# Leadership and Planning

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**Abstract**

This chapter begins by establishing the need for effective leadership. Next, it sets the framework for understanding leadership. Despite its popularity and our daily encounter with it, many people lack a clear understanding of the word, while others view leadership and management as interchangeable words. To clarify the differences between the two words, we define leadership using Rost's (1993) definition. Then we present the differences between leadership and management. The concepts of leadership and vision are explored. We provide anecdotes of visionary leadership to bolster our discussion. We next present the concept of planning and its relationship to leadership particularly with respect to organizational performance. We list the steps in the planning process and offer SWOT and SMART activities. A brief overview of the main effects of planning on workplace leadership performance is presented, followed by a more detailed description of the relevance of planning as a measurable aspect for specific key leadership behavior in organizations, namely vision, problem solving, driving and implementing change, and succession planning.

## Introduction

Effective leadership is necessary for creating sustainability in organizations. It allows executives to execute their vision and strategies in fast-paced turbulent environments. By doing so, effective leaders can outmaneuver their competitors, increase

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market share, and ensure the delivery of quality goods and services in highly competitive business markets. Leaders who have a vision and strategic plan accordingly create organizational relevance and sustainability. Simply maintaining the status quo is an untenable, unsustainable proposition for leaders and their organizations.

## Understanding Leadership

> "A leader is a dealer in hope"
>
> —Napoleon

The late James MacGregor Burns, political scientist, historian, and the winner of the Pulitzer Prize for his book *Roosevelt: The Soldier of Freedom* (1970), about Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President of the United States stated, "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth" (1978, p. 2). Burns's simple, yet powerfully elegant, quote is at the heart of the leadership conundrum.

At best our understanding about leadership is paradoxical. On the one hand, leadership is omnipresent. It envelops our personal and professional lives on multiple levels and contexts. Scan any newspaper and you will probably find an article about leadership in government or business. Recent headlines in the *International New York Times (INYT)* and the *Financial Times (FT)* provide us a sense of the scope: "Spain's real crisis is a leadership void" (*INYT,* July 13–14, 2013, p. 4). One week later, referring to Japanese leadership, the headline read: "Why a strong leader in Japan is a plus not a minus" (*INYT,* July 18, 2013, p. 9). Recently, the *FT* ran the headline: "Show of leadership" (*FT,* January 17/18, 2015, p. 7) in which it discussed French President Francois Hollande's leadership actions connected to the terrorists' attacks in Paris. In April 2015, the *FT* also published a series of articles about leadership problems at Volkswagen (VW), the German automobile manufacturer. "Volkswagen leadership crises escalates" (*FT,* April 13 2015, p. 15), followed up in rapid succession with "Victory for Winterkorn in VW leadership feud" (*FT*, April 18/19 2015, p. 8), and "VW reports leap in earning after leadership crisis" (*FT*, April 30, 2015, p. 18). These articles clearly show the Journalists' and the public's continued fascination with leadership.

On the other hand, we are often unclear about the meaning of leadership (Spicker, 2012). It is elusive. It is like love. Understanding it is far less rewarding than experiencing it (Bennis, 1990). Leadership is also problematic, fragmented, and intricate. It spans a variety of disciplines: political science, business and management, psychology, art, literature, philosophy, and history. Google the word "leadership" and some half a billion hits appear, covering a broad range of areas and interests.

Books tell a story about leadership as well. If we consider the third and fourth editions of *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership* (Bass & Bass, 2008; Bass & Stogdill, 1990), we see that the third issue contained some 7500 references, an incredible number of references, and the fourth edition, some 16,000 references, more than doubling in less than 20 years. Amazon, the mega online book seller, lists

more than 140,000 leadership books ranging from scholarly (e.g., Bass & Bass, 2008) to popular press (e.g., Maxwell, 2014). A 2012 study estimates that just in the United States, companies spend some $14 billion annually on leadership development (Hedges, 2015). Learning to become a leader is "big business" without any clear estimate of the return on investment (ROI) for leadership development training. In essence, understanding leadership and its effects on organization performance is not always conclusive.

