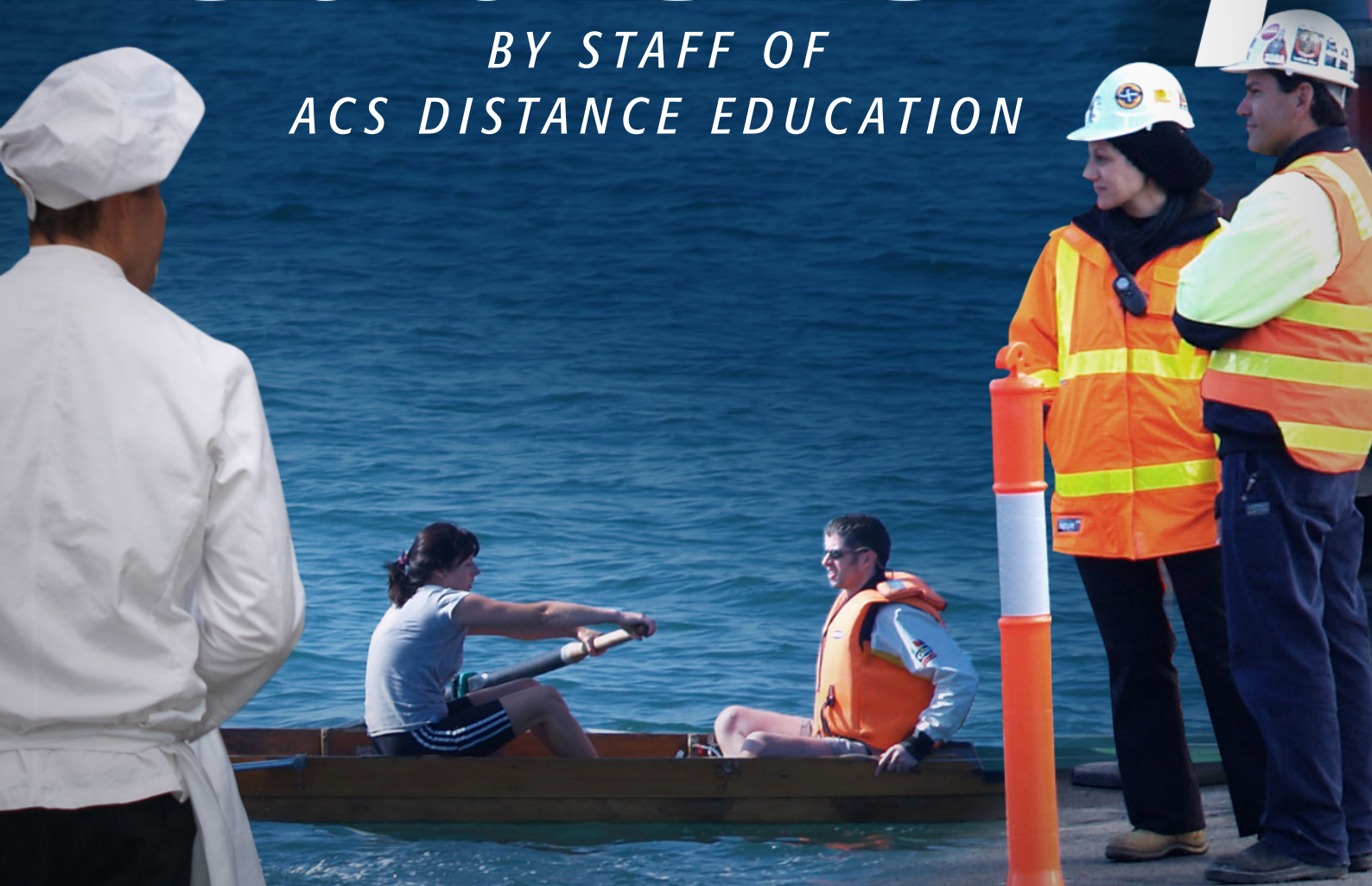# Leadership

BY STAFF OF
ACS DISTANCE EDUCATION

CONTENTS

CREDITS

CHAPTER 1 NATURE, SCOPE & SCALE OF MODERN LEADERSHIP

Any book about leadership should commence with a description of what we mean by leaders and leadership. Whilst we know that leaders are individuals who influence the members of groups and represent their views, leadership itself is not so easy to explain. Some would argue that it is situations which create leaders and others would argue that it is the characteristics of the individual themselves which determines whether they go on to become leaders.

