

MODULE 1

INTRODUCTION TO YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

| Segment | Content |
|--|---|
| <p>Introduction</p> | <p>Welcome to Module 1. Let’s begin with an age-old debate: the difference between leadership and management. The chances are that you an experienced and capable manager moving into a leadership role or are already in a leadership appointment and wanting to master leadership. But what is it? And how does it differ from management?</p> <p>I see this confusion on almost every episode of The Apprentice on TV. Each week they appoint a ‘project manager’ who endeavours to ‘manage’ the team in carrying out its task. All too often it ends in disaster for one team and there is a merciless dissection of all the problems that beset the team. What this usually reveals is that the team were not unified in what they were doing, and individuals pursued their own agendas, or worked in isolated ignorance, or were simply confused and disorganised. Do you recognise that in your workplace? Whilst there are some poor business decisions or misguided plans, the most common problem is the people in the team were working under pressure and without leadership. However brilliant the plan and the ‘management’ of the plan, in the absence of a team leader, any team is usually no more than a loose collection of individuals ... and in my humble opinion, this is what we often see on The Apprentice. You can see the reverse happening too with some tasks. Suddenly and magically, the team coalesces around an idea, and everything just seems to flow, and they forget that they are competing against each other, and all pull together. It is beautiful when this happens, as we can then see leadership in action.</p> <p>This programme aims to support and guide you in building up the set of knowledge and skills that will enable you to win the leadership challenge, in whatever form your challenge comes. It is about retaining your managerial skills and building on top the skills and mindset of an outstanding leader. The first six modules will lay the foundation by first articulating what it is to be a leader, and then looking at a range of approaches to defining and describing leadership. Today we focus on the difference between a leader and a manager.</p> |
| <p>Learning and development objective</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ By the end of this module, you will be able to define ‘leader’ and ‘manager’ and describe the similarities and differences in how the two roles are alike and different. ➤ You will be able to use your knowledge to identify ‘managers’ and ‘leaders’ in your sphere of influence. ➤ You will be able to reflect on your own leadership style and determine which term best describes you. |

Main text

If you want to become a better, more effective leader, the very first thing to do is understand the function and characteristics of a great leader. One of the key challenges is that leadership is an intangible concept. The role of a great leader can be difficult to define and opinions of what ‘makes a great leader’ vary. That being said, most people know a great leader when they see one. When a truly great leader galvanises a nation or a group to undertake an extraordinary challenge, like a Martin Luther King or Mahatma Gandhi, there is usually a consensus that they are powerful, skilled, and great. In the complexity of our everyday workplaces, it may be harder to define what makes a great leader, but the negative consequences of bad leadership are readily apparent.

Think for a moment about a business or workplace involving an ineffective leader. Do any of these negative consequences sound familiar?

- ▶ low employee morale
- ▶ high staff turnover
- ▶ poor productivity
- ▶ high sickness rates and absenteeism
- ▶ lack of creativity
- ▶ no loyalty or commitment to the leader, organisation, or task
- ▶ lack of personal discipline
- ▶ poor customer service, and so on

The age, appearance, education, and training of ineffective leaders varies from one to another. The negative consequences of working under an ineffective leader, however, are similar. They relate to people, relationships, and the human side of business.

Let’s imagine for a moment a business which selects three leaders and gives each of them a small team of employees and a major project to complete within a specified time period.

Team Leader One convenes a short meeting to break the task down into parts. As the leader, he exercises his authority and chooses the part he wants to work on. All other team members work on their tasks, turn in their assignments and the leader compiles and submits their work.

Team Leader Two carefully divides the task for his team into manageable parts, based on his perception of the team members’ strengths and interests, and then assigns tasks to team members best suited for the job. The team members are each provided with a timeline specifying when specific parts of each task are to be completed. Team members report each day to the leader summarizing the day’s accomplishments. Each morning, the team leader visits each team member’s desk to discuss the goals for the day. One week before the final project is due the leader begins to check off each completed piece of the project and compiles the final presentation.

Team Leader Three, has a different approach. After bringing the team together and sharing the nature of their project, the team members are encouraged to brainstorm possible solutions. The team leader responds to team member ideas with comments such as, “Great idea! What can we do to make this idea more effective? Remember

we aren't solving the problem just for today, but for next year also. How can we be ahead of the game here?" At the end of the first day, team members strategise different aspects of the project and accept the tasks they are energised to complete. Each morning the leader touches base with the team, encouraging team members to share ideas, identify problems, and dream 'bigger solutions.' When a team member hits a road block the entire team quickly convenes and problem-solve solutions. On the final two days, the team compiles their final report. When the task is complete, they go to lunch together to celebrate their tremendous success.

This example illustrates three approaches to tackling a project. Team Leader One was not really a leader. Leader One merely divided the project into tasks, assigning the best part of the project to himself. Team Leader Two epitomizes what Professor John Kotter of Harvard Business School, and well known leadership guru, describes as a **manager**. Team Leader Two organized the tasks and the team members so that the job was completed on time and the desired results were achieved. Professor Kotter would describe Team Leader Three as the true **leader**. This team leader provided direction to the task and sought to inspire his team members to meet their challenge with creativity and commitment. Have you seen all three approaches adopted on The Apprentice with dramatically differing results?