## Beginnings

Heifetz and his colleagues (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009) at Harvard's Kennedy School write that "The word leader (*a person*, our comment) comes from the Indo-European root word *leit,* the name for the person who carried the flag in front of the army going into battle and usually died in the first enemy attack. His sacrifice would alert the rest of the army to the location of the danger ahead" (p. 26). If we apply this definition to the word leader, it is easily understood why many people refuse to take the leadership mantle.

Leadership takes on a different meaning for different people. Rost (1993) identified more than 200 leadership definitions from 1920 to 1990. Early definitions (1920–1940) ranged from leadership as a process of control and command to the effects of personality on the group. Most definitions after this period referred to leadership as an influence process between a leader's ability to mobilize people (followers) to achieve goals. Such multiple definitions reflect a luck of consensus about a definition of leadership (Hackman & Wageman, 2005). Given this lack of consensus, we offer Rost's (1993) postindustrial paradigm leadership definition as the operating definition in this chapter: leadership is "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (p. 124). Without followers there can be no leaders and both leaders and followers want change.

## Leadership and Management

Many contemporary management textbooks view leadership and management differently: some list the functions of management as planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling without leadership as a function, while others include leadership among the functions. Fiedler and Garcia (1987) view leadership and management as synonymous. Kotter (1990), on the other hand, views it as distinct, complementary processes consisting of unique characteristics and activities. Leadership includes setting direction by creating a vision for a product, activity, or organization, by aligning employees and systems, by communicating the vision and strategies through words and deeds so that employees understand the vision and accept direction, and finally by motivating and inspiring employees to achieve the vision. The outcome of leadership then is the creation of significant change to enable

organizations and their employees to adapt to changing environments. Management, on the other hand, creates consistent and orderly effective results, by planning and budgeting to achieve specific results, by organizing and staffing to implement their plans, and by controlling to monitor results and make necessary corrections. Thus, planning is the connection between leadership and management functions.

## Vision: Clear, Concise, and Compelling

> "Vision without execution is hallucination"
>
> —Thomas Edison

Effective leaders develop a clear, concise, and compelling vision of the future. Vision is a source of internal motivation and commitment. It strengthens self-efficacy, helps leaders make difficult and decisive decisions to accomplish strategic objectives, and provides a long-term, sustainable shared purpose among organizational stakeholders. When creating a vision careful consideration must be given by leaders to paint a realistic, credible, and attractive picture for the future. When leaders fail to accomplish this, the process of change is considerably delayed and reduced to a series of activities or projects (Kotter, 2007).

### Key Elements of Vision

Dreaming is the ability to imagine and to create diverse alternatives without filtering them before analyzing them. Leaders must be dreamers. Walt Disney, the creator of the Disney empire, was a dreamer. "If you can dream it, you can do it" and "All our dream come true, if we have the courage to pursue them" have been linked to Disney. His dreams came true. The late Steve Jobs was not only a dreamer, but also someone who "would rather gamble on Apple's vision rather than" make me too products.

In addition to creating a vision for their organization, leaders must create a mission statement for their organization explaining the purpose of the organization. An effective mission statement creates enthusiasm and commitment for organizational members. Nike, the American multinational seller of athletic footwear and athletic apparel, has a short, crisp mission statement: "bring inspiration and innovation to any athlete in the world." On the other hand, SAP, the German multinational software mega-corporation, seeks to "make every customer a best-run business."

Vision cannot exist in isolation. It requires commitment and follower engagement to gain broad support for success. An effective vision rests on three pillars: (1) develop an exciting vision to enable others to understand it clearly, adopt it, and share it, (2) make it desirable for followers to understand the long-term vision and its impact for them, and (3) create realism to imagine (think Beatle John Lennon's song) the possibilities and commit to its cause (see Kouzes & Posner, 2012). In

essence, vision is a clear and challenging view of the direction and change required for a sustainable organizational future.

