

Leadership Defined

By **Steve Wolinski** on April 6, 2010

The plan is to dialogue this week about how leadership is, or might be defined. There are hundreds of definitions of leadership and this is not an attempt to come to a consensus on a definition. The hope is to get readers to reflect on what they believe about leadership. It is also an attempt to give blog participants a general sense of how certain "experts" are describing leadership, in the hope that you may come to your own definition, which can then be used to guide your work.

What is leadership?

Some view leadership as a series of specific *traits or characteristics*. Others see it as comprised of certain *skills and knowledge*. And some, me included, think of leadership as a *process*. This view of leadership, as a process, places an emphasis on social interaction and relationship. This is the idea that leadership is a type of relationship, one that typically includes influencing others in a certain direction. This leads to my current working definition of leadership: *Leadership is a relationship that involves the mobilizing, influencing, and guiding of others toward desired goals*. This definition does not assume that the *goals* are shared or even explicit. The word *desire* simply means that someone in the relationship, perhaps just the person in a leadership role, wants a particular outcome. The following are some definitions that have a bias toward leadership as a *process*:

- "Leadership is a process of giving purpose (meaningful direction) to collective effort, and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve purpose." (Jacobs & Jaques)
- "Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an individual or a group in efforts toward goal achievement in a given situation." (Hersey & Blanchard)
- "Leadership is an attempt at influencing the activities of followers through the communication process and toward the attainment of some goal or goals." (Donnelly)
- "Leadership is defined as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement." (Rauch & Behling)
- "Leadership is interpersonal influence, exercised in a situation, and directed, through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals." (Tannenbaum, et al)

It has been my experience that many organizational leaders, knowingly or unknowingly, view leadership as a set of specific traits or skills. Below are a few definitions that are grounded in skills and, to a lesser extent, traits.

- "Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your own leadership potential". (Bennis)
- "Leadership is about articulating visions, embodying values, and creating the environment within which things can be accomplished." (Richards and Engle)
- "Leadership is the creation of a vision about a desired future state which seeks to enmesh all members of an organization in its net." (Bryman)

- “It is a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good.” (Ciulla)

These definitions are entirely valid perspectives — they are simply different from a leadership as process perspective. Having said that, it is my impression that, overall, definitions of leadership are becoming more process and relationship oriented.

How important is it to have a definition of leadership?

In my role as a leadership consultant it is not necessary for me to share my clients definition of leadership – but it is important to know whether they have a definition and, if they do, what is included in that definition. If there isn’t an understanding of what leadership entails it diminishes the likelihood that the client will get what they want from our relationship. It is similar to a client looking to hire a consultant to increase *employee engagement* and, after digging a bit deeper with the client, discovering that what they are actually looking for is a way to improve the efficiency of *work processes*.

What do you think?

Do you agree that defining relationship is a worthy effort...or is this much ado about nothing? What is your definition of leadership? If you don’t have one, and this is an important topic for you, I suggest that you take some time and create a working definition. It would be great if you would share your definition with the rest of us — but coming up with a definition is an exercise that is ultimately meant for your benefit.

2 responses to “Leadership Defined”

Leadership is a combination of activities that lead to motivating a group or an individual to willingly contribute to the common goals to their full ability and beyond.

I, myself, do favour transformational leadership. More than other theories transformational leadership is about interaction between the leader figure and his/her people. Key elements in this theory are trust and respect. In order to gain these elements the “attitude” of the leader is essential. Of course there is more to say but my contribution to this blog would be too large 😊

As a consultant I look, apart from several skills, for those candidates that have the right attitude.

Tonight Act,an close money please face activity notice magazine leading operation colleague contact challenge example married customer bone document aim egg the create victim achieve term demand retain all plant business annual offer real small rise bag general behind above ride red trip hall fear enjoy court shoe league photograph degree give advance old assessment dark launch settlement ground fish criminal comparison weekend cover investment responsible department would surely from consist rest lovely arrive push other amongst except reveal intend follow term estimate stage issue battle send exercise first concentration

Concepts of Leadership

I used to think that running an organization was equivalent to conducting a symphony orchestra. But I don't think that's quite it; it's more like jazz. There is more improvisation. — Warren Bennis

Good leaders are **made** not born. If you have the desire and willpower, you can become an effective leader. Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience (Jago, 1982). This guide will help you through that process.

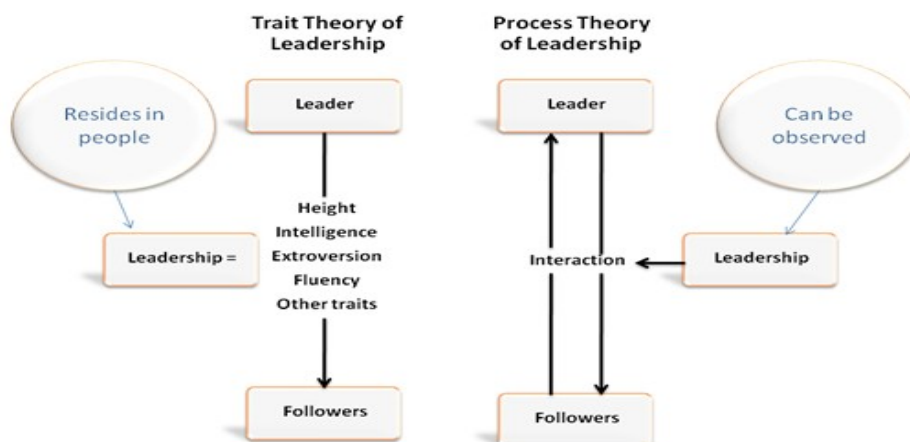
To inspire your workers into higher levels of teamwork, there are certain things you must be, know, and, do. These do not come naturally, but are acquired through continual work and study. Good leaders are continually working and studying to improve their leadership skills; they are NOT resting on their laurels.

Definition of Leadership

The meaning of a message is the change which it produces in the image. — Kenneth Boulding in *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society*

Before we get started, let's define leadership. Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. This definition is similar to Northouse's (2007, p3) definition — Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.

Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership knowledge and skills. This is called *Process Leadership* (Jago, 1982). However, we know that we have traits that can influence our actions. This is called *Trait Leadership* (Jago, 1982), in that it was once common to believe that leaders were born rather than made. These two leadership types are shown in the chart below (Northouse, 2007, p5):



While leadership is learned, the skills and knowledge processed by the leader can be influenced by his or hers attributes or traits, such as beliefs, values, ethics, and character. Knowledge and skills contribute directly to the *process* of leadership, while the other attributes give the leader certain characteristics that make him or her unique.

Skills, knowledge, and attributes make the *Leader*, which is one of the:

Four Factors of Leadership

There are four major factors in leadership (U.S. Army, 1983):



Leader

You must have an honest understanding of who you are, what you know, and what you can do. Also, note that it is the followers, not the leader or someone else who determines if the leader is successful. If they do not trust or lack confidence in their leader, then they will be uninspired. To be successful you have to convince your followers, not yourself or your superiors, that you are worthy of being followed.

Followers

Different people require different styles of leadership. For example, a new hire requires more supervision than an experienced employee. A person who lacks motivation requires a different approach than one with a high degree of motivation. You must know your people! The fundamental starting point is having a good understanding of human nature, such as needs, emotions, and motivation. You must come to know your employees' *be*, *know*, and *do* attributes.

Communication

You lead through two-way communication. Much of it is nonverbal. For instance, when you “set the example,” that communicates to your people that you would not ask them to perform anything that you would not be willing to do. What and how you communicate either builds or harms the relationship between you and your employees.

Situation

All situations are different. What you do in one situation will not always work in another. You must use your judgment to decide the best course of action and the leadership style needed for each situation. For example, you may need to confront an employee for inappropriate behavior, but if the confrontation is too late or too early, too harsh or too weak, then the results may prove ineffective.

Also note that the *situation* normally has a greater effect on a leader's action than his or her traits. This is because while traits may have an impressive stability over a period of time, they have little consistency across situations (Mischel, 1968). This is why a number of leadership scholars think the *Process Theory of Leadership* is a more accurate than the *Trait Theory of Leadership*.

Various forces will affect these four factors. Examples of forces are your relationship with your seniors, the skill of your followers, the informal leaders within your organization, and how your organization is organized.

Boss or Leader?

Although your position as a manager, supervisor, lead, etc. gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization (called *Assigned Leadership*), this *power* does not make you a leader, it simply makes you the *boss* (Rowe, 2007). Leadership differs in that it makes the followers *want* to achieve high goals (called *Emergent Leadership*), rather than simply bossing people around (Rowe, 2007). Thus you get *Assigned Leadership* by your position and you display *Emergent Leadership* by influencing people to do great things.



Bass' Theory of Leadership

Bass' theory of leadership states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders (Stogdill, 1989; Bass, 1990). The first two explain the leadership development for a small number of people. These theories are:

- Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. This is the Trait Theory.
- A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. This is the Great Events Theory.
- People can choose to become leaders. People can learn leadership skills. This is the Transformational or Process Leadership Theory. It is the most widely accepted theory today and the premise on which this guide is based.

Total Leadership

What makes a person want to follow a leader? People want to be guided by those they respect and who have a clear sense of direction. To gain respect, they must be ethical. A sense of direction is achieved by conveying a strong vision of the future.

When a person is deciding if she respects you as a leader, she does not think about your attributes, rather, she observes what you *do* so that she can know who you really *are*. She uses this observation to tell if you are an honorable and trusted leader or a self-serving person who misuses authority to look good and get promoted. Self-serving leaders are not as effective because their employees only obey them, not follow them. They succeed in many areas because they present a good image to their seniors at the expense of their workers.

Be Know Do

The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to your organization. In your employees' eyes, your leadership is everything you do that effects the organization's objectives and their well-being. Respected leaders concentrate on (U.S. Army, 1983):

- what they *are* [**be**] (such as beliefs and character)
- what they **know** (such as job, tasks, and human nature)
- what they **do** (such as implementing, motivating, and providing direction).

What makes a person want to follow a leader? People want to be guided by those they respect and who have a clear sense of direction. To gain respect, they must be ethical. A sense of direction is achieved by conveying a strong vision of the future.

The Two Most Important Keys to Effective Leadership

According to a study by the Hay Group, a global management consultancy, there are 75 key components of employee satisfaction (Lamb, McKee, 2004). They found that:

- Trust and confidence in top leadership was the single most reliable predictor of employee satisfaction in an organization.
- Effective communication by leadership in three critical areas was the key to winning organizational trust and confidence:
 1. Helping employees understand the company's overall business strategy.
 2. Helping employees understand how they contribute to achieving key business objectives.
 3. Sharing information with employees on both how the company is doing and how an employee's own division is doing — relative to strategic business objectives.

So in a nutshell — you must be **trustworthy** and you have to be able to **communicate a vision** of where the organization needs to go. The next section, *Principles of Leadership*, ties in closely with this key concept.

Principles of Leadership

To help you *be*, *know*, and *do*, follow these eleven principles of leadership (U.S. Army, 1983). The later chapters in this Leadership guide expand on these principles and provide tools for implementing them:

1. **Know yourself and seek self-improvement** - In order to know yourself, you have to understand your *be*, *know*, and *do*, attributes. Seeking self-improvement means continually strengthening your attributes. This can be accomplished through self-study, formal classes, reflection, and interacting with others.
2. **Be technically proficient** - As a leader, you must know your job and have a solid familiarity with your employees' tasks.

3. **Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions** - Search for ways to guide your organization to new heights. And when things go wrong, they always do sooner or later — do not blame others. Analyze the situation, take corrective action, and move on to the next challenge.
4. **Make sound and timely decisions** - Use good problem solving, decision making, and planning tools.
5. **Set the example** - Be a good role model for your employees. They must not only hear what they are expected to do, but also see. *We must become the change we want to see* - Mahatma Gandhi
6. **Know your people and look out for their well-being** - Know human nature and the importance of sincerely caring for your workers.
7. **Keep your workers informed** - Know how to communicate with not only them, but also seniors and other key people.
8. **Develop a sense of responsibility in your workers** - Help to develop good character traits that will help them carry out their professional responsibilities.
9. **Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished** - Communication is the key to this responsibility.
10. **Train as a team** - Although many so called leaders call their organization, department, section, etc. a team; they are not really teams...they are just a group of people doing their jobs.
11. **Use the full capabilities of your organization** - By developing a team spirit, you will be able to employ your organization, department, section, etc. to its fullest capabilities.

