

To Lead or to Manage? **Or To Lead and to Manage**



by Michelle Braden, CEO

an MSBCoach leadership resource

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INTRODUCTION

There is an ongoing debate about the differences and definitions of leader and manager and many are striving to identify which is better. The bottom line is, organizations need both leaders and managers in order to be successful. In fact, the more “lean” organizations become, the more we will see leaders who need to be able to manage and managers who need to be able to lead.

“ to manage is to handle or direct with a degree of skill or to make or keep compliant.

“ to lead is to guide on a way especially by going in advance to go through (I like this one - several metaphors here)

One of the mistakes that have been made is trying to make management and leadership independent of one another. The truth is they are both dependent upon one another for a company's profits as well as their people's success.

To take these definitions and apply them to the workplace, we can say a leader is one who guides (does not control or tell exactly how it has to be done) in order to move the organization forward (going in advance). The second part of the definition, “to go through” is meaningful. A leader allows people to “go through

them” to get to the next level or place that is best for the individual being lead, even if that means surpassing the leader or moving on to another organization. Leaders are not threatened by being the conduit that connects their people or allows them to pass through for a time as they keep on moving. This is very important to a company in order to have people buy in to

the vision, inspire loyalty, encourage innovation, problem solving and build customer service.

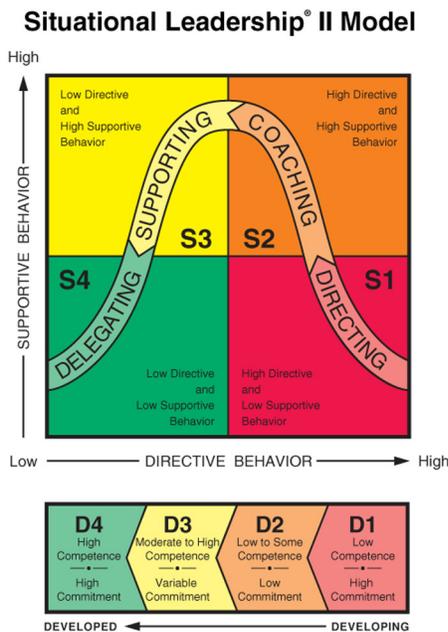
Taking the definition of a manager and applying it to the workplace, we can say simply that a manager directs. Directing is different from guiding. To direct is to regulate, control and give authoritative instructions. To guide is to assist a person in unfamiliar areas. The manager also works to make sure the people and the organization are in compliance. This is very important to organizations for consistency, quality assurance, safety, regulations and customer service.

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Situational Leadership

When we look at both of these definitions together, we realize it is important for organizations to have leaders that guide and inspire people to the vision as well as setting the course and allowing people to pass through them on their own leadership journeys without being intimidated. We need managers to direct

these definitions together, we realize it is important for organizations to have leaders that guide and inspire people to the vision as well as setting the course and allowing people to pass through them on their own leadership journeys without being intimidated. We need managers to direct the teams and make sure the organization has skilled workers and follows the rules.



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A person in an authoritative role in today's workplace has to have the ability to both lead and manage. This makes me think of Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model. Leaders need to know what the situation is, whom they are working with, what level of maturity and experience they have, and how to proceed forward with leading or managing in the given situation. Different situations and different people require different techniques to accomplish the tasks. Today's leader knows how to finesse and move in and out of each of the leadership styles in order to be most effective.

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The Characteristics of Leaders and Managers

LEADERS	MANAGERS
INNOVATE	ADMINISTRATE
ARE ORIGINALS	ARE COPIES-- THEY IMITATE
FOCUS ON PEOPLE	FOCUS ON SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES
INSPIRE TRUST	RELY ON CONTROL
HAVE A LONG-RANGE PERSPECTIVE	HAVE SHORT RANGE VIEW
HAVE THEIR EYE ON THE HORIZON	HAVE THEIR EYE ON THE BOTTOM LINE
CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO	ACCEPT THE STATUS QUO
ARE THEIR OWN PERSON	ARE THE CLASSIC GOOD SOLDIER
DO THINGS RIGHT	DO THE RIGHT THING
DEVELOP	MAINTAIN
ASK WHAT & WHY	ASK HOW & WHEN

It is important for leaders to review this list regularly and determine when to lead and when to manage – according to the situation.

The question is not “to lead or manage or not to lead or manage,” but rather a statement “to lead AND to manage”. We need people in authority to be able to accomplish both sides of the list. In some cases, it is two different people; however, we are seeing the need for current leaders to be able to work from both sides of the list to create success in today’s organization.



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Michelle has trained leaders for over 20 years. She is the founder of the Emerging Executive Leadership Program, the Authentic Leadership Summit, serves on the leadership board of the Building Goodness Foundation and the VA Chamber Small Business Advisory Board. Her areas of expertise include Executive, Leadership and High Potential Coaching. In 2011, Michelle served as a panelist for the World Coaching Conference.

She is a certified coach and the author of three leadership books *Stand Out, Dare to Make A Difference*, and *Bottom Line*, as well as a thought-leadership contributor to several blogs/publications including: Thought Leaders, Lead Change and Leadership Courseware... read more



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