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Before we go further, we should define what leadership is. Generally speaking, leadership is the movement of others towards a clear goal or direction of the leader. The leader will guide or direct others to achieve the leader's vision for the group. One of the difficulties in defining leadership is that it is that it is hard to elucidate exactly what makes certain people leaders. Leadership can be considered to involve personal qualities and behaviours demonstrated by a person's accomplishment in a particular field.

For example, a person may be a leader in business, information technology, sport, education, voluntary work, and so on. They might also be a leader during a particular time. For instance during wartime, a crisis, an election, or a strike. Leadership is also often considered to be part of organisational behaviour, which in some ways is similar to management. However, being in charge of a business or organisation does not necessarily make a good leader. Leadership, therefore, is not a simple concept and it is little wonder that many researchers have spent many years examining the nature and scope of this intriguing behaviour.

BEING IN CHARGE OR BEING A LEADER?

Leadership is not necessarily the same as being in charge of something. Whilst leaders often have some degree of authority so too do many other people. For instance, a security guard patrolling the perimeter of a building may be in charge, but this in itself does not make them a leader. Gibb has argued that 'headship' means holding a position in an official hierarchy. It does not necessarily mean that a person is a leader. A person in charge of an organisation may not necessarily have *influence* over the people in the group, and it is this influence which is an integral part of leadership. Leadership means having the capacity to influence, to encourage others to behave in a particular way. Therefore, if the head of an organisation cannot influence others, then they are not necessarily a leader.

IS LEADERSHIP THE SAME AS POWER?

The concepts of leadership and power do have a lot in common. Many believe that certain people are leaders because they can exercise superior power. We may consider it impossible for a leader to be a leader without having some degree of power. Therefore, power and leadership have become confused. Lapierre defines leadership as a behaviour that affects the behaviour of other people, rather than the behaviour of the people affecting the leader. So the leader is able to influence the behaviour of people, more than people can influence the behaviour of the leader.

Pigor also states that leadership is a concept that is used to apply to a personality that is placed in a situation where it directs and controls the pursuit of a common cause. Terry argues that leadership is the activity of influencing people to strive to mutual objectives, whilst Allen argues that leadership is an activity aimed at persuading people to cooperate towards achieving a common objective. In light of these different perspectives, we might conclude that leadership involves the attempt to affect the behaviour of others. Power is not the same thing.

Where leadership generally suggests that following the leader is optional, power suggests an ability to control or command others, where the person does not have the option to follow – they are either forced to follow, or are so overwhelmed by the power that they follow without thinking. When we think of historical leaders, we generally think of people that inspired others to greatness, such as Nelson Mandela or Mahatma Gandhi. If we think of people in history with a lot of power, we think of political dictators, or people such

as Adolf Hitler, who had control over people without them necessarily having a choice. Power, of course, does not have to be a bad thing. In combination with high integrity, a leader with power can create the extraordinary.

In the home environment, the difference between power and leadership can be demonstrated in a different way - a baby has the power to change the behaviour of his/her parents, but this influence is not the same as leadership in the family.

THE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP

There are several approaches to understanding the nature of leadership and how leaders emerge, some of which we shall now briefly discuss:

GREAT PERSON THEORY

Is there a specific personality that demonstrates that a person is a "great leader"? Whilst some personality traits lead to a natural inclination to be a leader, personality traits will not necessarily determine a person's leadership aptitude.