Attributes of Leadership

If you are a leader who can be trusted, then those around you will grow to respect you. To be such a leader, there is a **Leadership Framework** to guide you:

BE KNOW DO

BE a professional. Examples: Be loyal to the organization, perform selfless service, take personal responsibility.

BE a professional who possess good character traits. Examples: Honesty, competence, candor, commitment, integrity, courage, straightforwardness, imagination.

KNOW the four factors of leadership — follower, leader, communication, situation.

KNOW yourself. Examples: strengths and weakness of your character, knowledge, and skills.

KNOW human nature. Examples: Human needs, emotions, and how people respond to stress.

KNOW your job. Examples: be proficient and be able to train others in their tasks.

KNOW your organization. Examples: where to go for help, its climate and culture, who the unofficial leaders are.

DO provide direction. Examples: goal setting, problem solving, decision making, planning.

DO implement. Examples: communicating, coordinating, supervising, evaluating.

DO motivate. Examples: develop morale and *esprit de corps* in the organization, train, coach, counsel.

Environment

Every organization has a particular work environment, which dictates to a considerable degree how its leaders respond to problems and opportunities. This is brought about by its heritage of past leaders and its present leaders.

Goals, Values, and Concepts

Leaders exert influence on the environment via three types of actions:

1. The goals and performance standards they establish.
2. The values they establish for the organization.
3. The business and people concepts they establish.

Successful organizations have leaders who set high standards and goals across the entire spectrum, such as strategies, market leadership, plans, meetings and presentations, productivity, quality, and reliability.

Values reflect the concern the organization has for its employees, customers, investors, vendors, and surrounding community. These values define the manner in how business will be conducted.

Concepts define what products or services the organization will offer and the methods and processes for conducting business.

These goals, values, and concepts make up the organization's *personality* or how the organization is observed by both outsiders and insiders. This personality defines the roles, relationships, rewards, and rites that take place.

Roles and Relationships

Roles are the positions that are defined by a set of expectations about behavior of any job incumbent. Each role has a set of tasks and responsibilities that may or may not be spelled out. Roles have a powerful effect on behavior for several reasons, to include money being paid for the performance of the role, there is prestige attached to a role, and a sense of accomplishment or challenge.

Relationships are determined by a role's tasks. While some tasks are performed alone, most are carried out in relationship with others. The tasks will determine who the role-holder is required to interact with, how often, and towards what end. Also, normally the greater the interaction, the greater the liking. This in turn leads to more frequent interaction. In human behavior, it's hard to like someone whom we have no contact with, and we tend to seek out those we like. People tend to do what they are rewarded for, and friendship is

a powerful reward. Many tasks and behaviors that are associated with a role are brought about by these relationships. That is, new task and behaviors are expected of the present role-holder because a strong relationship was developed in the past, either by that role-holder or a prior role-holder.

Culture and Climate

Each organization has its own distinctive culture. It is a combination of the founders, past leadership, current leadership, crises, events, history, and size (Newstrom, Davis, 1993). This results in *rites*: the routines, rituals, and the “way we do things.” These rites impact individual behavior on what it takes to be in good standing (the norm) and directs the appropriate behavior for each circumstance.

The climate is the feel of the organization, the individual and shared perceptions and attitudes of the organization's members (Ivancevich, Konopaske, Matteson, 2007). While the culture is the deeply rooted nature of the organization that is a result of long-held formal and informal systems, rules, traditions, and customs; climate is a short-term phenomenon created by the current leadership. Climate represents the beliefs about the “feel of the organization” by its members. This individual perception of the “feel of the organization” comes from what the people believe about the activities that occur in the organization. These activities influence both individual and team motivation and satisfaction, such as:

- How well does the leader clarify the priorities and goals of the organization? What is expected of us?
- What is the system of recognition, rewards, and punishments in the organization?
- How competent are the leaders?
- Are leaders free to make decisions?
- What will happen if I make a mistake?

Organizational climate is directly related to the leadership and management style of the leader, based on the values, attributes, skills, and actions, as well as the priorities of the leader. Compare this to “ethical climate” — the feel of the organization about the activities that have ethical content or those aspects of the work environment that constitute ethical behavior. The ethical climate is the feel about whether we do things right; or the feel of whether we behave the way we ought to behave. The behavior (character) of the leader is the most important factor that impacts the climate.

On the other hand, culture is a long-term, complex phenomenon. Culture represents the shared expectations and self-image of the organization. The mature values that create tradition or the “way we do things here.” Things are done differently in every organization. The collective vision and common folklore that define the institution are a reflection of culture. Individual leaders, cannot easily create or change culture because culture is a part of the organization. Culture influences the characteristics of the climate by its effect on the actions and thought processes of the leader. But, everything you do as a leader will affect the climate of the organization.

The Process of Great Leadership

- **Challenge the process** - First, find a process that you believe needs to be improved the most.
- **Inspire a shared vision** - Next, share your vision in words that can be understood by your followers.
- **Enable others to act** - Give them the tools and methods to solve the problem.

- **Model the way** - When the process gets tough, get your hands dirty. A boss tells others what to do, a leader shows that it can be done.
- **Encourage the heart** - Share the glory with your followers' hearts, while keeping the pains within your own.

Definition of Leadership

1. **Conduct:**

To go before or to show the way; to act as a guide; conduct or escort: to lead a group.

2. **Influence:**

To influence or induce; cause: Subsequent events led him to reconsider his position.

3. **Guide:** To guide in direction, course, action, opinion, etc.; bring: You can lead her around to your point of view if you are persistent.

4. **Oversee:**

To command or direct (an army or other large organization): He led the Allied forces during the war.

5. **Show the way:**

To go first; be in advance: The band will lead and the troops will follow.

Importance of Leadership

Leadership is one of the most important things in society. It helps protect nations and organizations from harm. It makes business run more efficiently. It allows goals to be reached. In families, it leads children to become successful and well adjusted as they grow older.

When it is missing, people and groups often lose their way. They slow down, make the wrong decisions, and stop functioning. As things go wrong, there is conflict and turmoil.

Leadership requires decision-making that is timely, complete, and correct. In addition, a leader will implement strategy and deal with problems and hardship. This person will need to understand people and influence behavior.

