

The Role of Leadership in Public Administration Reform

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‘Leadership, or the lack of it, seems to be responsible for just about everything these days’ (Grint 2005).

We believe

Poor leadership creates
all the problems

Effective leadership
can solve them



THE POPULAR VIEW

We all know about leadership and its importance
We often don't agree with each other about leadership

THE GOOD NEWS

'The popular view that leaders impact organizations has received general research support' (Avery 2005)

THE BAD NEWS

We are still not clear on the cause-effect relationship between leadership and organizational performance despite the amount of research, writing and discussion



LEADERSHIP FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC ADMIN REFORM (PAR)

If leadership is so important for organizational change (including PAR) then we need to know what it is and how to develop it.

PROBLEM

Lack of agreement on a definition
Numerous competing theories

LMX
Theory

Servant
Leadership

Path-Goal
Theory

Contingency
theory

Distributed
Leadership

Transactional
Leadership

Traits
Theory

Transformational
Leadership

Level 5
Leadership

Adaptive
Leadership

Leadership as Process

WHAT IS IT?

A way of doing things
The practices that leaders use
HOW LEADERS LEAD



THE MESSAGE

Effective leadership involves the application of certain steps and accompanying behaviours to produce the desired results



A LEADERSHIP PROCESS MODEL

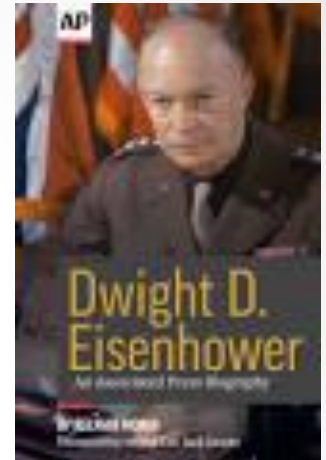
1. ESTABLISH A SENSE OF URGENCY
2. FORMING A POWERFUL GUIDING COALITION
3. CREATING A VISION
4. COMMUNICATING A VISION
5. EMPOWERING OTHERS TO ACT ON THAT VISION
6. PLANNING FOR AND CREATING SHORT-TERM WINS
7. CONSOLIDATING IMPROVEMENTS AND PRODUCING STILL MORE CHANGES
8. INSTITUTIONALIZING NEW APPROACHES

KOTTER 1996

LEADERSHIP INVOLVES INFLUENCE

'Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want because he wants to do it'

Dwight D. Eisenhower



Three Modes of Influencing

1. Reasoning
2. Consulting and Participation
3. Inspiring

Influence may be exercised through **positional power** and **coercive power**
*BUT DO THEY PROMOTE
COMMITMENT OR SIMPLY
COMPLIANCE?*



WHAT ABOUT THE FOLLOWERS?

'I must follow the people. Am I not their leader?
Benjamin Disraeli



Leadership is multi-directional

Followers can be

Moderators of leadership

Co-producers of leadership

'A leader is best when people barely know
he exists, when his work is done, his aim
fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.'

Lao Tzu



LEADERSHIP AND VISION

Visions of desirable futures are important components of leadership

'A leader is a dealer in hope'
Napoleon Bonaparte

AN EFFECTIVE VISION

Imaginable
Desirable
Feasible
Focused
Flexible
Communicable



Visions are expected of **TRANSFORMATIONAL** leaders

But leaders have to turn visions into **effective strategies** – with a lot of help from followers

STRATEGY is the managerial tool 'that integrates an organization's major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole' (Quinn 1998)



Attention to Goals – The INSTRUMENTAL Aspect of Leadership

- ◆ Leadership in many definitions over many years awards high importance to **goal achievement**
- ◆ It is also a common view of leadership in practice

RESULTS are what matter

PREMIER LEAGUE MANAGERS (where goals are goals)

Average lifespan = 91 games

Managers replaced 2018-2019 season = 11
20 teams in the PL

You need to win

You need **RESULTS**



RESULTS

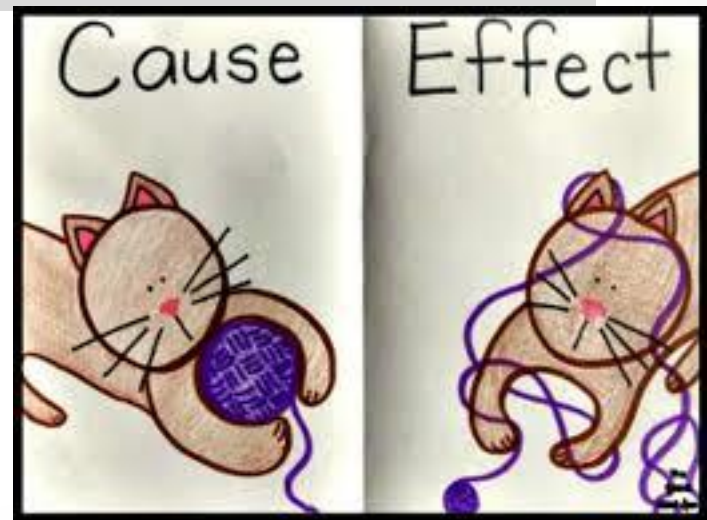
We often assume a simple **cause-and-effect** relationships between leaders and results – reality often more complex

Exclusive focus on results can lead to problems

- ◆ Ethical issues eg *Royal Commission on Banking in Australia*
- ◆ Playing the system eg *gaming performance management*
- ◆ Goal displacement eg *filling in the forms v improving the service*

PLAYING GAMES WITH RESULTS

- ◆ Ratchet effect
- ◆ Threshold effect
- ◆ Hit the target, miss the point
(Hood 2006)



ORGANIZATIONS AS POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Organizational participants are constantly engaged in activities of a political nature

‘The change agent who is not politically skilled will fail’
(Badham 2008)

MANAGERS AGREE



LEADER'S POLITICAL NAVIGATION GUIDE

1. Map the political landscape
2. Identify key influencers
3. Assess influencers' receptiveness to change
4. Mobilise influential sponsors and promoters
5. Engage influential positive and negative sceptics

DECREASING RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

1. Communication
2. Participation and involvement
3. Education and support
4. Negotiation and agreement
5. Manipulation and co-optation
6. Explicit and implicit coercion
7. Problem finding
8. Role modelling
9. Changing reward structures

CULTURE – It's there but can it be managed?

WHAT IS IT?

'shared meanings and understandings'
(Morgan 1997)

'learned ways of coping with experience
that have developed in an organization's
history' (Brown 1995)



WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Culture can constrain new ways
of thinking and therefore, the
implementation of plans and
their consequent feasibility

**ESPECIALLY TRANSFORMATIONAL
CHANGE**



CONCLUSION

1. There is no one best way to lead organizational change
2. Leadership for organizational change is complex and multi-faceted
3. Understanding context is vital
4. One leader can't do everything or be good at everything
5. Delegation to others is needed