A leader may also have other qualities such as superior tact, superior intelligence, superior strength, superior knowledge, superior oratory skills, or superior power. Some or all or none of these can lead to attaining leadership. These things may be important, but they are not necessarily essential. It is also the ability to set new goals and reach new expectations for themselves and for the group they influence.

Leadership also assumes a mutual behaviour pattern between the leader and their followers. Therefore,

leadership is a two-way relationship and it is important to recognise this. If there are no followers, there is no leader. Leadership therefore involves the obedience and willingness of followers. Leadership is also based on good will and cooperation. Leadership can exist through force and threat, but a leader will not usually maintain this relationship for long. Leadership can also be specific to a certain situation.

So are leaders great people? In the past, leadership was considered to come from the personal qualities of the leader and little attention was given to the contribution of the group and followers and the situation in which the leadership arose. Early studies therefore focussed their attention on traits that leaders presented when compared to non-leaders.

Gibb argued that the traits of leaders are often relative to specific social situations and are not shown in isolation. As mentioned earlier, a person cannot be a leader without followers and often they may only be a leader in a certain situation. Therefore, we cannot really consider the traits of a leader or non-leader in isolation. A leader surpasses other members in the group to achieve leadership in a particular situation. Leadership then, is an interaction between the person, the situation and the followers.

SITUATIONAL HYPOTHESIS

This theory suggests that it is the situation which creates the leader. As such, different people could become a leader in the right situation, and a leader in one situation may not be a leader in another situation i.e. they may be a follower. The situational approach to leadership disregards the trait approach to leadership, which views leaders as superior individuals who would lead whatever situation they found themselves in. The situational approach focuses on the idea that a leader will arise in a specific situation. For example, a leader in the playground will not necessarily be a leader in the classroom. A leader in wartime will not necessarily be a leader in peace time. This approach suggests that leadership is a behaviour that occurs in a specific situation, but it does not rule out the possibility that there may be general traits underlying the way the people are rated as leaders.

Carter argued that leadership is specific to a certain situation. A leader can therefore only emerge in relation to other individuals or people. No-one can be a leader in isolation. Therefore, given that the leader must be defined in terms of his or her relationship with others, there should not be a generalisation about traits that are common to all leaders.

TRANSACTIONAL THEORY

The greatest flaw of the trait and situational approaches to leadership is that they give little acknowledgement to the significance of followers. Out of growing recognition of the impact of followers in leadership, transactional theories emerged. Transactional theory suggests that whilst leaders influence

their followers, their followers also influence them.
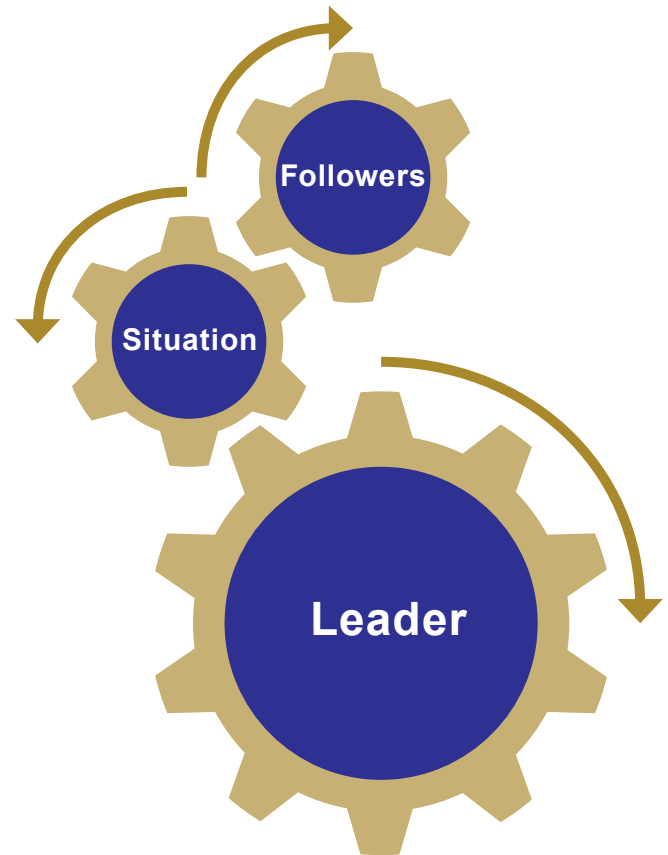
A leader may need a certain situation, and have certain characteristics, but they will also be influenced by, and have, followers.

