

Leadership in Business

Leadership & Communication

MORTIMER ADLER, U.S. philosopher: In Aristotelian terms, the good leader must have ethos, pathos and logos. The ethos is his moral character, the source of his ability to persuade. The pathos is his ability to touch feelings, to move people emotionally. The logos is his ability to give solid reasons for an action, to move people intellectually. By this definition, Pericles of Athens was a great leader.

Leadership has roots in the beginning of human society. Greek heroes, Roman emperors and great conquerors have all in common to be leaders.

Historically three main theoretical frameworks have been developed in order to defined and qualified leadership.

Many leadership studies, conducted in the 30s and the 40s, were based on the theory that leaders born with the ability to be followed in all what they intend to do. The trait approach analyzed the physical, mental and social characteristics of individuals and looked if there was significant links between those characteristics and the leadership ability. In 1948, **Ralph Stogdill** (1904-1978) published a review which marks the end of those investigations, where he concluded on the unsuccessful of the trait approach.

In the 50s leadership origins were more researched in the behaviors exhibited by people than in their traits. The first conclusions with this approach were that two distinct behavior factors describe how leaders carry out their role, showing concern for the task they have to do or for interpersonal relations. **Robert Blake** and **Jane Mounton** built their concept of Leadership Grid on this approach, keeping in focus the production and task aspect and simultaneously concern of people is the objective to practice "team management".

Nevertheless only taking in consideration behaviors to improve leadership is forgetting situational influences, that is why contingency approach has been investigated since the late 60s. This theory revised in 1977 by **Hersey** and **Blanchard** suggests the key contingency factor, influence leaders' decisions, is the maturity of his subordinates, their ability to accept responsibility.

Leadership can be seen as the method used, consciously or unconsciously, by somebody who has specifics goals, to influence others individuals. In this definition different points are important, and will be more developed later, but we can already highlight that leadership main tool is communication, verbal or nonverbal. Consequently, communication is a crucial aspect of leadership.

We will see firstly, why leadership is a method, based on different rules and theories. Besides, a leader has volunteer followers, in this way leadership stand out from management, mostly based on authority, we will see the tools which can be used to make acting people in influencing them. Finally, leadership is a social influence process, and people can react differently to stimulation depending on their culture or the context, consequently we will see that more than communication skills a leader needs to adaptation skills in communicating.

Classical and scientific theories emerged in the 19th century with the theories of **Henry Fayol**, a French engineer (1841-1925), who showed management as a process of planning, organizing and controlling. Fayol structured the classical-scientific management in three hierarchic levels. The first one is organizing, controlling and develop long term strategy. Second level is co-ordinate supervisors 'activities and the lowest one are the supervisors, responsible of their job and who follow the directives. To this theories were added the theories of **Taylor** who introduced the division of labor concept in order to increase labor efficiency. The division of labor concept is to break down a complex task into different elementary ones. The objective of

this task division is that this complex task can be done by workers who each realize a simple part of it. Leadership used in classical scientific approach is an autocratic style, based on the fact that manager is the unique people who can understand, consequently subordinates have to follow him without express his ideas.

Those classical views of management which involve planning, organizing, directing and controlling have to be distinguished from leadership. In influencing people a manager performs these functions. He has formal authority on his followers, thanks to his professional position. By contrast, a leader influences others, and leads them to do what he wants them to do without having any authority on them. Leadership elicits voluntary action from followers. The voluntary nature of compliance is an important point of leadership and differentiates it from management.

