

Managerial Leadership in Academic Libraries

Roadblocks to Success

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This famous maxim by the Chinese philosopher Lao Tsu sums up very well desirable and undesirable characteristics of leadership styles applicable to a wide variety of contexts:

*The wicked Leader is he who the people despise.
The good Leader is he who the people revere.
The great Leader is he who the people say
“We did it ourselves.”*

As is true for any organization, effective leadership is crucial for success. In the library profession, one may encounter various problems caused by the lack of leadership qualities possessed by employees in managerial leadership positions. For example, one obvious problem is micromanagement. Indications of micromanagement include: wanting to be in control of everything, not giving employees sufficient authority and control over their job responsibilities, and interfering or imposing too many restrictions on what subordinates are allowed to do. The lack of delegation results in the manager becoming overwhelmed by job duties, the subordinates' motivation and initiative being stifled, and an overall inefficiency of the organization.

Insufficient self-knowledge (especially of one's own shortcomings) is another problem. Under certain circumstances, this may result in sudden outbursts of anger, intimidation, threats, unjust and uncalled for reprimands, boastful attitude about one's own achievements and abilities, and the inability to take into consideration valid arguments by subordinates and justified criticism. This can lead to misuse of power, which can take various forms such as marginalizing and discrediting people perceived as a threat to the manager's authority, and consequently withholding necessary support from subordinates.

Patterns of poor managerial leadership create low morale, poor organizational climate, distrust towards supervisors among subordinates, low productivity, lack of teamwork, and lack of consensus building and shared goals. Obviously, this describes a situation where the wrong

person attained a managerial leadership position. Why does this happen? Why do the wrong people end up in these positions? How can it be prevented? Much has been written about leadership, but Riggs pointed out that little has been written about ineffective or “bad” leadership, and he asks the important question, “Why are we reluctant to address/discuss bad leadership?”¹

This author's approach to the subject of managerial leadership performance is based on the Competing Values Framework, as discussed by Faerman in her article “Organizational Change and Leadership Styles.” This framework is based on a series of studies regarding the relationship between organizational effectiveness and managerial performance. As explained by Faerman, “Because it is a conceptual model derived from the study of organizational theories, rather than an empirical model derived from the direct observation of organizations or managers, it is not limited to a particular type of organization.”² In the first section of her article, Faerman explains the Competing Values Framework, and in the second section she focuses on organizational change and leadership in libraries. This article uses her framework to help identify and understand roadblocks in all areas of managerial leadership. In doing so, this article covers literature on leadership and management from the library field and management in general, as well as the author's own perspective. It also discusses the competing demands on managerial leadership in academic libraries, as well as the problems caused by ineffective or wrong approaches to these demands.

The flaws in managerial leadership previously mentioned are examples of worst-case scenarios, representing failures on the part of the person in a leadership position, primarily in the human relations area. A closer look at library administrators' job responsibilities should be helpful in seeing more clearly the validity of the following statement:

Library administrators are facing a wide variety of competing and often conflicting demands—caused by forces both internal and external to the library itself—which often require them to deal with situations which on the surface appear to be contradictory or paradoxical.³

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The Competing Values Framework is a useful general framework of organizational and managerial leadership performance. This framework, which was originally developed by Robert E. Quinn, is applicable to a wide variety of organizations.⁴ It makes explicit inherent paradoxes and competing demands regarding organizational and managerial leadership effectiveness. The framework is basically a conceptual, or mental map that illustrates the inherent contradictions in important assumptions about organizational effectiveness and managerial leadership performance. Furthermore, it makes one see more clearly the connection between various criteria of organizational performance and different kinds of managerial styles and behaviors.

Competing Values Framework: Overview

Managerial leadership, as viewed from the perspective of the Competing Values Framework, encompasses the following roles:

1. Innovator and broker (concerned with innovation, adaptation to change)
2. Director and producer (concerned with planning and goal setting, achievement of productive outcomes)
3. Coordinator and monitor (concerned with organizational effectiveness)
4. Mentor and facilitator (concerned with effective human relations)

It is not easy to achieve a balance between these contradictory and competing demands, and studying the dynamic between them can be done as a means of assessing effectiveness.

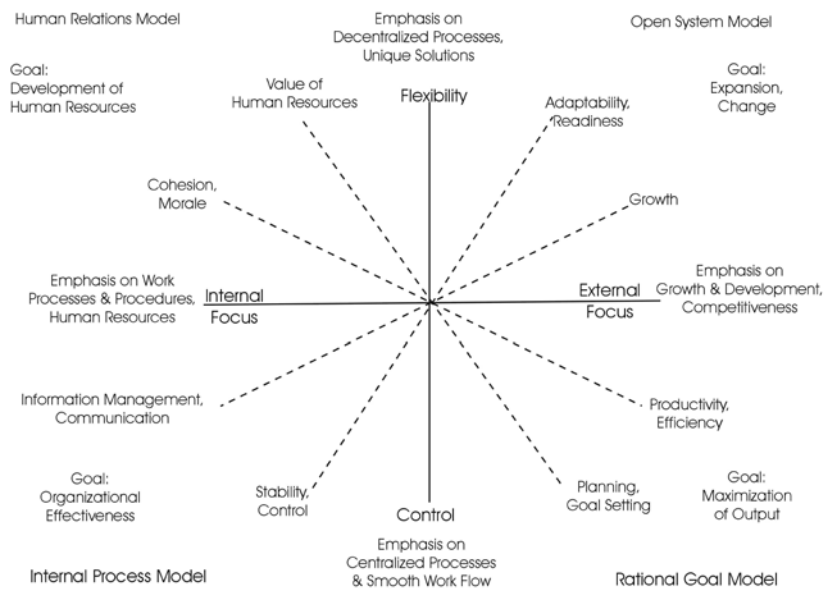
Faerman sums up the contradictory demands and expectations faced by organizations:

Recognizing that organizations function in a world where they are consistently faced with demands and expectations that are competing and often contradictory, the framework views organizational effectiveness as a multi-dimensional construct. . . . Organizations are expected to be task-oriented, to accomplish their goals, and to be cost-effective; but they are also expected to be people-oriented and to show concern for the employees and of the organization, even when this involves costs to the organization. Similarly, organizations are expected to be stable, with well coordinated work flows and

established rules and procedures for dealing with employees, as well as with customers, clients and patrons. But they are also expected to be flexible and to be able to deal with both short-term crises and long-term changes in their situation. Thus . . . all organizations are expected to excel in contradictory domains.⁵

Figure 1 depicts Faerman's explanation of the Competing Values Framework for Organizational Effectiveness. The vertical axis relates to organizational structure in which the emphasis may be either on control or on flexibility. Because of differing criteria of organizational effectiveness, the emphasis may be either on stability and uniformity, or on adaptability and differentiation. The horizontal axis in figure 1 relates to differences in organizational focus: an internal perspective, emphasizing the coordination of the parts, and an external focus, emphasizing the well-being and development of the organization as a whole. The internal perspective of organizational effectiveness focuses on work processes and procedures, and the importance of employees as vital resources within the organization, while the external perspective focuses on the growth and development of the organization and how the organization fits into its larger environment.

The aforementioned different values concerning organizational effectiveness can be categorized according to "four models of organizational effectiveness which are associated with four schools of thought in organizational theory."⁶ At the bottom right of figure 1 is the *Rational Goal Model* of organizational effectiveness. The emphasis is on planning



Adapted from Sue R. Faerman (1993). *Organizational Change and Leadership Styles*. *Journal of Library Administration*, 19 (3/4), 55-79.

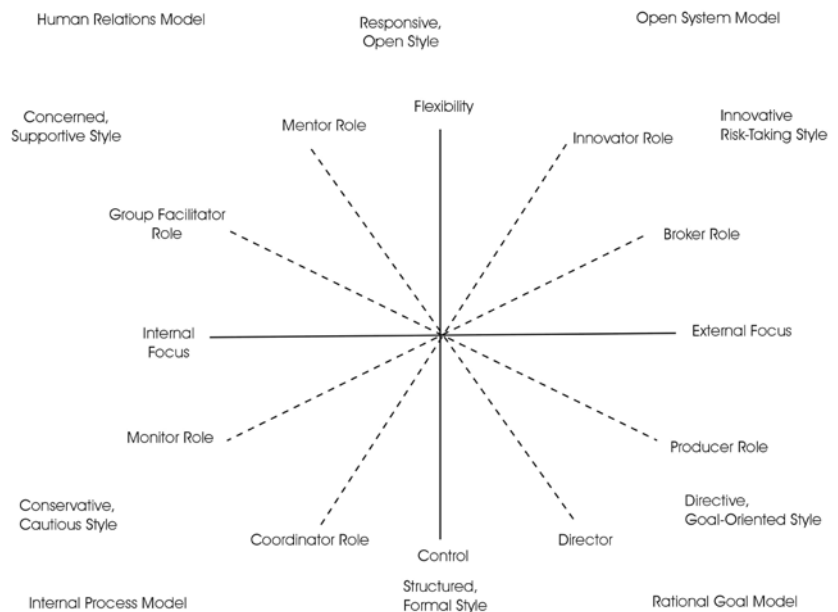
Figure 1. Competing Values Framework: Organizational Effectiveness (Illustration used with permission of John Wiley & Sons.)

and goal setting (as means), and productivity and efficiency (as ends). The goal is the maximization of output. In the lower left quadrant is the *Internal Process Model* of organizational effectiveness. The emphasis is on information management and communication (as means), and stability and control (as ends). The *Human Relations Model* of organizational effectiveness is shown in the upper left quadrant. The emphasis is on the maintenance of cohesion and morale and the smooth functioning of group processes (as means), and the long-term growth and development of individuals in the organization (as ends). Important values are participation and consensus in decision-making. Finally, the *Open System Model* of organizational effectiveness is pictured in the upper right quadrant. The emphasis is on adaptability and readiness (as means), and the attainment of external support, and growth and resource acquisition (as ends). Important values are adaptation to the organizational environment, as well as creativity and innovation. Faerman emphasizes that “the framework is called the competing values framework because it illustrates the fact that organizations are expected to be and do many different things and thus competing and conflicting demands are placed on them.”⁷

Figure 2 shows how the four models of organizational effectiveness relate to eight managerial leadership roles. In it, the *Open System Model* of organizational effectiveness emphasizes the ability to adapt to changes in the external environment. The related leadership roles are innovator and broker. The innovator creates a vision for change that defines the future direction of the organization and leads it through adapting to the desired changes. Leaders in the role of the broker serve as a liaison between the organization and those outside of it. They must sell their vision for change to important external stakeholders in order to secure funding or approval for organizational change. The *Rational Goal Model* of organizational effectiveness emphasizes planning, goal setting, productivity, and efficiency. The managerial roles associated with this quadrant are those of the director and producer. In the *Internal Process Model*, the leadership roles are coordinator and monitor. In the coordinator role, the leader is concerned with making sure that the right people are in the right place doing the right job with the right equipment. In the monitor role, leaders emphasize the effectiveness criteria of communication and information management. Lastly, in the *Human Relations Model*, the leadership roles are those of mentor and facilitator. In the mentor role, the leader is concerned with helping employees formulate plans for their personal and professional growth and

development. In the facilitator role, leaders are concerned with group, rather than individual, performance; they are process-oriented, concerned with building cohesion and teamwork, skilled at leading group meetings, managing conflict, and negotiating compromises among group members.

Faerman argues that although the criteria of organizational effectiveness “are conceptually competing and shown as oppositions in the framework, [it] does not mean that they cannot mutually exist in a real organization.” In fact, “in order for organizations to be truly effective, the different criteria of effectiveness must all be present in some degree in an organization, and probably should be present in some balance.”⁸ Likewise, “although the managerial leadership roles represent conceptually competing sets of behaviors and are shown as opposites in the framework, this does not mean that they cannot mutually exist in one individual,” and moreover, “in order for managerial leaders to be truly effective” they need to ensure “that each of the leadership roles is performed to some degree within each work unit and within the organization more generally and probably should be present in some balance.”⁹ Still, Faerman does concede that “virtually all individuals have preferences for some of these roles over the others,” based on “skill level or comfort level (for example, how well does an individual believe that he or she performs in the role?)” or on “values or guiding beliefs about what is important for overall organizational performance.”¹⁰



Adapted from Sue R. Faerman (1993). Organizational Change and Leadership Styles. *Journal of Library Administration*, 19 (3/4), 55-79.

Figure 2. Competing Values Framework: Managerial Leadership (Illustration used with permission of John Wiley & Sons.)

Definitions of Managerial Leadership

Before proceeding with the discussion of the various managerial leadership roles of library administrators, let us first take a look at what managerial leadership is all about. In the leadership literature, an important distinction is made between “managers” and “leaders.” Managers are primarily involved with processes of planning and budgeting, organizing, staffing, controlling, and problem solving. On the other hand, leaders are involved with establishing directions, aligning people, motivating, and inspiring.

In “What Leaders Really Do,” Kotter emphasizes that leadership is about coping with change. Setting the direction for change is fundamental to leadership. