

ПОДПОМАГАНЕ НА ЛИДЕРСТВОТО

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FACILITATIVE LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

Facilitative leadership is one of the emerging leadership paradigms making its way into more and more organizations, governments and institutions. It is a co-creative leadership model asserting that leaders should effectively facilitate deep collaboration.

Facilitative leadership involves asking powerful questions and engaging others to leverage each person's individual strengths in creating a shared organizational vision. Deep collaboration means the parties involved—all of them, including the leader—undergo transformations through the work they are engaging. In short, groups undergo adaptive changes. This means development is a central part of leadership.

Facilitative Leadership is a people-centered, quality and results driven process of developing and supporting a culture in the workplace that facilitates goal achievement through effective relational processes. It is particularly important to effective group process, teamwork, workplace culture and change management in the workplace.

Keywords: *Facilitative leadership, leaders, leadership styles, group process, teamwork.*

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1. Introduction

Facilitative Leadership does not get rid of hierarchical forms of leadership and management. Contrary to popular opinion, it does the opposite. Hierarchy thrives within

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facilitative leadership. It thrives because pre-existing hierarchies are no longer rigidly in command. As leadership capacity develops beyond traditional hierarchies resting upon position, a new form of hierarchy emerges. A more effective form. Organic and responsive hierarchies come forth—they emerge—and are subservient to the most proficient and creative outcomes. Role and position no longer exclusively distribute power. Now, capability does. Innovation and productivity have powerful agendas that challenge us to transform ourselves into more adaptive and responsive human beings.

Because post-modernity is in the process of dismantling hierarchies, plenty of organizations struggling with consensus forms of decision making. While everyone may indeed get to feel heard, these organizations and business units are going out of business. Culturally they become too inclusive of everyone's opinions, lack catalytic direction and selfishly cannibalize resources to support their own processes. These kill both creativity and productivity.

Could facilitative leadership be an understated secret to successful leadership? Facilitation is often seen as a neutral role, balancing differing views. However as we shall see there is nothing neutral about the potential power of facilitative leadership.

A facilitative approach recognizes the synergy of bringing together the different strengths of individuals. This idea is captured in the words accredited to Mother Theresa: „You can do what I cannot do. I can do what you cannot do. Together we can do great things“.

Leadership turnover crushes organizational well-being and profitability. As a result, more sustainable leadership practices are required because they insulate organizations from being overly dependent upon leaders and their more limited management practices.

Today's complex demands and highly competitive marketplaces require more stable forms of leadership. This is especially the case in mature markets. Leaders cannot be intoxicated by their own constructions of direction. This is a high bar. Less than 1% of adults show the requisite developmental aptitudes to do these complex and nuanced leadership maneuvers.

Facilitative Leadership is one brand of these emerging forms of leadership. It draws on decades of meticulous research into how adults develop professionally and who thrives in the face of complex leadership responsibilities. It is in the heights of professional development the leader find larger abilities and broaden the scope of influence can make with his life.

Facilitative leader is a person with authority or influence who encourages others to get up and do things. By training, the leaders rigorously can gain bigger perspectives, learn how to effortlessly collaborate, execute goals with precision, command the energetics of a room, make bold maneuvers that yield greater creativity and work optimally in complex, fast paced environments. To be practice and train to embody this

high bar of human excellence, and to be bring these elegant adaptations into professional development. This is precisely where Facilitative Leadership thrives.

FACILITATIVE STYLE - KEY TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Facilitative leadership as opposed to the old fashioned authoritative leaderships style indeed a new era of piloting a project, team or an organization, when need to motivate team members or the employees toward a common purpose, objective or goal instead of giving them strict and detailed instructions to abide by, although in some cases it may be absolutely necessary.

Facilitative leadership requires the leader, to be compassionate in communication and that includes listening openly to the verbal and non-verbal expressions of team members, subordinates or clients without judgment or condemnation of any sort. This kind of leadership is non-authoritative and invites open suggestions and constructive feedback from the floor so that everyone involved gets to share their thoughts and opinions.

In this kind of set up, suggestions or opinions are discussed, debated and contemplated openly in a healthy environment. Everyone including stakeholders, management, team members, employees or any related parties get to share ownership of ideas when there is collective agreement and clarity in the direction of where the project or organization is heading. There is a sense of joint responsibility for the progress of a project or growth of an organization.

This leadership approach will, without any doubt, create powerful fundamental positive emotions that will give them a strong sense of respect and appreciation for themselves as well as toward and the organization. This inevitably empowers related parties and naturally motivates them to improve themselves in supportive areas of their skills which results in a more productive and united team aiding the growth, creativity and expansion of an organization or simply to the successful completion of project.

It is encouraging to note that facilitative leadership permits understanding and appreciation to arise between team members, management and employees. This openness and allowance to sift through valuable ideas provides a clearer vision of the path where a project or organization is heading towards without taking the reins. From a different perspective, being an effective facilitative leader is a risk mitigation strategy as you are virtually making the project theirs.

Facilitative Leadership is a special leadership style that can be used by anyone who runs meetings. It can also be practiced by creating self-managed teams, which make decisions without the need for an authoritative figure giving instructions. The Team Leader role can further be rotated amongst the team members for a set period of time.

This style is different as opposed to other leadership styles in which the leader is perceived to always be right and in control along with making sure no one openly resists their instructions. The old autocratic leader runs the show with fear, restricting team members or employees freedom of speech and actions thus limiting their creativity and growth. Collaboration is indeed important and beneficial for any form of team or organization to achieve its visions; to inspire and allow ideas, opinions and creativity to flow as a form of support. It promotes harmony and well-being not only for the project and organization, but also reduces the stress for the human factors involved!

