engage in a wide range of activities that support the instructional priorities of the school. We suspect that instructional leadership is as much a product of a personalized instructional philosophy as it is of any particular activities that a person engages in.

A recent effort to gain a better understanding of what behaviors constitute instructional leadership was carried out by Jerry Patterson (1993) for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). He looked at the work of numerous principals who had been identified as instructional leaders. These individuals, who were viewed as effective leaders, exhibited five behavioral patterns. Again, it may be helpful for you to think of principals whom you know and which of these patterns they exhibit.

1. *They provide a sense of vision to their schools.* They demonstrate the ability to articulate what a school is supposed to do, particularly in terms of what it should do to benefit children. Effective instructional leaders leave little doubt that the purpose of the school is to find ways in which children may learn successfully. This vision guides all other activities.
2. *They engage in participative management.* They encourage a better organizational climate in the school by allowing teachers and staff to

participate meaningfully in real decision making and not merely an effort to pretend they are getting people involved when in real decisions are already made. The staff senses greater ownership in priorities and programs that are available to help children.

3. *They provide support for instruction.* Instructional leaders are so committed to maintaining quality instruction as their primary organizational focus that when decisions must be made concerning priorities, instruction always comes first. These individuals make it clear to those around them that energy will be expended to ensure that resources are available to enable the instructional program of the school to proceed unabated.
4. *They monitor instruction.* They know what is going on in the classrooms of their schools. This monitoring may take several forms from direct in-class, intensive observation to merely walking around the building and talking with students. The critical issue, regardless of the particular procedures followed, is that instructional leaders are aware of the quality of instruction being carried out in their schools.
5. *They are resourceful.* Instructional leaders rarely allow circumstances of their organizations to get in the way of their visions for quality educational programs. As a result, they tend not to allow the lack of resources or prohibitive school or district policies or any other factors—to interfere with their goals for their schools.

Instructional leaders exhibit these behavior patterns very differently. Thus, people with different personalities, philosophies, values, and attitudes can be equally effective as educational leaders. In addition, different schools can serve as settings for instructional leadership of the type identified through the ASCD work.

As one might predict, effective school leaders share many behavioral patterns with leaders in other organizations. Bennis and Nanus (1985), in a study of a variety of effective organizations, discovered five strategies followed by successful leaders:

- Strategy 1. *Attention through vision.* Leaders create a focus in an organization or an agenda that demonstrates an unparalleled concern for outcomes, products, and results.
- Strategy 2. *Meaning through communication.* Effective communication is inseparable from effective leadership.
- Strategy 3. *Trust through empowering.* Leaders must be trusted in order to be effective; we trust people who are predictable and whose positions are known. Leaders who are trusted make themselves known and make their positions clear.

Strategy 4. *The deployment of self through positive self-regard.* Leaders have positive self-images, self-regard that is not self-centered, and they know their worth. In general, they are confident without being cocky.

Strategy 5. *The development of self through the Wallenda factor.* Before his death, the aerialist Karl Wallenda was said to have become more pre-occupied with not falling than with succeeding. Leaders are able consistently to focus their energies on success rather than on simply avoiding failure.

General Comments About Leadership

The material presented here about leadership only scratches the surface of an extremely complex topic. The search for a complete understanding of what contributes to effective organizational leadership has been at the center of virtually every analysis of organizations. People always have been and always will be fascinated with determining “who leads?” and “how do they do it?” People will always try to put into some kind of order the notions they have about leadership.

Researchers have only gotten a very brief glimpse into the process of leadership. Many facets of this critical topic have not yet been explored. For example, researchers have tended to look almost exclusively at leadership demonstrated by those who have formal leadership titles in schools and other organizations. The roles of principals, superintendents, and others have been examined to the virtual exclusion of the study of others. Anyone who has ever worked in or around schools will recognize that leadership is not the “exclusive property of administrators” (Playko, 1991). And anyone who assumes that it is could be making a terrible mistake in judgment. A second area where more research is needed is the phenomenon of *followership* and the nature of the dynamic relationships that occur between leaders and others in their organizations. The concept of *transformative leadership* (energy directed toward enabling others to sustain needed change), first described by James McGregor Burns (1978) and expanded into an emphasis on empowerment by Bennis and Nanus (1985), appears to hold promise for increasing our understanding of how leaders interact with others. Leaders must have followers, and interest must be directed toward that fact.