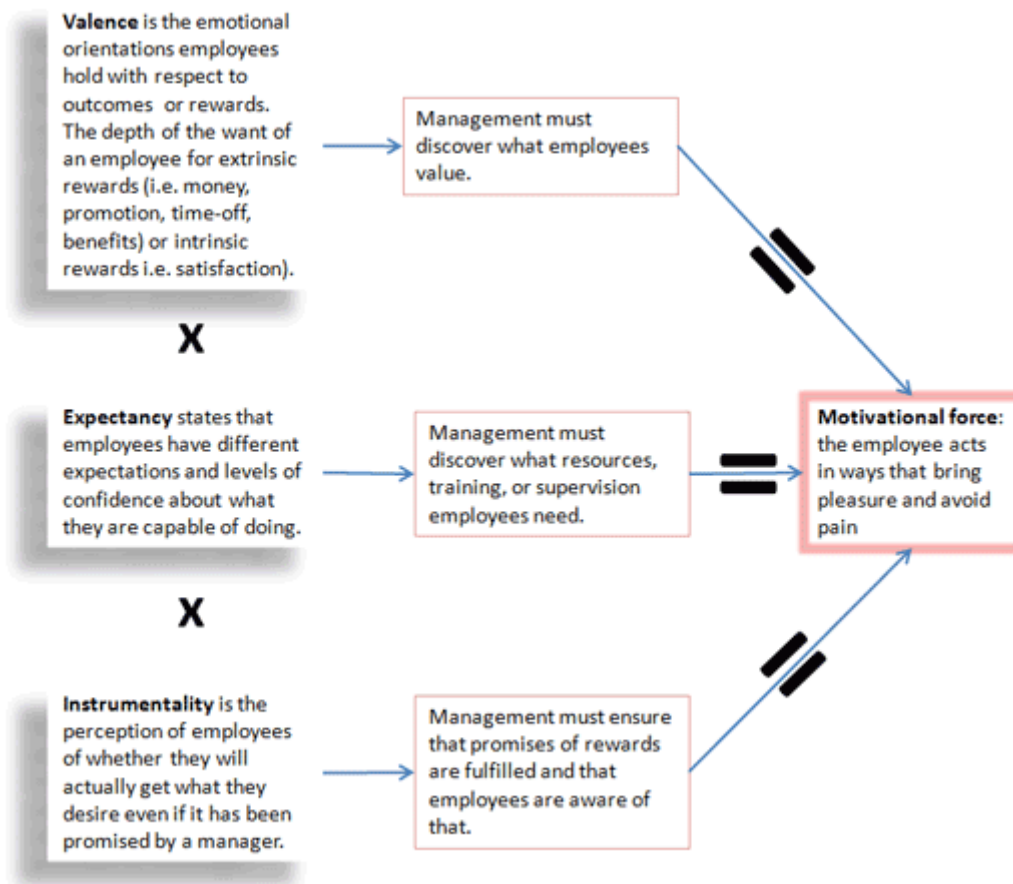
In order to influence people without any authority, a leader needs some skills and mostly good communication abilities. Good communication skills create the trust necessary to lead other people to follow a leader. Communication can be defined as the verbal or nonverbal transmission of idea or request from somebody to an audience. Different points are important to transfer a meaning which can influence somebody. In order to deliver a message that motivate or inspire others to action leader has to overcome noises which could scramble the message. Leadership communication depends on the image the auditory seen from the speaker. To transmit properly his message leader has to be listened and believed, if it is not the case the persuasive force of his argumentation would be lower.

Nowadays, communication skills are not really learned, but in Antiquity the Greeks and Romans speaking was an art and communication was divided in four parts, invention, arrangement or organization, style and memory. Invention is the ability to find subject to talk about, to take the parole. Organization is the logical construction of your argumentation. Style is the tools you use to persuade people. And memory is the ability to memorize writings, it is associated to clever people today. People who perform in all the fourth fields are called communication genius. As **Churchill** understood, it needs theory, talent and especially practice.

To exist a leader need followers, and expecting actions from different people in order to achieve a main objective requires adapting his communication to them. **Alfred Alder** (1879-1937) thank that social influences formed every person's psyche and that his character is the interaction just between his needs for power or esteem and his needs for social feeling. We can interpret in referencing to a theory of **Sigmund Freud** which tells that all our actions are caused by two basic desires: sexual desire and the desire to be recognized. We can conclude that rewarding and compliment are fundamental in leading people as it is shown in **Vroom's** Expectancy Theory:

$$\text{Valence} \times \text{Expectancy} \times \text{Instrumentality} = \text{Motivation}$$

- **Valence** (Reward) = the amount of desire for a goal (What is the reward?)
- **Expectancy** (Performance) = the strength of belief that work related effort will result in the completion of the task (How hard will I have to work to reach the goal?)
- **Instrumentality** (Belief) = the belief that the reward will be received once the task is completed (Will they notice the effort I put forth?)