A **Manager** is described as:

- ▶ motivational
- ▶ organisational
- ▶ ordered
- ▶ planned
- ▶ budgeted
- ▶ consistent

In other words, a manager organises people to produce the desired results, whether it is producing parts on a production line, handling customer queries, or running the Human Resources or Finance departments. Let's be clear, there is nothing wrong with this: if you are a manager then you are there to manage things or processes. It is part of your job. However, leaders can move people to do so much more, and this is the essence of being a real leader rather than just a manager.

A **Leader** is described by Kotter as

- ▶ strategic
- ▶ influential
- ▶ visionary
- ▶ transformational
- ▶ inspirational

A leader puts management activity into a strategic perspective, giving direction to the people, as well as the activity. Most of all a leader delivers the '*transformational and inspirational*' element which gets people to perform in a consistently committed, purposeful and selfless way, putting the organisation's interests before their own, whatever challenges may come along.

My early career was spent as an officer in the British Army and my military education and early appointments gave me an excellent grounding in the theory and practicalities of leadership. When I first encountered this debate, it was reduced to the following simplistic formula:

- ▶ Management = Fixed, i.e. things
- ▶ Leadership = Variables, i.e. people

Although this formula oversimplifies things, it highlights the key distinctions between managers and leaders. It highlights the leader’s greatest challenge which is people. Most businesses rely heavily on people to get things done however many machines, computers, or other forms of automation they have. At the end of the day, it is the people who plan, design, create, organise, build, move, serve and carry out so many other vital tasks for a business to operate. When things go wrong with the people in an organisation, it is so often because a ‘manager’ has dealt with a situation in a ‘managerial’ way – looking at everything and everyone, as ‘things’ to be managed from a process or financial perspective. It has become a dominant culture in many organisations with shocking but often misunderstood consequences. It may be blindingly obvious to an outsider what is going wrong however to the manager it is just people being awkward and a new managerial response is required to ‘manage’ people better. Due to the rise of the ‘manager’ and the ‘managerialist’ dogma, which has so dominated the workplace in some organisations, in both private and public sectors, some otherwise sane and caring people, have become managerial robots, who completely fail to engage the people in their organisations. I must apologise here if I seem overly opinionated – I feel strongly about this as it is innocent people who are just trying to earn a living who suffer as a result as does the organisation.

While we are not going to change business culture, we can help to value our people more, understanding that they are human and need to be treated as humans. In return, the people you lead will respond with an exceptional work ethic.

So, let’s look at a few quotes on leadership from a variety of accomplished leaders to see what more there is to leadership:

Leadership is a combination of strategy and character. If you must be without one, be without the strategy.

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf

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.

Management is efficiency in climbing the ladder of success; leadership determines whether the ladder is leaning against the right wall.

Stephen R. Covey

These quotes hint at the wide range of skills, qualities, and approaches to leadership that we will explore in the next few modules. For now, we have established that

leadership is all about getting like-minded people together to get remarkable things done. Humans have evolved as social animals into natural hierarchies, from which leaders emerge. A leader is required to communicate a vision, which will connect the group and build the relationships needed to take the group toward its objectives.

Leadership comes naturally to some. The good news from recent scientific research into the way the human brain works, leadership can also be learned. Understanding how your brain works and those of others, will help you to develop powerful visions, connect and inspire people, and galvanise your team into sustained and focussed action. You can become a great leader. Leadership is about people, it's about change, it's about motivation, it's about providing direction and order in chaos, and perhaps above all, inspiration, communication, and connection.

Don't get me wrong, most organisations need managers, and managers must manage the business. Managers must, however, rise up the ranks and become leaders. While they retain the essential skills and knowledge of managers, they must transform into leaders. While not all do, I presume that you have transformed, or that you are taking this programme because you want to become an effective leader.

It is now time to start thinking about leadership in practice and how these characteristics apply to you given your individual experience, and your unique work environment. So, look at the task in the next section and think about it as you go about your work in the day ahead. Then spend some time on the questions which follow, answering each question as fully and as honestly as you can. Answering the questions at the end of the day will be best for many as this is the time to reflect on your working day.

The next stage in your leadership journey has truly started now.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <p>Key points</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Management is motivational, organisational, ordered, planned, budgeted and consistent. ➤ Leadership is strategic, influential, visionary, transformational and inspirational. It's about people. <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Leaders don’t manage, and managers don’t lead” John Kotter in What Leaders Really Do</i></p> |
| <p>Task for the day</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have a good look at the people in the world around you and try to identify the real leaders. Look out for those who are authentic leaders and not simply managers going through the motions or those just seeking popularity or power. ➤ Think about your work place and the team leaders, supervisors, managers, and directors. Which ones inspire you and your colleagues? Identify those that somehow make you just want to do more ... and those who don't. ➤ Look further afield at your community or any groups or organisations outside of work. Can you identify energising leaders who you or others willingly follow? ➤ Finally look at the wider world, at politics, business, the arts, entertainment, and so on. Who can you identify who influences your behaviour positively or inspires you? ➤ Leadership comes in many forms and is practiced at many levels in widely differing contexts. List everyone you can think of who a motivational leader is and try to identify what it is about them which is inspiring you. Don't get too analytical though – go with your gut feeling. |
| <p>Questions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What were the key characteristics you identified in your list of leaders? What was common among many of them? ➤ What else is apparent to you when you look at this list of people? ➤ How do you feel about yourself as a leader? Are you more of a 'Manager' or a 'Leader'? ➤ How would your colleagues, subordinates, boss, and customers describe you as a leader? Would their perspective be the same or different from your own perspective? |