Finally, a discussion of leadership often includes some views that Bennis and Nanus call the “myths of leadership.” We conclude this analysis of leadership by listing these myths and noting why they should not be viewed as limitations.

Myth 1. *Leadership is a rare skill.* In fact, virtually everyone has some leadership potential, and opportunities are great for many people to assume formal and informal leadership roles in a variety of settings.

Myth 2. *Leaders are born, not made.* As we noted when we looked at the great person approach to leadership, the major capacities and competencies of leadership can be learned if there is a basic desire to learn them. Acquiring the knowledge and skills for effective leadership is not easy, but most people have the fundamental capacity to become powerful leaders.

Myth 3. *Leaders are charismatic.* Most leaders are quite human, and they rarely possess any magical talents that are unavailable to the rest of us. In fact, some evidence indicates that what we call charisma is the result of leadership, not the reverse. Good leaders often gain respect and admiration from their followers because of the ways in which they demonstrate leadership qualities.

Myth 4. *Leadership exists at the top of an organization.* As noted in the review of instructional leadership, successful leaders strive to increase opportunities for staff members to take active roles in schools through conscious efforts at participative management. Leaders are not threatened by allowing others to have some control over the organization.

Myth 5. *The leader controls, directs, prods, and manipulates.* Leadership is not the exercise of absolute power but rather the empowerment of others to make use of their full potential. As a result, any effort at control for its own sake might not be an activity of leadership at all but rather an effort to dominate. Ultimately, organizations that are faced with this type of strangling behavior will either cast out the leader or die as organizations.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the concept of leadership, often referred to as the single most important characteristic to be developed by anyone interested in pursuing an administrative role. It is assumed that you will never be effective without considering some of the basic issues presented in this chapter.

A variety of definitions found in the literature were examined, along with the basic differences between descriptive and normative conceptualizations of leadership—a rather subtle shift in recent years from efforts to describe what leadership is to attempts to tell people how to behave as leaders.

We then considered four historical frameworks for the analysis of leadership, including the great person, traitist, situational, and behavioral approaches. I noted the major limitations for each of the first three approaches. These limitations suggested why most current explanations of leadership use the behavioral perspective, which emphasizes the relationships that

exist between individual characteristics and the context in which people work.

Next, we considered several descriptive and normative leadership theories. The chapter also reviewed the concept of instructional leadership and concluded with some general comments and observations on the nature of the complex phenomenon of leadership in schools.

As a practicing school administrator, it is highly unlikely that you will ever be expected to recall the specific names of leadership theorists, conceptual frameworks, or many of the other ideas presented here. However, as in the case of Kelly Marshall, you will often be on stage as a leader in many different settings in your career, and people will constantly seek your personal vision of leadership, either directly or indirectly. It makes little difference if that vision relies on the theories described here or not. As a result, part of your personal journey and professional development must be devoted to a personal reflection on two central issues: *What is leadership?* and *How do I fit that definition?*

Suggested Activities

1. Write a personal response to the question “What is leadership?” Do not be concerned with trying to incorporate any of the theoretical perspectives or language used in this chapter unless these are helpful to you in your own reflection.

2. Interview a group of teachers and determine their perceptions of what leadership should be. Compare the definitions with your own view and also the definitions that are presented with the alternative perspectives of leadership discussed in this chapter.

3. Using the leadership myths of Bennis and Nanus, compose a rating scale that may be used to collect data concerning perceptions of whether people agree or disagree with each of the stated myths.

4. Talk with people who are not in professional education and determine their perceptions of what leadership is. Again, compare these statements with the great person, traitist, situational, and behavioral perspectives.

5. Interview at least five practicing school administrators and determine their personal definitions of *instructional leadership*. How successful do these individuals feel about actually engaging in behaviors that are part of their definitions? What prohibits people from serving as instructional leaders? What contributes to their ability to serve in this capacity?