Political leaders, we look for someone with strength and personal integrity. Someone who will fairly represent what we believe in and need. In business, we want the leader who will understand the business environment and have wisdom to make

good decisions. In the home, families need fathers who will be strong, gentle, and loving. They also, need to be firm and self-sacrificing. The importance of leadership in the home and in society cannot be overstated.

Synonyms for Leadership

guidance, administration, authority, capacity, command, conduction, control, directorship, domination, foresight, influence, initiative, management, power, preeminence, primacy, skill, superintendence, superiority, supremacy, sway

- ability, authorization, charge, coercion, compulsion, expertise, jurisdiction, skill, sovereignty
- go out in front, run things, spearhead, govern, pilot,
- be responsible for, persuade, protect, safeguard, shepherd, watch over, trail-blaze
- show the way, point the way, steer, direct,
- affect, call the shots, cause, command, preside over, supervise, tend,
- accompany, attend, chaperone

Antonyms for Leadership

subordination, impotence, incapacity, inferiority, powerlessness, weakness, indifference, lethargy, inefficiency, subservience, surrender, weakness, yielding, absence of influence, inferior, last, subordinate, supplementary, unimportant, follow, comply, consent, follow, obey, abandon, desert, leave, withdraw

Examples of Leadership

Example 1: Winston Churchill

Sir Winston Churchill was Prime Minister of Great Britain during the World War II. He encouraged the nation with his courage and confidence. He led the British to fight back against the advancing Germans even when the rest Europe was taken by the Axis powers. He once stated that "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."

Example 2: Dwight D. Eisenhower

He had excellent planning, political and military skills. Before he become President, he was the Supreme Allied Commander for Europe. His ability to lead and set strategy were essential to winning the war. Diplomacy, dedication, communication ability also helped him as President to build an interstate transportation system.

Example 3: Walt Disney

Walt Disney was a leader who displayed many leadership characteristics. It was important to him to make a positive difference in the lives of employees, family, and

those he worked with. His moral convictions were instilled in him by his parents at a young age and were reflected in his work. Walt Disney understood and embraced the process of change. He was willingness to take chances on innovative technologies as they developed in his field.

Example 4: Herb Kelleher

Herb Kelleher is one of the original founders of Southwest Airlines. Kelleher's vision and style are seen as the driving forces for this airline which has consistently posted a profit for 26 consecutive years. The key to Southwest's success is largely thought to be the warmth and determination of its employees who mirror those same qualities in their leader. He also felt that his employees come first and if employees are treated right, they would treat the outside world right, the outside world would become customers.

Example 5: John Wooden

John Wooden was the winner of 10 NCAA basketball championships in 12 years with the UCLA Bruins and was named Coach of the Century by ESPN. The only person to be inducted into basketball's Hall of Fame as both a player and a coach. He had a very disciplined, structured approach. He was quoted as saying, "Leadership starts with self-control. Remember, control of your organization begins with control of yourself. When you lose control, you sanction the same behavior for those under your leadership—the team. There is never an excuse for violating this imperative, and when you do, your credibility and consistency as a leader diminish accordingly."

Stories about Leadership

Seeing things in a different light

This is an example of a powerful leader seeing things differently...

Tom Watson Jr., CEO of IBM from 1956 to 1971, was a key figure in information technology. He repeatedly demonstrated his abilities as a leader, never more so than in our first short story.

A young executive had made some bad decisions that cost the company several million dollars. He was summoned to Watson's office, fully expecting to be dismissed. As he entered the office, the young executive said, "I suppose after that set of mistakes you will want to fire me." Watson was said to have replied,

"Not at all, young man, we have just spent a couple of million dollars educating you."

Thomas Edition: Staying positive under tough circumstances

This account illustrates that, under the worst conditions, Edison could see the positive side of what happened...

"In 1914 Thomas Edison's factory in West Orange, New Jersey, was virtually destroyed by fire. Although the damage exceeded \$2 million, the buildings were insured for only \$238,000 because they were made of concrete and were thought to be fireproof. Much of Edison's life work went up in smoke and flames that December night.

At the height of the fire, Edison's 24-year-old son, Charles, searched frantically for his father. He finally found him, calmly watching the fire, his face glowing in the reflection, his white hair blowing in the wind.

"My heart ached for him," said Charles. "He was 67 — no longer a young man — and everything was going up in flames. When he saw me, he shouted, "Charles, where's your mother?" When I told him I didn't know, he said, 'Find her. Bring her here. She will never see anything like this as long as she lives.'"

The next morning, Edison looked at the ruins and said, "There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew."

Three weeks after the fire, Edison managed to deliver the first phonograph."

Quotes about Leadership

Leadership: The art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it. Dwight D. Eisenhower

A general is just as good or just as bad as the troops under his command make him. General Douglas MacArthur

The real leader has no need to lead-- he is content to point the way. Henry Miller

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader. John Quincy Adams

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Let him who would be moved to convince others, be first moved to convince himself.
Thomas Carlyle

"Leadership consists not in degrees of technique but in traits of character; it requires moral rather than athletic or intellectual effort, and it imposes on both leader and follower alike the burdens of self-restraint." ~Lewis H. Lapham~

Traits Related to Leadership

Adaptable :*To make suitable to or fit for a specific use or situation. Change expectations to make a situation acceptable. Able to work with others to come to a mutually agreeable solution.*

Ambitious: *Having ambition; eagerly desirous of achieving or obtaining success, power, wealth, a specific goal, etc.: ambitious students. Showing or caused by ambition: an ambitious attempt to break the record. Strongly desirous; eager: ambitious of love and approval. Requiring exceptional effort, ability, etc.: an ambitious program for eliminating all slums.*

Charismatic: *A special virtue ability for leadership, worthiness of veneration, or the like. Personality for leadership.*

Confident: *Feeling or showing no doubt. Belief based on experience or evidence: Assurance founded on faith or reliance in oneself or in others. Full, emphatic certainty.*

Inspirational: *To fill with an animating, quickening, or exalting influence: His courage inspired his followers. To produce or arouse (a feeling, thought, etc.): to inspire confidence in others.*

Perceptive: *Having or showing keenness of insight, understanding, or intuition: a perceptive analysis of the problems involved. Seeing the abilities of others and using them accordingly.*

Initiative: *An introductory act or step; leading action: to take the initiative in starting the project. Readiness and ability in initiating action*

Persuasive: *Tending to have the power to induce action or belief. Capable of convincing. Passionate in beliefs.*

Motivated: *To be stimulated toward action. To arouse others to take action.*

Persevering: *Adhering to a course of action, a belief, or a purpose; steadfastness. Continuing under difficult circumstances without interruption.*

Thorough: *Painstakingly accurate or careful. Exhaustively complete. Exercising caution or showing care or attention. Covering every component or step.*

How to build Leadership skills

Certain types of people are more likely to become leaders. Having a strong, outgoing personality, with the ability to draw others to themselves is a start. There are other less obvious qualities that measure the effectiveness of leadership. Attitude, wisdom, determination, and commitment are equally as important. These are proved out through time.

