

By Shannon Kalvar

Anyone who follows business literature can easily track the rise and fall of leadership and management as opposed disciplines. Sometimes the demand is for more vision and inspiration; other times, it's for more measurement and control. Fundamentally, though, the two disciplines cannot work apart.

Leadership without management can't sustain change or improve the now. At the same time, management without leadership is a soulless endeavor best suited to controlling the actions of spoiled children.

I've watched many good leader/manager pairs working together over the years. Some ran small businesses; others worked on massive projects with hundreds of people and millions of dollars. But no matter what the setting, they shared many of the following traits.

## 1 Leaders inspire; managers measure

When leaders finish speaking, the listeners want to go out and change the world. They get fired up and moving, willingly facing problems they would have ignored before. This energy gradually fades until the leader reestablishes it.

When managers finish speaking, everyone knows what is expected of them, how it will be measured, and what results to expect. In other words, they know exactly what they have to do. This knowledge remains valid until the goal changes.

## 2 Leaders guide, managers navigate

Leaders give their followers a general idea of where they want to take the team. The team members then do their level best to get from the current state to the future state, using the skills they possess to cover the gap.

When managers describe what they want done, they include clear instructions regarding the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the gap plan. The team then enacts the plan in a, hopefully anyway, organized fashion.

## 3 Leaders envision, managers maintain

Leaders speak about the future as if it already exists. They see it, taste it, and can sometimes even feel it just out of reach. This vision allows them to show the team what could be, lifting them out of habitual ruts.

Managers speak about what they currently see and measure. They explain clearly how things operate and identify metrics to further refine that operation. These metrics may help change; more often, they reinforce existing habitual behaviors.

## 4 Leaders talk, managers listen

The essence of leadership lies in knowing when to talk and what to say to reach your team. Sometimes that means sitting silently. The Japanese say "eloquence is silver, silence is golden" for a reason. Regardless of technique, though, leaders' immediate goals always revolve around opening the way to communicate a vision to their target audience.

The essence of management lies in knowing when to gather data and what data points are needed to manipulate the team or the political environment. Managers listen carefully, make notes, and then come to a decision about the situation as it exists in the immediate world.

## **5 Leaders support, managers teach**

The very best leader I ever worked for asked me, "What can I do for you today?" every day, without fail. If I needed resources, he found them; if I needed time, he got deadlines pushed back. He gave me the support and the space I needed to excel or fall flat on my face.

The very best manager I ever worked for asked me, "Do you need any help?" every day without fail. If I needed training, he arranged for it; if I didn't know how to handle something, he taught me how to do it himself. Whenever I came upon something I didn't know, I knew he could show me how to do it.

## **6 Leaders hope, managers analyze**

Leaders sometimes seem unattached to reality. Their focus on the future, on a vision of what could be, gives them great hope with which to weather trials. It also sometimes leads them to ignore problems that honestly need addressing before the future can come to be.

Managers, on the other hand, clearly see the present with all its warts and flaws. This clarity gives them the ability to resolve current issues; it also can create a loop in which they can't change things because they know only "the way things have always been done."

## **7 Leaders authorize, managers direct**

Leaders expand their scope of action by authorizing their followers to act within a scope. This authorization carries with it a part of the leader's own authority and entrusts the subordinate with a part of the leader's vision.

Managers expand their scope of action by directing subordinates within their team to perform specific tasks or processes until they reach a specific end point. This direction does not empower the subordinate with the manager's authority; it does, however, have definite boundaries and a finite duration.

## **8 Leaders rally, managers retrench**

When things go wrong, leaders gather their team together, reestablish the vision, inspire the group, and then go out to protect them while they deal with the situation. Leaders stand up, do what's right, and accept the consequences of their team's actions as their own. The team continues to work and react in the background.

When things go wrong, managers gather their team together, identify the exact problem, create a plan to address it, assign tasks, and dispatch the team with strict instructions. Assuming the initial analysis identified the problem and no other problems arise, the team will quickly resolve the issue and then return to normal operation.

## **9 Leaders expect, managers demand**

Finally, leaders expect particular behaviors from their followers. They want specific types of integrity, work ethic, and methods of communication. Leaders know their team borders on functional when everyone within the team behaves in the same way. Managers, on the other hand, demand specific outputs from their subordinates at particular times. They derive these demands either from established role documentation, agreed-upon dates, or expectations set during meetings. These demands tie back to established success metrics for the manager, the team, or both.

## **Success requires both**

Management has garnered a bad name for itself over the years, for a wide variety of reasons. However, it is still a vital part of every IT and business environment. Without it, all the leadership in the world can't create a sustainable change. Of course, the opposite also holds true. Without leadership, management does little more than defend the status quo against change.

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