LEADERSHIP AND GROUP BEHAVIOUR

As we have seen, leaders need followers and so they are naturally a product of groups. In the animal kingdom, most social animals have hierarchies with a leader at the helm; typically, an alpha male. If you think about any group you have ever belonged to; whether social, recreational, work-orientated, or family - there is nearly always one individual who has more influence than the others.

Social groups and groups of friends do not tend to have such a rigid leadership structure, but work groups and other organised groups do. In groups of

friends different members of the group may take on the leadership role at different times or for different activities. In organised groups a leader is usually clearly defined, and so are the roles of the other group members.

THE ROLES OF LEADERS

The roles of leaders vary according to the group or groups they are leading and the situation in which leadership takes place. A leader in one situation might have to be more flexible than a leader in another situation. As with other areas of life, a leader is acting out a social role. A leader knows what the expectations of their role are, just as they understand what to expect from the roles of others.

Whilst most leaders have a role in which they are clearly defined as leaders, in some situations there may be more than one leader. For example, research by Bales (1970) revealed that there are two types of leadership roles in working groups:

- Task orientated leader - these leaders are focussed on the group goals and how to achieve them.

- Social-emotional leader - these leaders are more interested in maintaining good social relationships within the group.

Whilst he acknowledged that a good leader should encapsulate both these roles, Bales suggested that in many cases there were two leaders and that these roles underlie different leadership[styles. Others have argued that there may be more than two different styles.

FUNCTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

There is no universal opinion as to the functions of leadership. Detailing the functions of leadership does really depend on your own concept of leadership. Leadership functions generally relate to the achievement of a goal or the maintenance or strengthening of a group. The main function of any leadership is therefore to contribute to the group's achievement and to hold the group together. The leader cannot achieve the group goals alone or help it maintain strength and solidarity without support.

Leadership is not an individual activity. By its very definition, leadership means leading others, so it should not be viewed as a solitary activity. In larger

organisations, no one person may have all leadership functions, leadership may be spread among different individuals with those different individuals each responsible for different areas of leadership. There may be leaders at different levels in a hierarchy. A leader of a large organisation may simply be a symbolic leader or spokesman, or a supreme coordinator.

Whether a person assumes leadership or not will depend on the rewards and costs to the person of what is expected by their followers. A leader may gain rewards through:

Successful accomplishment of tasks

■ Rewards from the leadership activity itself, such as:

   a. Need for dominance over others

   b. Social-emotional needs

   c. Need for achievement itself

But there are also costs for leaders, such as:

■ The drain on their time and energy

■ Anxiety

■ Fear of failure

■ Stress

■ Blame for failure

■ Reduced popularity

■ Loneliness

■ Lost friends and/or family

Followers may recognise that without a leader their goals may not be achieved. Also, the followers escape a fear of failure and blame, as they do not take the overall responsibility that the leader does. But even though it benefits the followers to follow the leader, they may also view the leader in a different way, which affects their social relationship with him/her and how they view them.

LEADERSHIP AND MOTIVATION

Not everyone is motivated to become a leader. Even in situations in which a particular individual might seem like the natural choice to take on the role of leader, they may not wish to become the leader. So, what are the individual differences which can underlie leadership motivation?

NEED FOR ACHIEVEMENT

As mentioned in the previous section, leaders may have a need for achievement. They may want the status, power, money etc. that they receive with leadership. They may seek leadership as a way to meet their need for achievement. This achievement can be attained in a range of ways or fields. For example, a leader in sport may be the fastest 100 metre runner. A leader in business may be someone who sets up a very profitable fast growing company.