### Visionary Leadership: An Anecdote

The following anecdote is a good example of a leader and a vision. Several years ago, a founder and leader of an organization asked a consultant to look out the window of his office and tell him what he saw. Innocently, the consultant told the leaders he saw a section of the city that was blighted and uninhabitable. Almost enraged at the consultant's response, the leader remarked that the consultant had no vision since he did not "see" a new elementary school in that space. Some three years later, the founder had erected in that space an awarding winning school for disadvantaged elementary school students. His vision was turned into a successful reality.

## Leadership, Change, and Status Quo

> "If you don't change, you die"
>
> – Leonard Sweet

The process of change is constant. Think of two prehistoric species: the dinosaur and the ant. One became extinct, while the other survives today, because it changed and adapted to its environment. People and organizations are the same. Fear is the number one reason organization members resist change (there are others). Applying some better known theories to organizations seeking change many lessen that resistance.

More than 50 years ago, the social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1958) proposed a three-step model of change: (1) unfreezing, (2) implementing, and (3) refreezing the change. Over the years this simple model has been adapted and improved upon considerably by many change management researchers. Change today involves adaptive challenges. As a dynamic and endless process it is both strategic and evolutionary. Leaders as agents of change therefore must use flexible, adaptive, and transparent skills and capabilities. Kotter's (2007) eight-step action guide helps leaders transform their organizations.

### Rudy Giuliani and 9/11: An Anecdote

Rudy Giuliani was the former mayor of New York City (1994–2001). He demonstrated effective leadership as mayor of the city on September 11, 2001, in response to the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center (NYC). He approached the 9/11 situation in this way: he used the metaphor of a baseball team on a losing streak. The first step the team must take is to win the game. The strategy for winning the game is not to pressure members of the team to hit a grand slam home run (often rare and exceedingly difficult), but rather to encourage team members to hit singles and get on base. In many cases it is easier for baseball players to hit a series of singles (one base hits) that drive the other team members around the bases to score a run. In essence, Giuliani (like Kotter) believes that small successes (singles) create momentum in baseball and in organizations. In baseball it changes the score of the game, in business it changes the way in which the organization operates, and in the case of 9/11 it addressed the way the city dealt with the crisis and regained its composure and

eventually recovered from the worst terrorists attack on US soil. Small successes help to ignite joy, engagement, and creativity in people (Amabile & Kramer, 2011).

## Leadership and Planning

> "Leadership should not be judged by its popularity but by its effectiveness"
>
> – Goffee and Jones

Planning is the first and most important of the four management functions. Peter Drucker, perhaps the most influential management thinker of the twentieth century, is credited with posing three very interesting questions about planning: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where do we want to go? and (3) How will we get there? Answering these three simple questions provides a direction for leaders and employees to follow. Leaders forecast, identify goal and objectives, analyze the environment, and assess a course of action. We define planning as the process of setting goals to ensure organizational performance. A planning model includes a six (6) step strategic framework: (1) vision (long-term view of the organization-think leadership), (2) mission (purpose of our business or organization), (3) strategic objectives (3–5 years), (4) organization goals (18–24 months), (5) department goals (6–18 months), and (6) team (6–12 months)/individual (30–90 days) goals.

Leaders often conduct a SWOT analysis as part of the planning process. SWOT is an acronym and represents an organization's S(trengths), W(eaknesses), O(pportunities), and T(hreats). A SWOT analysis assists leaders in identifying and evaluating internal and external environmental situation and it serves as a guide to help implement their vision. Questions for the organization may include, but are not limited to, what are the strengths of the organization (e.g., good leadership, committed employees)?, what are the weaknesses of the organization (e.g., poor cash flow, inadequate supply chain)?, what are the opportunities for the organization (e.g., merging with a competitor, new market)?, and what are the threats to the organization (e.g., possibility of being acquired, overregulation by government)? Figure 23.1 represents one possible way to present the SWOT analysis. The model gives a visual comparative view of the four SWOT components.

### ACTIVITY: Conduct a SWOT Analysis

**Directions**

Think about an organization you know or have read about in some of your courses. Conduct a SWOT analysis by listing three or four items for each of the SWOT components. Share your SWOT analysis with a classmate and discuss the reasons why you list the items in each of the four quadrants.

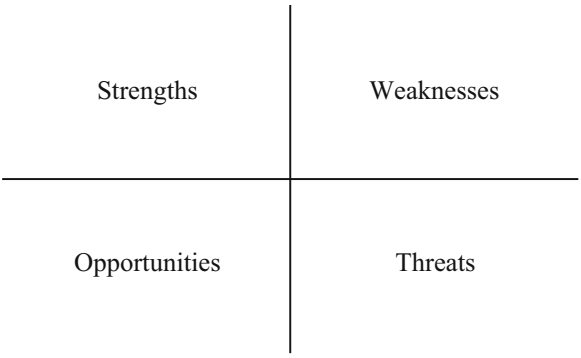


**Fig. 23.1** A SWOT analysis model

## SMART: Another Helpful Model

While the planning process appears to be reasonably simple, many leaders fail to set, communicate, accomplish, and evaluate goals. SMART, like SWOT, is a useful planning tool for setting goals. SMART (another acronym) represents goals that are: S(pecific), M(easurable), A(ttainable), R(elevant), and T(imely).

1. *Specific:* is vital for the communication of plans. Clarity is key to setting specific task objectives to guide and coordinate work activity and to ensure that all involved know what to do and how to do it (has details: numbers, timelines, dates, quantity).
2. *Measurable:* sets a performance benchmark to compare the degree to which the task performance was accomplished (set standards: what would be considered a satisfactory/excellent result?). Include tangibles, things that you can see, hear, and feel. If you can, include numerics such as the amount of money, ideal weight, and time.
3. *Attainable:* is the goal attainable. In other words, is the goal reasonable and realistic (within the availability of resources, knowledge, competencies, time, etc.)? Or is it too aggressive, even beyond a "stretch"?
4. *Relevant:* does the goal give meaning to the plan? How? Does it directly related to responsibilities within the employee's control?
5. *Timely:* when will it be accomplished (has specified deadlines)?

An example of a SMART goal is: "To improve the quality of customer service by the end of the third quarter by reducing the average call response to 30 seconds."

Our SMART goal example begins with the infinitive form of an action verb: "to improve" followed by what we want to improve. In this goal it is "the quality of customer service." Next, the goal imposes a specific guidance for the action to be completed/achieved "by the end of the third quarter," what needs to be done (expected outcome) "reducing the average call response to 30 seconds."

## ACTIVITY: Apply a SMART Goals

**Directions**

You have been asked to write two (2) SMART goals for your organization. Use the information supplied below. If you have no work experience, consider writing a SMART goal with your own information.

1. December 31, 2016
2. July 31, 2017
3. To increase
4. To decrease
5. Sales
6. Absenteeism
7. 5 %
8. 10 %

## Measuring Goal Attainment

A SWOT analysis provides us with a visual picture of the organization at a glance and SMART gives us precise guidance of the goal(s) we intend to accomplish. We also need to evaluate our plans and goals and to measure the degree to which these goals have been accomplished by members of the organization. We can apply the following four goal attainment measuring devices: (1) efficiency, (2) intended/unintended outcomes, (3) quality, and (4) progress to determine this.

1. *Efficiency:* refers to the degree to which we measure productivity (e.g., how many items produced) and cost (e.g., have we exceeded the budget, wasted materials). We can compare inputs to outputs (e.g., comparison of initial budgets estimates to the final costs).
2. *Intended/Unintended Outcomes:* To what degree have goods or services provided met the proposed targets/standards set? Has the established goal accomplished what it sets out to do? To what degree have intended outcomes had an impact? For example, are customers better/worse off as a result of this goal? Unintended outcomes refer to unexpected benefits derived from a goal: have customers benefited from the goal in another way (that was unplanned)?
3. *Quality:* Was the goal accurate? Are its results reliable? Has the goal complied with specifications?
4. *Progress:* To what degree was the implementation of the goal successful? What was the rate of completion? For example, a 10 % completion rate may suggest an especially poor showing, while a rate of 80 % may be satisfactory or even good enough.