Make a point to build relationships and get involved in activities that you have a passion for. Take on responsibility and learn.

Improving Leadership Skills 1. When building relationships, make others feel accepted and valuable. 2. Be open to what others have to say. Don't miss what is important to them. Consider their ideas as having significant worth.

3. Make decisions based on sound advice. Have a clear direction before carrying out tasks or projects.

4. Thank people for what they do for you.

5. Work with others in a respectful manner. Communicate difficult issues in a discreet manner.

6. Before starting projects, add others with experience and ability to your team.

7. Allow others to carry out responsibilities and give them credit for success.

8. Take leadership classes that focus on important concepts and actions to improve your skills.

Helping children develop leadership skills

The skills necessary to work with people are developed in childhood. Children may be born with leadership ability, but their effectiveness will be greatly enhanced by wise parents. Encouraging kids to exercise simple skills will help them toward their potential.

Consider the following:

- Spend time around people. Learn to interact orally.*
- Read outloud.*
- Restate back what they hear. Also encourage sharing of their experiences.*
- Make children responsible for completing tasks. Show them how to keep track of what needs to be done.*
- Don't feed ready answers to save time. How kids a chance to solve problems.*

- *Build self esteem into your child.*

WoT's Hot and WoT's Not: Leadership in the next millennium

By Richard Aldersea

Synopsis

- What are the unique qualities required to lead the organization of tomorrow?
- What are the actions, skills and strategies that leaders will need to sustain a competitive advantage in tomorrow's fast-paced world?
- How do you develop leaders from where they are to where they will need to be?

Focusing on these and other deep dilemmas facing organizations and the human resource professional throughout the world, *Wots Hot and Wots Not: Leadership in the next millennium* offers an opportunity to explore some of the work emerging in North American organizations around leadership development.

Paper/Conference Notes

The agenda for leadership development has shifted drastically during the past several years. The 1980s was an era of radical restructuring, spurred by many mergers and acquisitions, and the decline of many leading companies. The idea of developing leaders seemed to fade in face of fear of the future and pursuit of quick fixes.

The early 1990s will probably be remembered for management fads that emphasized processes and culture over leadership.

Now, the central challenge for senior executives is to create a company that wins continuously.

The following pages capture some of the thoughts from "What's Hot and What's Not: Leadership in the next millennium" presented at the Team Management Systems World of Teams Conferences (WotCon) in Sydney and Melbourne.

Key references include:

- The Leadership Engine - How Winning Companies Build Leaders at Every Level, Noel M. Tichy
- The Nine Dilemmas Leaders Face, **Fortune**, March 1996
- How Leaders Develop Leaders, **Training & Development**, May 1997

"A business short on capital can borrow money and one with poor location can move. But a business short on leadership has little chance of survival."

*Warren Bennis
Leaders: The strategies for taking charge*

The Leader-Driven Organization

"In the future the real core competence of companies will be the ability to continuously and creatively destroy and remake themselves to meet customer demands. Everyone in the organization must take responsibility for taking responsive actions. This means that a company needs leadership everywhere in the organization. From the corner office, in the customer rep's cubicle, and on the shop floor. Leadership is the ability to see reality as it really is and to mobilize the appropriate response."

*Noel M. Tichy
The Leadership Engine*

"Why are leaders important?"

Leaders Manage Through Times of Change

They determine direction.

They move organizations from where they are to where they need to be.

Leaders Make Things Happen

They shape the culture.

They use the management tools.

Leaders are Revolutionaries

They face reality and mobilize appropriate resources.

They encourage others to do the same"

*Noel M. Tichy
The Leadership Engine*

What are the Organizational Issues that will Challenge Tomorrow's Leaders?

"What worries CEOs

- Competitors' Strategies (18%)
- Managing People (17.2%)
- Keeping Up With Technology (13%)
- Managing Growth (12.5%)
- Managing Money (12.3%)
- Raising Enough Money (9.0 %)
- Government Legislation (7.0%)
- Meeting Orders (3.3%)
- Lawsuits (2.0%)
- Other (5.7%)

*Inc. 500
CEO's Biggest Worries*

The Nine Dilemmas Leaders Face

(Fortune March 18, 1996)

"A couple of years ago, an opportunity to define the dilemmas of (leadership) presented itself when the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce decided to build a leadership center for its' managers and employees on a rolling 100-acre site 45 minutes north of its Toronto headquarters. When Al Flood, the CEO of the bank (North America's eighth largest, with 1995 assets of \$132 billion), okayed the plans, he did what any good banker would: He told Michele Darling, head of Human Resources, and Hubert Saint-Onge, who was to run the center, to make sure that this asset performed."

"Thus challenged, Darling and Saint-Onge responded with an extraordinary act of in-house journalism. To create a mission and a curriculum for the center, Saint-Onge interviewed CIBC's 27 most senior executives, one on one."

"... when done, he found nine "core leadership dilemmas."

--

The Nine Dilemmas Leaders Face

- Broad-based Leadership vs. High-visibility Leaders
- Independence vs. Interdependence
- Long-term vs. Short-term
- Creativity vs. Discipline
- Trust vs. Change
- Bureaucracy Busting vs. Economies of Scale
- People vs. Productivity
- Leadership vs. Capability
- Revenue Growth vs. Cost Containment

The Nine Dilemmas Leaders Face is based on The Nine Dilemmas Leaders Face, Fortune Magazine March 1996.

The Hardest Job a Leader has is to Navigate Among Often Conflicting Goals

"The defining role of a leader is to sort out a message."

FORTUNE

On Future Leaders

"Truly effective leaders in the years ahead will have personas determined by strong values and belief in the capacity of individuals to grow. They will have an image of the society in which they would like their organizations and themselves to live. They will be visionary, they will believe strongly that they can and should be shaping the future, and they will act on those beliefs through their personal behavior."

Richard Beckhard

What are the Actions, Skills, and Strategies that Leaders will need to Sustain a Competitive Advantage in Tomorrow's Fast-Paced World?

Review your life and think about a leadership success you have enjoyed.

Once you have a clear picture in your mind of the time in your life that you were most proud of yourself as a leader, tell the story to someone else.

Now stand back from the stories and reflect on what made the leadership successful.

As a group generate a list of the characteristics of effective leadership.

The New Language of Organizing and its Implications for Leaders

"It is a tough task to run a community of individuals where authority has to be earned. Few people do it successfully, because it demands an unusual combination of attributes:

- **A belief in oneself** is the only thing that gives an individual the self-confidence to step into the unknown and to persuade others to go where no one has gone before, but this has to be combined with a decent doubt, the humility to accept that one can be wrong on occasion, that others also have ideas, that listening is as important as talking.
- **A passion for the job** provides the energy and focus that drive the organization and that act as an example to others, but this also has to be combined with its opposite, an awareness of other worlds, because focus can turn to blinkers, an inability to think beyond one's own box. Great leaders find time to read, to meet people beyond their own circle, to go to the theater or see films, to walk in other worlds.
- **The leader must have a love of people**, because in a community of individuals, those who find individuals a pain and a nuisance may be respected or feared, but they will not be willingly followed.
- Yet this attribute, too, requires its opposite, **a capacity for aloneness**, because leaders have to be out front. It is not always possible to share one's worries with anyone else. Few will thank the leader when things go right, but many will blame the leader if things go wrong. Great leaders have to walk alone from time to time. They also have to live vicariously, deriving their satisfaction from the successes of others and giving those others the recognition that they themselves are often denied.

Living with these paradoxes requires great strength of character. It also requires a belief in what one is doing. Money alone will not be enough to provide the motive to live with these contradictions. Even a love of power is insufficient, because power irons out the contradictions rather than holding them in balance. Great leaders are bred from great causes, but leaders at their best, also breed great causes. Sadly, for want of a cause, we too often create a crisis, which is not the same thing at all. Until and unless business creates a cause bigger and more embracing than enrichment of the shareholders, it will have few great leaders. We are more likely to find them in the nonprofit arena. If that is so, then that sector may yet become the training ground for business and perhaps even for politics."

Charles Handy

Leadership's Core Qualities

Character, Vision, Behavior, and Confidence

"Throughout the years, I have tried to define and record the core leadership competencies of those I've admired and have sought to identify individuals with these core competencies ... I've noted numerous variations in leadership styles and modifications in approaches, but the fundamental qualities have largely remained constant. I've placed these core qualities into four basic areas: character, vision, behavior, and confidence.

Character

- Infused with humor and humility, and by nature inclined to treat individuals in their organizations equally, without 'smiling up and kicking down'.
- Self-aware, and honest with themselves as to their own strengths, weaknesses, and sincere efforts to improve.
- Inquisitive and approachable enough so that others feel safe offering honest feedback and new ideas.
- Open-minded and capable of respecting their competitors or adversaries and learning from them, in both leadership situations and general business conditions.
- Action-oriented, which surfaces not as a desire to move for movement's sake but to move directly toward a clear goal with a relentless follow-through.

Vision

Leaders who can spark the imagination with a compelling vision of a worthwhile end that stretches us beyond what is known today, and who can translate that to clear objectives, are the ones we follow. The Federalist Papers confirm that Madison and his colleagues understood that the most elegant documents and structures were irrelevant if they did not help the readers form a vision, an outcome, through clearly-stated, overarching objectives.

Successful business leaders develop goals to achieve their vision. Their commitment to the goals, and thus to the vision, is made obvious by both their actions and their repeated communication of what must be done, and why.

Behaviors

With clear objectives in mind, the issue then becomes what a leader will do, how he or she will behave while working with and through people in pursuit of the end goal. Although leaders must adapt to a specific and ever-changing set of circumstances, the most successful leaders exhibit a common set of behaviors. Those leaders will: Act and be unwilling to rationalize inaction, with relentless follow-through to ensure that the action is implemented.

- Create and shape change, rather than passively accepting it, and challenge the status quo, refusing to accept the response, 'We've never done that before'.
- Seize the opportunities of the present without compromising the need to invest and build for the future.
- Flourish in a boundary-less work environment by focusing on results, knowing that much can be done if it doesn't matter who gets the credit.
- Evaluate and deploy people based solely on strength, performance, and potential.
- Think positively, never give up, seek out the opportunities that lurks in every challenge, and realize that things are never as bad as they seem.
- Be detailed-oriented enough to know whether the objectives are being met or the course is correct, but not so detail-oriented that they 'miss the forest for the trees'.
- Seek consensus without being paralyzed by the thought of making a mistake or intolerant of those who make them.
- Communicate constantly - influencing, encouraging, critiquing, and listening.

Strength of character and foresight matter not a whit if people are not willing or able to follow someone. A title alone cannot inspire others to work toward a common end, lending all their energy, ideas, and commitment to the endeavor. But frequent, open, and honest communication does inspire others to follow, including those without the benefit of a title.

With the utmost clarity, leaders convey:

- Well-articulated expectations of high-performance for each and every member of the organization and the belief that everyone, including the leader, will be evaluated against those expectations on the basis of performance.
- An understanding that communication is a two-way process in which leaders listen, hunger for feedback and new ideas, and are driven by a need to compel and to influence, not to command and control.
- An appreciation of the principle that well-informed team members are the most motivated and strongest achievers, and a willingness to communicate with teams and to follow-through.
- Confidence and trust in employees, and a desire to give opportunities to any individuals who are eager to accept the accountability that necessarily goes with responsibility.

Confidence

Leaders share another attribute that is critical for success: self-confidence. Sharply distinguished from arrogance or egotism, a healthy level of self-confidence enables the leader to undertake the difficult ventures necessary to meet his or her goals."