NEED FOR AFFILIATION

The need for affiliation is the need to be linked to others; to become members with others. A leader may feel this need - the need to belong to a group, to be a member of a group. Along with the need for affiliation, they will also have other needs and skills which they can use to become a leader of the group they are affiliated with.

NEED FOR SOCIAL RESPECT

Some leaders may feel that leadership gives them social respect. They are known as a leader, respected, and viewed as someone to follow.

NEED FOR POSITIVE REGARD

Some leaders may also feel that being a leader is a way for them to receive positive regard, positive feelings from others. Obviously, this is not always the case, some leaders may not receive positive regard all of the time, and some may be perceived negatively by their followers some of the time. Even

leaders who are viewed mostly as positive and good leaders may not be well viewed or liked as people.

SELF-ACTUALISATION

Abraham Maslow's developed a humanistic theory. Although he conceded that theories based upon homeostasis (the maintenance of equilibrium) were useful, he felt that more focus was necessary on the individual's tendency to grow on all levels, including the spiritual. In his own words: "More and more psychologists have found themselves compelled to postulate some tendency of growth or self perfection to supplement the concepts of equilibrium, homeostasis, tension reduction..."

Thus, Maslow developed his concept of a "hierarchy of needs". Maslow's needs are innate, but not exclusively biological, and they are modified by learning patterns and cultural demands. Maslow distinguished between seven groups of needs:

- Physiological needs, which are the most basic (e.g. food and shelter).

- Security needs which involve the need for order and stability, money, shelter, consistent protection from family or parents.

- The need for love, which involves reciprocity, that is, give and take, physical and emotional intimacy.

- The need for self esteem, which involves respect and appreciation from others, and from one self; the establishment of a positive sense of self worth and confidence.

- Cognitive needs; that is, need to know, understand, and explore.

- Aesthetic needs; that is, to enjoy harmonious or beautiful sensory or sensuous impressions.

- The need for **self-actualisation**, which involves the capacity to develop morally, intellectually and spiritually.

These needs are arranged in a hierarchy in order of primacy. The individual progresses upwards through the hierarchy as each group of needs is met.

The diagram below demonstrates this.

Self-Actualisation

Aesthetic Needs

Cognitive Needs

Esteem Needs

Love Needs

Safety Needs (such as home)

