

Lead To Manage! Part One



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During the PSMB Conference, “Strategizing Human Capital Development during Global Economic Crisis”, held in October 2009, one of the keynote speakers mentioned that, “Organizations that want to prosper and succeed must change from management to leadership”.

However, I did not agree with him, we discussed that, and he did agree with my point. I did not agree with him and I would not agree with any theory saying that, simply because management skills and leadership skills are different and distinct. However, they are inseparable and both needed for the success of any organization.

Most people believe that leadership and management are the same (The manager is the leader); they are not.

Harvard Business Review 2006, described management as, “The process of guidance, directing, and controlling for the sake of attaining objectives efficiently and effectively with and through other people”.

Leadership; however, as dictionaries and scholars define it, is “the process of social influence in which one person or a group can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task”, and “it is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen”.

Peter Ferdinand Drucker, the man who invented management, described leadership as, "The ability, and skill of attaining objectives with and through the voluntary cooperation of other people; while winning their confidence, respect, and loyalty".

Explaining some differences between management and leadership, Warren Gamaliel Bennis, the American scholar, organizational consultant, and author, who is widely regarded as a pioneer of the contemporary field of leadership studies, said, "Management is getting people to do what needs to be done. Leadership is getting people to want to do what needs to be done. Managers push; leaders pull; managers command; leaders communicate".

Management focuses on work activities that involve planning, organizing, budgeting, paper work, time, staffing, controlling, coordinating, strategy, decision-making, and problem solving.

That is no longer enough for organizations to succeed. Organizations must be able to adapt to the continuous rapid change (positive or negative) and growth; thus, they need strong leadership. Leadership focuses on people, which involve inspiration, influence, setting directions, aligning people, coaching, counseling, creating a motivational working environment, and helping people to grow and to cope with change.

Management is a science that most people can study and become managers; leadership, is an art that not every person can master, but it is also not in the person's gene; it is an observable, learnable set of practices.

A successful organization of any kind cannot exist without both strong leadership and great management. The organization needs a formal authority that is management, and it needs a moral authority and that is leadership.

In his book, "Managing", Harold Geneen, who was the president and CEO of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT), said, "Leadership is the heart and soul of business management... You cannot manage simply by rearranging the organizational chart, playing with numbers, or tallying the latest business school formula (technical skills). What you manage in business is people (by leading them) and mastering that is the most important ingredient in the recipe of business success".

In this statement, Harold Geneen shows that management skills and leadership skills are different and necessary for the success of the organization. What he meant is that you need to master the leadership skills and influence people to follow you regardless of how good your technical skills are.

You could be the best accountant, engineer, lawyer, doctor, scientist, or mechanic, but that does not mean that you can lead a team to achieve objectives unless you are a good effective leader. If you are a good effective leader with high technical skills, you will not only achieve your goals and objectives, but also will help your team members to learn and grow, and they will follow you.

Effective leadership starts with trust, which comes from candor, honesty, and respect. It is impossible for anyone to lead people who do not trust him/her.

I believe that you would not follow someone whom you do not trust or whom you feel takes advantage of you, so are others. Your effectiveness as a leader depends on your ability to gain the full trust of those who follow you.

There are hundreds if not thousands of books about leadership, and about how to become an effective leader. Nevertheless, many people are lacking this skill, simply because either they do not read some of these books, or they do not use the information in them.