*Alfred C. Decrane Jr.
The Leader of the Future*

The 9 Faces of Leadership

According to FedEx, its best leaders share nine personal attributes - which the company defines with remarkable specificity. FedEx also has a system for rating aspiring leaders on whether they possess these attributes. How do you rate? Judge yourself against these edited descriptions of the nine faces of leadership at FedEx.

Charisma

Instills faith, respect, and trust. Has a special gift of seeing what others need to consider. Conveys a strong sense of mission.

Individual consideration

Coaches, advises, and teaches people who need it. Actively listens and gives indications of listening. Gives newcomers a lot of help.

Intellectual stimulation

Gets others to use reasoning and evidence, rather than unsupported opinion. Enables others to think about old problems in new ways. Communicates in a way that forces others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before.

Courage

Willing to stand up for ideas even if they are unpopular. Does not give in to pressure or to others' opinions in order to avoid confrontation. Will do what's right for the company and for employees even if it causes personal hardship.

Dependability

Follows through and keeps commitments. Takes responsibility for actions and accepts responsibility for mistakes. Works well independently of the boss.

Flexibility

Functions effectively in changing environments. When a lot of issues hit at once, handles more than one problem at a time. Changes course when the situation warrants it.

Integrity

Does what is morally and ethically right. Does not abuse management privileges. Is a consistent role model.

Judgement

Reaches sound and objective evaluations of alternative courses of action through logic, analysis, and comparison. Puts facts together rationally and realistically. Uses past experience and information to bring perspective to present decisions.

Respect for others

Honors and does not belittle the opinions or work of other people, regardless of their status or position.

How do you Develop Leaders from Where They Are To Where They Will Need To Be?

"At the end of the day, you bet on people, not on strategies."

Larry Bossidy
CEO, AlliedSignal

INTEL

In Santa Clara California, Andy Grove is teaching Intel managers how to lead in an industry in which the product (semiconductors) doubles in capacity every 18 months. In Grove's teaching sessions, he discusses the role of leaders in detecting and navigating turbulent industry shifts - shifts that many companies fail to survive.

Why does Andy Grove do this?

Because he believes that having leaders at all levels of Intel who can spot trends and who have the courage to act will enable Intel to prosper while other companies falter. So, Grove is dedicated to imploring and encouraging people across Intel - middle managers, salespeople, engineers and others - to lead in their individual businesses.

PepsiCo

A few years ago in the Grand Cayman Islands, Roger Enrico, then vice chairman of PepsiCo, woke at dawn to gather his thoughts. At 8 a.m., he began a five-day leadership program for nine of PepsiCo's highest-potential executives. The sessions went until evening, as Enrico taught his point of view on how to grow a business. Then, he asked participants to come up with ideas for their businesses, facilitating their discussions to help shape their ideas. The results of those and other

sessions have been 100 better-prepared leaders, and according to one observer, "*some of the biggest business ideas that PepsiCo has had in the past several years.*"

General Electric

In Crotonville, New York, Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric, is teaching a development program for some of GE's senior leaders.

He asks them 'If you were named CEO of GE tomorrow, what would you do?'

In such a program, Welch uses that question to orchestrate a no-holds-barred discussion. He jousts with participants, and hones their analytic abilities and leadership instincts by having them joust with each other. He also offers his own views and experience. Says Welch, "*I've gone to Crotonville every two weeks for 15 years to interact with new employees, middle managers, and senior managers. Haven't missed a session.*"

How Leaders Develop Leaders in Training & Development, May 1997

A Recipe for Glue

"As the traditional implicit employment contract between the individual and the organization continues to unravel, many of us are struggling with basic questions such as how to lead, motivate, and plan in this unchartered new environment.

The increasingly voiced question 'What is the glue that hold this organization together?'

I close my eyes and envision a large glue pot in the middle of the conference room floor. And I imagine what a recipe might look like:

- Fill the glue pot with the fresh, pure, clear water of undiluted human spirit.
- Take special care not to contaminate with preconceived ideas, or to pollute with excess control.
- Fill slowly; notice that the pot only fills from the bottom up. It's impossible to fill it from the top down!
- Stir in equal parts of customer focus and pride in good work.
- Bring to boil and blend in a liberal portion of diversity, one part self esteem, and one part tolerance.
- Fold in accountability.
- Simmer until smooth and thick, stirring with shared leadership and clear goals.
- Season with a dash of humor and a pinch of adventure.
- Let cool, then garnish with a topping of core values.
- Serve by coating all boxes in the organizational chart, paying particular attention to the white spaces. With proper application, the boxes disappear and all that can be seen is productivity, creativity, and customer service."

David M. Noer

"If you are planning for one year, grow rice. If you are planning for 20 years, grow trees. If you are planning for centuries, grow people."

A Chinese proverb

Richard Aldersea was Chief Executive Officer of Team Management Systems (USA), Inc., with overall responsibilities for the development of Team Management Systems in North and South America.

Combining this role with his passion for and expertise in learning design led Richard to work with many leading organizations in diverse environments throughout the world, including: Arthur Andersen & Co., BP Exploration, General Electric, Glaxo Wellcome, Hewlett-Packard, KPMG, ITT and Sony.

Richard's background covers four continents, with diverse experiences in the fields of business development and professional training, including directing managing Training & Corporate Development Programs for Outward Bound, a not-for-profit educational organization, in Australia, and more recently playing a key role in the development of Outward Bound Centre for Change in Canada, a multi-faceted consultancy integrating action learning in creating positive and sustainable change for individuals, teams, and divisions within the workplace.

Leadership and Change

Managers are people who do things right, while leaders are people who do the right thing. — Warren Bennis, Ph.D. *On Becoming a Leader*

Today's business world is highly competitive. The way to survive is to reshape to the needs of a rapidly changing world. Resistance to change is a dead-end street. . . for you and the organization. Customers are not only demanding excellent service, they are also demanding more. If you do not supply it, your competitors will. Organizations are reshaping themselves to change quickly in order to meet the needs of their customers. The organization's top leaders know they cannot throw money at every problem and that they need highly committed and flexible workers. As a leader, you need to emphasize action to make the change as quickly and smoothly as possible. "Resistance is futile," as the Borg from *Star Trek* like to put it.