## Leadership and Succession Planning for Organizational Sustainability

> "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail"
>
> —Benjamin Franklin

Leaders must think strategically about organizational issues. One such issue is creating a succession plan (who will replace the leader) to ensure organizational sustainability. Succession planning has been defined as "a deliberate and systematic effort by an organization to ensure leadership continuity in key positions, retain and develop intellectual and knowledge capital for the future, and encourage individual advancement" (Rothwell, 2001, p. 29). Every organizational leader should plan for a successor. Leaders, either voluntarily or involuntarily, leave their organizations. For example, a leader may find another position that is more appealing than her current one and informs the board about her decision. A leader may leave unexpectedly without any prior notice (die in office, see *Executive Suite* below or think of McDonald's Chairperson and CEO Jim Cantalupo's death from a heart attack at 60 years of age in 2004). Without a succession plan organizations encounter chaos and disruption which create an unsettling internal and external reaction on the part of organizational stakeholders. Unfortunately, succession planning has not always been a top strategic concern for many leaders or their boards for a variety of reason (e.g., immortality issues, politics). A good example of the lack of succession planning problem can be seen in the film *Executive Suite.*

### Executive Succession and the Silver Screen

#### Executive Suite (Houseman & Wise, 1954)

The black and white film *Executive Suite* (1954) shows the adverse consequences that an organization can encounter without creating a succession plan. Though now more than 60 years old, this classic movie captures the overt and subtle challenges the Tredway Corporation encountered when Avery Bullard, its dynamic 56-year-old president, dies when hailing a taxi after a business meeting in New York. Bullard has not planned for a successor. With no provisions for a successor, despite the ample supply of several, presumably able, internal vice-presidents, who could replace him, we discover the motivation (e.g., lust for power) and lack of motivation (e.g., apathy) by executives in the company that led to organizational chaos and internal managerial and leadership disruptions. We also see the political machinations by internal actors to seize the opportunity for power and position (the CEO seat). The age old succession (e.g., Shakespeare's *King Lear* and Daphne du Maurier's novel *Rebecca*, 1938) problem is resolved only when one of the vice-presidents, who was initially reluctant to assume the reins of the position agrees, after some pressure is exerted on him by a faction of the senior management, to take the CEO position.

## Ways to Plan for a Successor

Leaders must develop a succession plan to avoid problems similar to those encountered in *Executive Suite*. A plan may include the identification of an insider(s)—individual(s) currently employed by the organization or an outsider(s)—candidate (s) not currently employed by the organization. It is often easier to identify a successor in a large organization as size (number of potential successors) offers leaders and the boards a greater list of choices from which to select a successor. Leaders and/or their board can identify an "heir apparent," that is an insider who has been "screened" carefully and has the qualifications and competencies to lead the organization. Organizational leaders can also stage a "horse race," that is, create a rivalry between or among the various top candidates considered as replacements for the departing CEO (e.g., Jack Welch at GE in the 1980s). Internal candidates are often organizational high flyers and have learned how to lead through their participation in leadership development programs, through mentoring and coaching programs, through job rotation within the organization, through progressive work experiences and increased levels of managerial responsibility within the organization, or through their relationships with senior managers who share their professional knowledge and experience with them.

On the other hand, depending on the needs of the organization, external candidates who have previous CEO or top managerial experiences may be identified and selected to replace a departing CEO. External replacements may infuse new ideas into the organization through the creation of new and innovative strategic initiatives, may possess "star" power, may revitalize the organization though acquisition on new businesses or introduce new systems and structure to align employees. The appointment of external candidates as successors often occurs when boards want major strategic change. For example, the appointment of RJR Nabisco CEO Lou Gerstner to lead IBM in 1993 is an example of an external appointee with years of leadership and managerial (e.g., American Express and McKinsey & Company) experience. IBM was in a crisis mode after it was losing market share and billions of dollars to the personal computer (PC) industry. Gerstner, an outsider, created major disruptions in the way the company conducted its business and was able to revive the company making it a competitive industry player.