The product of valence, expectancy, and instrumentality is motivation.

At work leaders interact most of the time with groups of individual, with characteristics reactions. As an example of those interactions between a leader and a group we can talk about the communication between manager and workers. In *Sociologist and Working Stiff* **Donald Roy** made a participant observation of working and allows readers to enter the logic of workers' actions, their views and thus highlight the mechanism of few workers practices such as braking 'respecting quotas' or 'pulling to the side' or communication 'consummatory' and 'instrumental'. The different solutions that Roy mentioned to reduce these inefficiencies are paying by the piece and not by the day, creating a competition between chains to make them working at their maximum capacity.

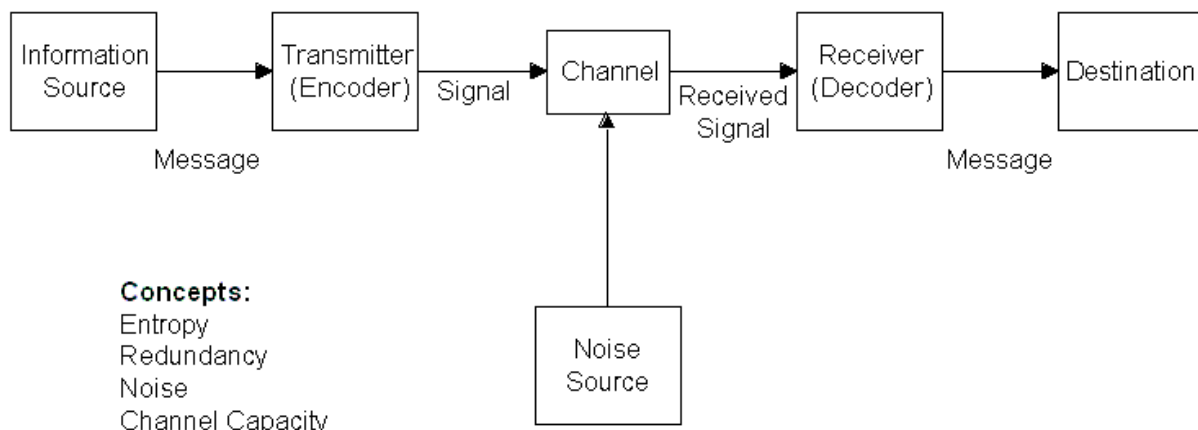
The effectiveness of a leader's influence is based on the strategy he will use to communicate. Analyze the audience and different environmental aspects which can have an influence on the perception of his message by the auditory are necessary.

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Papers Review

The first article I will comment is an analysis from *Steve Tobak* of a Dan Gilbert communiqué published the 9th July 2010 and called **Dan Gilbert Letter: Leadership Communication 101**. The original Dan Gilbert, Cleveland Cavaliers owner, letter is the public expression of his disappointment about LeBron James decision to leave the basketball team for another one. The Steve Tobak analysis highlights the communication mistakes done by Gilbert in this communiqué, which I will comment more technically, referencing to the course content. Communication has some theoretical rules and needs. The clearest representation of communication for me is the Shannon-Weaver Mathematical Model established in 1940:

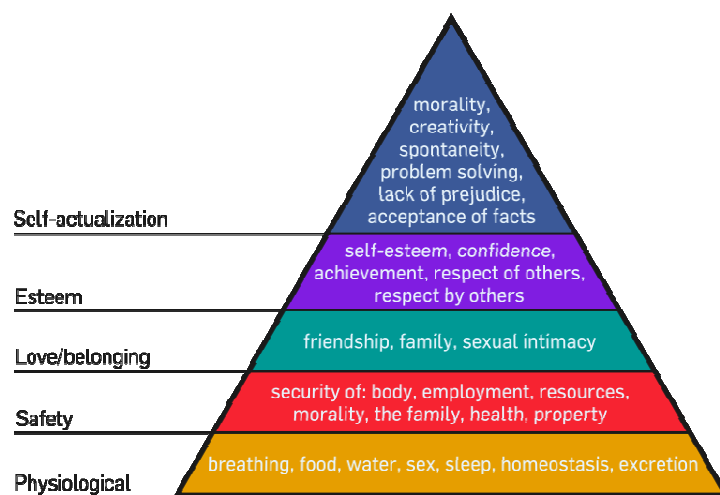


In this letter Gilbert does not encode his message properly, he put too much emotion and feelings, does not used the good channel, public announcement like open letter on a website is not appropriate to express his personal feelings, and moreover he did not take care about who will be the receiver, all the website visitors, and how they will decode his message. In trying to express the club and fans frustration, Gilbert has expressed his personal seethe about the situation, with consequences that he has never been believed anymore after this in his business. In expressing his ego paradoxically Gilbert broke down his image. "The distinction between children and adults, while probably useful for some purposes, is at bottom a specious one, I feel. There are only individual egos ..." **Niccolo Machiavelli** *The Prince* .

Why Wimps make Better Leaders is the title of the second article I have chosen, it has been written by *Kimberly Weisul* the 11th of March 2011. Firstly this article emphasizes different features presented in trait theory as the leader lines. Besides, it brings to light how a group can has complexes reactions in front of a leader. The trait theory is historically the first research area to find origins of leadership. In telling that the psychological experience of power drive people to be more likely, and more pretentious the author identify, in my point of view, the biggest problem of human nature, ego. But moreover that changing their behaviors in getting power, leaders are confronted to complexes group reaction. Experiences done show firstly that to build a cooperative group a leader has create a team spirit and show that he is working with his team and not only managing it. A group is build with different individualities and the second experience shows the importance to motivate and reward each individual in a group to create an effective team. This analysis can be compared to **Donald Roy's** one in *Sociologist and Working Stiff*.

"The deepest principle of human nature is a craving to be appreciated." – William James.

Recognition and esteem constitute the fourth step of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid.



The third text studied highlight different basic rules in formal communication. This article untitled **How to be Direct without being a Jerk** has been published the 17th February 2011 by *Steve Tobak*. Studies has shown that a manager spend between 80 and 90% of his time communicating. Consulting with colleagues, leading collaborators, or getting order from supervisors, a manager always adapts how he communicates but he has to keep a formal expression and some basic rules like a clear and neutral position, giving all the information required and be professional. A good way to make sure that you communicate in a good way is to try to see it from the other person's perspective. As a well known leader said "If there's any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own." Henry Ford (1863-1947). Adapt his communication is also important when the auditory is multiple, but group nature causes some differences in the way to be and communicate. Some values and norms leads every group work and keeping a good image, a necessary way to communicate efficiently and be a good leader, is uniquely feasible if you are not seen as a rate buster or a chiseller or a squealer.

The last but not least text I selected is an extract of **Churchill's the Prime Minister**, wonderful *Winston Churchill's* speech from the 13th May 1940. I selected the two last paragraphs of this talk, which reveal already all the leadership, and the verbal and nonverbal communication skills of this master communicator. Firstly, Churchill was a great written word, which leads him to receive a Nobel Prize for literature, this ability is flagrant in this text. In using anaphors with powerful words like hope or epiphora with victory and euphemisms as in the most famous sentence of this speech: "I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat" Churchill gives to his discourse power and allure. In including rhetorical questions he creates interaction with the auditory and increases his fascination. In calling listeners "friends, colleagues" and doing god references "the strength that God can give us" he built a link between him and his auditory. Churchill was not only a writer who could create messages that appealed to both the heart and the head of the listener, Churchill was also a great orator, with charisma and clear and convincing elocution. The style of his verbal and nonverbal communication, his adaptation to the auditory and to the context made Churchill the last Communication Genius.