Physiological Needs (such as thirst and hunger)
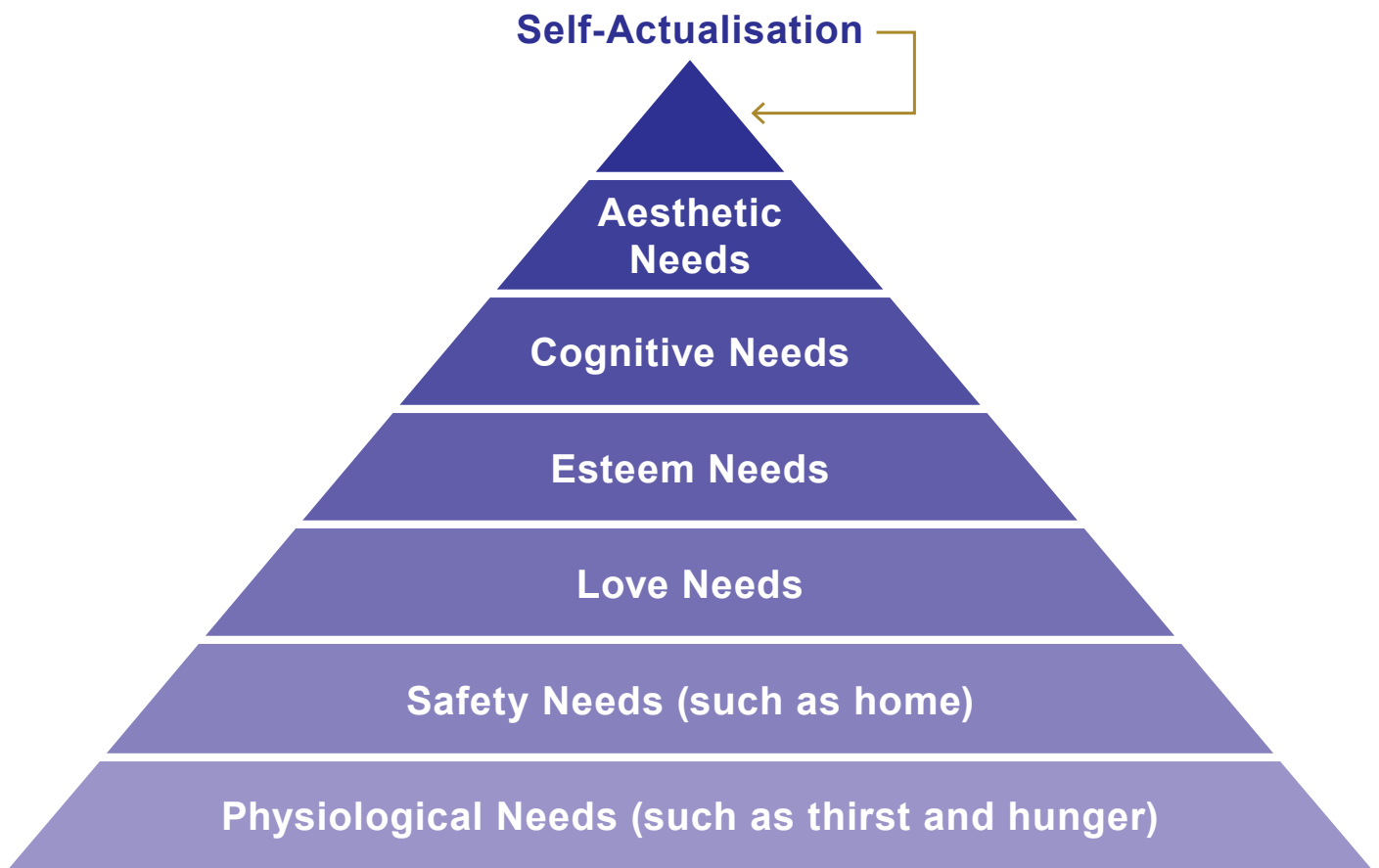
The first four levels are called **deficiency needs**, simply because they involve the need for something which is lacking, or deficient. The top three levels represent **growth needs**, which involve the individuals desire to grow and develop spiritually, to the fullest degree. Growth needs are never saturated. The crux of Maslow's theory is that growth needs cannot be satisfied until all other need levels have been partially fulfilled. Maslow calls the highest growth need the need for **self-actualisation**: "the desire to become more and more of what one is, to become everything one is capable of becoming". This is the level at which one develops one's individual talents and unique potentials.

Maslow's hierarchy does not propose that one level of needs grows out of another. We are all born with an innate drive to fulfil all of these levels of needs. What the hierarchy does propose is that we cannot fulfil a certain level unless we

have partially satisfied previous levels. Needs that are low in the hierarchy must be at least partially satisfied before needs that are higher in the hierarchy become important sources of motivation. In essence, people who spend most of their time trying to obtain food and water have little motivation to worry about self-expression or their image.

With a leader then, their self-actualisation may actually be when they attain a certain level of leadership. Maslow argued that self-actualisation is an instinctual need in humans, that we strive to be the best we can. Therefore, the final stage of Maslow's theory is where the person is satisfied in their other needs – physiological, security, and so on. When all of these needs are satisfied, the individual is able to realise their potential to become an effective individual. Obviously, the importance a person places on their different needs will vary. To some a need to achieve leadership and status may be more important than their other needs. For example, Mussolini alienated many of his close family and friends to achieve his status as a war leader and conqueror. Whilst a war photographer may be less concerned about safety or their physiological needs than their need to take photographs.