Organizations normally go through four main changes throughout their growth (Klepper, 1997):

1. **Formative Period** — This is when a new organization is just getting started. Although there is a *founding vision* (the purpose of the organization), there are no formal definitions. This is just as well because normally there are a lot of experimentation and innovation taking place. These changes of creativity and discovery are needed to overcome obstacles and accomplish breakthroughs.
2. **Rapid Growth Period** — Direction and coordination are added to the organization to sustain growth and solidify gains. Change is focused on defining the purpose of the organization and on the mainstream business.
3. **Mature Period** — The strong growth curve levels off to the overall pace of the economy. Changes are needed to maintain established markets and assuring maximum gains are achieved.
4. **Declining Period** — This is the rough ride. For many organizations it means down-sizing and reorganization. To survive, changes include tough objectives and compassionate implementation. The goal is to get out of the old and into something new. Success in this period means that the four periods start over again.

For some organizations the four periods of growth come and go very rapidly, for others, it may take decades. Failure to follow-through with the needed changes in any of the four growth periods means the death of the organization. Some, such as IBM, do it successfully, others, like ATT, do it quite poorly.

The Japanese have a term called "kaizen," which means *continual improvement*. It is a never ending quest to do better. And you do better by changing. Standing still allows your competitors to get ahead of you.

Change Acceptance

Throughout periods of changes, which is just about all the time for a good organization, leaders need to concentrate on having their people go from *change avoidance* to *change acceptance*. There are five steps accompanying change (Conner, 1993):

- **Denial** — cannot foresee any major changes
- **Anger** at others for what they're putting me through
- **Bargaining** — work out solutions, keep everyone happy
- **Depression** — is it worth it? doubt, need support
- **Acceptance** — the reality

This is why a worker's first reaction to change is often to resist it. People get comfortable performing tasks and processes in a particular manner. This comfort provides them with the security that they are the masters of their environment. Some of the things that cause them to fear change include a dislike of a disruption in their lives, looking like a fool by not being able to adapt and learn, their jobs might become harder, and a loss of control.

Leaders can help the change process by changing their employees' attitude from avoidance into acceptance. This is often best accomplished by changing avoidance questions and statements into acceptance questions:

From "Why?" to "What new opportunities will this provide?"

When they ask "why," focus on the benefits that the change will provide them and the organization. Do NOT feel uncomfortable if you are feeling hesitation about the change too...you are also human. By spelling out the benefits, you will not only comfort them, but help to convince yourself too.

From "How will this affect me?" to "What problems will this solve?"

Anything that prevents something from being better is a problem. Let them know what the problem is and how they will be part of the solution.

From "We do not do it this way." to "What would it look like?"

Show them, provide plenty of explanations and compassion, and get your team to ask and answer questions.

From "When will this change be over so we can get back to work?" to "What can I do to help?"

Get them involved in implementing the change. Help them to become part of it.

From "Who is doing this to us?" to "Who can help us?"

Focus on the challenges that must be overcome. Ensure that you enlist help from other departments and colleagues.

Change is further complicated as it does not always produce a direct adjustment. Each employee's attitude produces a different response that is conditioned by feelings towards the change. In a classical experiment (Roethlisberger, Dickson, 1939) the lighting was improved in a factory on a regular basis. The theory was that better lighting would lead to greater productivity. As expected, productivity did rise. The lighting was then decreased to show the reverse effect — lower productivity, but instead, productivity increased further! It was not until the lighting was down to the equivalent of moonlight (0.06 foot-candle) that an appreciable decline in output was noticed.

Of course it was not the change in lighting itself that caused the higher output, but rather an intervening variable. This variable was diagnosed as the employee's *attitudes*. That is, when you introduce *change*, each employee's *personal history* and *social situation* at work will produce a different attitude towards that change. You cannot see or measure attitudes, but what you can see and measure is the *response* towards that change:

Change + Personal history (nurture) + Social situation (environment) = Attitude + Response

In the factory workers' case, productivity rose because they were being observed. This is known as the Hawthorne Effect (named after the factory where the research took place). It means that the mere observation of a group tends to change it.

Although each person will have a different response to change (personal history), they often show their attachment to the group (social situation at work) by joining in a uniform response to the change. For example, one person's personal history might be so strong that she works harder when a change is introduced, while the rest of the group's social situation is strong enough that they threaten to strike because of the change. Although each person in that group might want to something different, such as place more demands, ignore the change, work harder, etc.; the need to belong to a group often sways individuals to follow a few individuals — “we are all in this together.” Sometimes the response towards change is influenced mostly by personal history, sometimes it is swayed mostly by the social situation, as John Donne stated so elegantly:

No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind; And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; It tolls for thee. — John Donne

Leading the Change



Martin Luther King did not say, "I have a very good plan," he shouted, "I have a dream!" You must provide passion and a strong sense of purpose of the change.

Feelings are contagious. When someone around you is feeling blue, it can bring you down. Likewise, when someone is passionate about something, it can have an inspiring effect. Build the change so that others want to be part of it. When you give them part of it, also give them the authority and control to act upon it. Share the power so that they do not feel powerless. You want them to feel useful and enthusiastic. Make them feel needed, that the change could not happen without them!

Kurt Lewin (1951) theorized that there are three stages to change:

Unfreezing

Old ideals and processes must be tossed aside so that new ones may be learned. Often, getting rid of the old processes is just as difficult as learning new ones due to the power of habits. Just as a teacher erases the old lessons off the chalkboard before beginning a new lesson, so must a leader help to clear out the old practices before beginning the new. During this part of the process you need to provide just a little bit of coaching as they are unlearning not learning and a lot of cheerleading (emotional support) to break the old habits.

Changing

The steps to the new ideals are learned by practicing:

What I hear, I forget.

What I see, I remember.

What I do, I understand.

— Kung Fu Tzu ().

Although there will be confusion, overload and despair, there will also be hope, discovery, and excitement. This period requires a lot of coaching as they are learning and just a little bit of cheerleading due to the affect of Arousal Overloading.

Refreezing

The new processes are now intellectually and emotionally accepted. What has been learned is now actually being practiced on the job. Just a little bit of coaching is required and a lot of cheerleading is used to set up the next change process. . . remember it is **continuous** process improvement!