Table no. 1 - A model of facilitation skills

Focus	Level	Activity
Relationships	Individual	Observation
Content	Interpersonal	Interventions
Context	Group	
Task 1. Problem Definition 2. Outcome		
Process 1. Communication 2. Meeting 3. Problem Solving		

CHARACTERISTICS OF FACILITATIVE LEADERS

In order to advance their organizations' efforts, leaders must be able to actively engage others so their talents and contributions are fully leveraged.

How can they do so? With using facilitation skills. A facilitator is someone who engages in the activity of [facilitation](#). They help a group of people understand their common objectives and assists them to plan how to achieve these objectives. (Bens, 2012)

There are a variety of definitions for facilitators:

"An individual who enables groups and organizations to work more effectively; to collaborate and achieve synergy. He or she is a 'content neutral' party who by not taking sides or expressing or advocating a point of view during the meeting, can advocate for fair, open, and inclusive procedures to accomplish the group's work" (Kaner et al., 2007)

"One who contributes structure and process to interactions so groups are able to function effectively and make high-quality decisions. A helper and enabler whose goal is to support others as they pursue their objectives." (Bens, 2012)

"The facilitator's job is to support everyone to do their best thinking and practice. To do this, the facilitator encourages full participation, promotes mutual understanding and cultivates shared responsibility. By supporting everyone to do their best thinking, a facilitator enables group members to search for inclusive solutions and build sustainable agreements" (Kaner, Lind, Toldi, Fisk & Berger, 2007)

"A Facilitator is a content-neutral task leader who forms a group of people into a collaborative team, supporting consensus and uses a range of processes to enable the group to accomplish their task. The Facilitator is responsible for the context." (Rush, 2013)

"A meeting or workshop leader who creates an environment where every participant has the opportunity to collaborate, innovate, and excel." (Metz, 2013)

Effective facilitation involves using processes and tools to maximize the collective intelligence of individuals in a group to determine the right course of action and to then build a template for acting on the choices they make. Facilitation, while long associated with individuals leading workshops, planning meetings, or other group processes, actually encompasses a broad mix of consulting and coaching skills that are too critical to be relegated to the domain of a select few.

Every person can adopt the role of a facilitator in their interactions with others. Making a commitment to act in this way, however, needs to be done thoughtfully. Authenticity is one of the hallmarks of the effective facilitator. Facilitative leaders model their genuine selves for others and help create the space that honors the diversity and genuineness present in any group.

In today's organizations, individuals at all levels need to possess facilitation skills. By necessity, people are making decisions collaboratively in consultation with others. More work is being completed in cross-functional teams and through internal or external partnerships than ever before. But this need for greater collaboration comes at a time when the diversity of perspectives, talents, and cultures present in the workplace is increasing. Achieving better results by tapping into this mix is a goal that can be accomplished through effective application of facilitative leadership fundamentals.

Table no. 2 - Modern vs. Facilitative Leaders

Modern Leaders	Facilitative Leaders
✓ Are receptive to change	✓ Focus on continuous improvement of both results and the method used to obtain them
✓ Communicate and receive feedback	✓ Can also structure activities to ensure that participants evaluate them and each other
✓ Effective interpersonal skills	✓ More than people savvy, they are group focused
✓ Believe that staff work for them	✓ Work to exceed the expectations of all stakeholders, including their staff
✓ Have meeting management skills	✓ Can also use groups to build complex deliverables and structure any type of conversation with collaboration
✓ Involved in directing tasks	✓ Strive to build collaborative decisions based on staff input
✓ Remain accountable for results	✓ Leads groups whose members are highly skilled and also accountable for outcomes
✓ Value teamwork and collaboration	✓ Focus on providing structures that support superior performance
✓ Work to meet the expectation of management	✓ Operate without status or rank consciousness

There are leaders, and there are great leaders... What separates those who manage a team or business from those who lead an organization? They possess at least 5 characteristics of great facilitative leaders: (NorthPoint, 2016)

- **Visionary**

„The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it.“ - Michelangelo

Great leaders have to be visionary. They have to push the boundaries. At the same time, they also have to be realistic, as there is no point steering an organization down an unattainable path.

- **Empowering**

„It doesn't make sense to hire smart people and tell them what to do; we hire smart people so they can tell us what to do.“ -Steve Jobs

Great leaders understand that their success – and the success of the organization – is dependent on the people around them. They know that have to hire the best people, work with them, and give them room to make decisions.

- **Challenging**

„Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected.“ - Steve Jobs

Great leaders constantly challenge themselves and those around them to do more, achieve more and be more. They understand that mediocrity is one step away from apathy, and are focussed on building a culture of over-achievers.

- **Energetic**

„The higher your energy level, the more efficient your body. The more efficient your body, the better you feel and the more you will use your talent to produce outstanding results.“ -Tony Robbins

Great leaders display immense amounts of physical and mental energy. They act, talk and walk fast as they know their actions inspire those around them. Their positive energy is contagious.

- **Questioning**

„Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime“. Great leaders rarely come up with great answers. They do however ask great questions to help others come up with great answers. It's this coaching mindset that helps to build those around them.

CONCLUSIONS

In business today, there is an increasing emphasis on facilitative leadership as a way forward. Facilitative leadership is about using the group's collective expertise to accept responsibility and solve business problems collectively. Traditionally, managers used their authority to make decisions, which employees followed. Rather than being directive, the facilitative leader involve employees in the decision making process and ensures their commitment to the final course of action. This approach removes the "them versus us" mentality and ensures buy-in from every individual who has been involved in the decision making process.

Although this particular style has many advantages but this might not be the appropriate style for all situations or all organizations. While it might produce results for one set of people it might create apathy and inefficient work habits within another. This

approach requires careful planning. The business culture and the timing need to be supportive and leader must assess and appraise the situation and circumstances before deciding on the degree of employee involvement.

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