

THE NEED FOR LEADERS

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Everybody has become a specialist in management. Every enterpriser believes that he is also a manager. All the managers are under the impression that they are characterized by efficiency and performance.

The reality is different. Although they are trained and some of them have skills too, not all of them get the qualification as successful manager. But it is not because of them. Their failures are also due to the human factor, with which they surround themselves, or to the institutional, juridical and macro-economical systems.

A manager is not a leader and a leader is not a manager. Our economy also needs leaders.

In the last couple of years each enterpriser has believed that he was also a manager. A part of the enterprisers also think that they are leaders. Maybe it is so, but the economic reality rather presents behaviours with a tendency towards alignment.

The leaders are those managers who:

- succeed to determine people to act according to the spirit inspired by them;
- manage to direct them according to the stated beliefs;
- they inspire trust and they are self-confident;
- they use their experience in order not to let errors prevent them from achieving the objective;
- they make the others to value themselves, to feel strong, to demonstrate competitive skills, to accept challenges of a complex and interesting work

The specialists' opinions regarding the definition of the leader gravitates around four aspects:

- attention management is relevant through its capacity to:
 - attract the others by creating a vision;
 - communicate this vision;
 - make the others, through personal example, try to realize together that vision;
- signification management or the ability to transmit clearly his objectives so that everyone understands and there aren't left doubtful aspects;
- trust management based on the ability to be trusted and to inspire confidence;
- self management, meaning a self-knowledge and self-understanding in order to allow the actions in its own capacity limits

The theory decides a person's managerial qualities, pointing out that there is no need that their existence to assure success in the act of leadership. Instead, leaders also have native and accustomed qualities which surely drive them to the top.

Very often is accepted the idea that managers are formed in schools but also in practice; but this is not enough. There are still few those who accept the reality that a renowned manager is the one who is born for such a job. In other words, the native qualities represent the cornerstone for finalizing the achieved abilities.

Alongside with the professional ability, in the first place, or with the general knowledge and qualities, the aptitudes, the talent, the experience or even the gender, in the second place there is also associated the ability to lead, which is significantly more important in estimating the essential abilities of an efficient manager. The latter are materialized in a ten abilities set:

1. The ability to establish a clear action direction;
2. The ability to realize an open and intense communication system with all the workers regardless their hierarchical position in the organization;
3. The ability to educate and to support others;
4. The ability to fairly admit the subalterns' performances;
5. The ability to know how to measure control and trust (it is a known fact that their sum represents a parameter in management);
6. The ability to accurately know the proper individuals fit to lead the organization;
7. The ability to really evaluate the financial consequences of the decisional process;
8. The ability to react positively, openly and with receptivity to all that is new;
9. The ability to transmit clear messages and to communicate the decisions so that everyone understands them;
10. The ability to have ethical integrity and to be an example in this matter.

Most of the theorists think that managers are just those who meet two requirement categories:

1. Prerequisites that refer to personality and are being defined by: the subject's constitution and temperament; the physical environment (or the climate); the social environment (the country, the family, the education); the customs and the day by day habits.
2. Prerequisites that refer to intellectual abilities: intelligence; being open to new; the memory; the rational and clear thinking for theorizing, generalizing and thinking abstractedly as well as for solving daily problems.

However, the specialists have always estimated that the managers' abilities are divided into four categories:

1. Cognitive competencies – help the managers to collect and synthesize the necessary information, and also to expose them in an acceptable manner that is easy to understand by those around;
2. Interpersonal competencies – allow the managers to handle the subordinate human resources, exactly in the sense of attributing each, in a team, a role considered to be the most suited;
3. Communication competencies – facilitate the managers' solving the current problems, as well as administrating the exceptional ones, in either formal or informal ways;
4. Motivational competencies – facilitate the establishing of clear objectives, profoundly determined and put in a hierarchy.

There are also opinions according to which the attributes, the abilities and the competencies are not the only characteristic elements of a manager. There must be put together some technical, analytical, conceptual decisional activities (tasks or works) in the human relation, communication, informational domain...