Maslow argued that self-actualised people will be:

- Spontaneous

- Creative

- Embracing of the realities of the world, rather than avoid or deny them

- Interested in problem solving

- Close to others

- Appreciative of life

- Internally moral – they will have their own level of morality rather than be reliant on an external authority (for example, an independently moral person would not steal because they are likely to believe it is immoral - rather than not steal because the law says they should not).

- Able to be objective.

All of these characteristics are also, then, very relevant to the qualities we may require from a leader.

CHAPTER 2 LEADERSHIP TOOLS

As discussed in the opening chapter, leadership is not just determined by individual factors but to a large degree is influenced by situations and interactions. Whilst some personal traits such as intelligence may be relatively fixed, others are not. As such, it is possible to train individuals to become better leaders. It may be that a leader needs to have certain requirements to begin with, but let's have a look at what tools are available to help individuals develop as leaders.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING

To develop as a leader requires some degree of training. In organisations, leadership training often entails subjecting an individual to a 'training-needs analysis' which involves identifying any shortcomings in an individual's leadership skills. Training is typically a three step process. Firstly, the aspects of leadership a particular person needs to understand are identified. Secondly, a training programme is then tailored to their needs. Thirdly, the training programme is assessed to see if it produced the desired learning outcomes.

When conducting a training needs analysis situational factors are taken into consideration, along with analysis of general behaviours. Situational factors are scrutinised to determine how they affect influencing skills and from that the most useful personal skills can be determined. An individual's leadership skills are then compared to the skills required in their role and areas for improvement are noted. In this way, it is possible to determine suitable leadership styles for the individual's present job role. Often this may also be extended to include potential future leadership roles.

A simpler approach to training needs analysis can also be undertaken by simply identifying any problem areas the leader has by consulting performance records and then designing a training package to meet those needs. In other cases, organisations may plan ahead by working out what types of leaders they will need and design training packages to address those needs.

APPENDIX

DISTANCE LEARNING AND ONLINE COURSES

The authors of this book have developed a large variety of distance learning courses, online, on CD or by correspondence, which are available through various colleges that are part of the ACS Global Partners Network.

There are over 500 different courses offered by ACS Affiliates, through colleges in seven different countries. Some relevant courses include:

■ Leadership

■ Play Leadership

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■ Motivation

■ Recreation Leadership

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PRINTED BOOKS BY JOHN MASON

John Mason has been writing books since the 1970's and has over 40 titles published, some as printed books, others as ebooks. Some (print) titles are out of print, and now only available as second hand books or e books. If you have difficulty finding any of Mr Mason's titles, you can enquire by email to **admin@acs.edu.au**

Print Books by John Mason include:

- Fun and Fitness Trails, Victorian Dept. of Sport and Recreation, 1978
- Starting a Nursery or Herb Farm, Night Owl, 1983 (revised 1994)
- The Environment of Play, Leisure Press, New York, 1982
- Herb Review, self published, 1987
- Landscaping with Herbs, self published, 1988
- The Native Plant Expert, self published, 1989
- Let's Grow Gardens, self published, 1990
- Growing Ferns, Kangaroo Press, 1990
- Commercial Hydroponics, Kangaroo Press, 1990, 2007
- Growing Vegetables, Kangaroo Press, 1991
- Growing Herbs, Kangaroo Press, 1993
- Nursery Management, Kangaroo Press, April 1994
- Tropical Gardening, Bay Books, October 1994
- Yates Guide to Pests & Diseases, Angus & Robertson, February 1995
- Growing Pelargoniums & Geraniums Hyland House 1996
- Farm Management Kangaroo Press 1996
- Growing Australian Natives Kangaroo Press 1997
- Starting a Nursery or Herb Farm (Revised ed) Kangaroo Press 1997
- Sustainable Farming Simon & Schuster (Kangaroo Press) Spring 1997
- Growing Tropical Plants Simon & Schuster (Kangaroo Press) 1997
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