The following case study is an example of an unplanned departure of an executive director (CEO) of a nonprofit organization.

**West Side Community Agency: A Case Study for Succession Planning***

Will Adams awoke from a deep sleep in a cold sweat. After 22 years as the executive director of the West Side Community Agency, a mid-sized nonprofit human services organization, he decided he had had enough. Early the next morning, he notified Fred Kennedy, chairperson of the board, and then packed his belongings and departed without taking the time to inform his staff. Staff learned about his hasty departure early the next day when the deputy director of the organization called an emergency staff meeting to inform them that Adams has resigned and the board did not have a succession plan. The deputy director would communicate any news on who would lead the organization as soon as he knew something.

Adams was the second executive director to lead the 25-year-old organization. He was a formidable force to contend with during his tenure at the organization both inside the organization and within the larger social and political communities, based on years of cultivating relationships and developing external networks.

Succession planning was not a subject for discussion. He simply avoided the subject. If the subject did arise in conversation, Adams would adroitly steer the conversation in another direction and the board did not press the matter, since Adams would remain with the organization for some time.

Adams' departure caught the board completely off guard. With no potential candidate in mind, the board applied an easy band-aid solution to a huge wound by replacing him with an internal interim executive who would play the role as organizational caretaker, and thereby reduce any organization disruption as well as demonstrate to external sources the organization was operating normally.

The interim executive played her role well. She adopted a "wait-and-see" attitude which resulted in missed financial and other key opportunities for the organization, although this attitude would allow the organization to tread water while the board conducted a national search for a permanent replacement. Six months later, the board chair announced that after carefully considering all applicants, the board had settled on the deputy director. Although not its first choice, the deputy director was the compromise candidate who possessed sufficient skills and could grow in the position. Again, the matter of an executive succession plan was never mentioned by either the deputy director or the board. It took the new successor approximately three years to make some major changes to the organization. Just when it seemed that the organization was making headway, she announced her decision to resign due to a family relocation. Again the board had left itself vulnerable and had to scurry around to get suitable replacement. The board chair would serve as the interim director until a permanent successor could be found. It took nearly nine months of an executive search for the board to find a suitable replacement, considering the range of applicants, their compensation requirements, and the willingness of some prime candidates to relocate to a major city. During the nine months of the interim executive director's leadership, the organization maintained the status quo with no growth initiatives being introduced and no sign of any strategic intention to establish protocols for future succession issues. The indications were that little to no planning got the organization through in the past, and the same approach would work again now. Had the organization learned anything from its past lack of succession planning? Obviously not.

Case Questions

1. Have the leaders (board) of this organization learned anything from its encounters with the succession issue? Could they have planned better?
2. What would you have done differently if you were the chairperson of the board, a board member, the executive director of the organization?

*Source*: Santora, J.C.& Sarros, J.C. 2012. Do nonprofit organizations ever really learn from their mistakes—or are they doomed to repeat them. *Development & Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*, 26/3, 8–10.

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**Discussion Questions**

1. Define the term leadership. Why is it such an elusive concept?
2. What is the difference between leadership and management?
3. Describe the linkage between leadership and planning. Why should leaders plan?
4. Why is executive succession a key planning strategic initiative?
5. Do you think it is better to select an executive successor internally or externally? Why/Why not?

**Chapter Summary**

The aim of this chapter was to discuss leadership and planning in an organizational context. This chapter began with a brief overview of the leadership concept, its definition, distinctions and similarities with management. Next, the concept of vision was introduced as a key leadership driver linked to the constant need of leaders to examine the status quo, working and mobilizing their followers toward new direction to realize their mutual aspirations. Within this context, planning is a critical skill set necessary at all organizational levels. Leaders need to apply planning both as a strategic tool to decide where are we now and where do we want to go, and as measurable aspect of vision, goal setting, and problem solving. The chapter draws to a logical conclusion by presenting a leadership and planning issue: succession planning. We have provided two examples: one from the private sector (the film *Executive Suite*) and one from the nonprofit sector (West Side Community Agency) to help create a better understanding of the problems leaders face without such planning.

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