It is certain that no matter the interpretation, the approach, the classification or the name, a manager must stand for a complex of characteristics, competences, abilities, aptitudes, skills, vocations... all being subordinate to a single purpose: the lead of people in order to lead the processes.

The present reality requires leaders, not necessarily managers, and within organizations one should talk about leadership more and more often.

The leadership notion does not identify at all with the management notion, it makes no reference to charisma or personality traits, it does not identify at all with the managerial action methods, but it may come as a supplement. Nowadays, most of the organizations are more managed and less lead.

This is not surprising in the case of public organizations which most are under the state influence. There you find nothing but restrictions (first of all financial restrictions and then legal, any kind of normative restrictions), it is very difficult to express your initiatives, to transpose them into reality, to take decisions according to your own beliefs and not to subordinate yourself to any plan, formerly settled from somewhere “up above”.

It is unconceivable not to have leaders in the particular system. Usually, successful organizations draw individuals who have leader potential, they encourage them to discover and to make the best of their potential, they stimulate them to consolidate their careers within these organizations, making them aware that no one can be simultaneously a good manager and a good leader.

Facing the more and more frequent changes determined by the dynamics of the 20th century end and by the beginning of a new century, the leadership seems to have the most suited answer to the questions that trouble the managers. If the managers want to become leaders-managers they will mix the complex processes that belong to the competence of the management with the competitive feature that is permanently changing and guided by the leadership. There can not be other result but the weariness of the invested authority individuals and the perplexing of the subordinate individuals.

Leadership does not lead throughout planning and organizing. Fulfilling the vision is based on the motivation and the enthusiasm of the workers gathered together in the direction of implementing the change.

Whether we like it or not, the present management is a change management in which the leadership gets a growing significance based on the role played by the people in the management of the organizational change.

In fact, the leadership as part of the management is observed every time the ability is sensed of some people to convince others to look for a harmonious and enthusiastic way to achieve some common objectives throughout any of the following influence strategies:

- Reason – using the situations, the events, the procedures, the data and the information for the purpose of developing some logical proofs;
- Friendship – looking for support, using flattery, creating a pleasant mood;
- Coalition – mobilizing the others;
- Agreeing – negotiating by using rewards;
- Agresivity – using the direct and compelling approach;
- The superior authority – gaining support through the hierarchical position;
- Sanctioning – using the punitive power.

Without any doubt the leader is a born one. He can also develop himself, but his native qualities are incontestable (unlike the case of managers). A manager can not be mistaken for a leader, at least because of the following differences:

- The manager administrates – the leader innovates;
- The manager is a replica – the leader is the original;
- The manager imitates – the leader initiates;

- The manager maintains – the leader develops;
- The manager accepts – the leader challenges;
- The manager is the good old performer – the leader is his own master;
- The manager emphasizes systems and structures – the leader pays attention to people;
- The manager has a short-term vision – the leader has a long-term vision;
- The manager asks “how?” and “when?” – the leader asks “what” and “why?”;
- The manager has a final purpose – the leader has a horizon;
- The manager does things well – the leader makes good things;
- The manager trains himself – the leader educates himself.

Maybe the reality asks too much from the managers or from just a part of them. Of course there are leaders too, but there are never enough. Even though some of them are in a process of transforming (consciously or not) from manager to leader, the failures of their activity are not totally from their fault. The measure of their quality must not be disputed because from a profane point of view they are not that well trained.

Managers go through an entire drama because the whole Romanian society chokes through extremely confusing legal provisions that are contradictory, overwhelming and not at all in favour of an enterprising spirit.

But the most discouraging process is the one of propagating the superficiality based on the principle “it works this way” which confers a false value and an exaggerate self-evaluation, a loss of professionalism in certain categories and a degradation – controlled subtly – of the human factor.

Nowadays, when the process of European integration extends and the globalization phenomenon is generalizing, more than ever leaders are needed. The wonderful qualities of the human species promoters are not to be forgotten just because the expansion of the uniformity is wanted. Courage, creativity, the free spirit of the people with business ideas is especially commanded in economy.

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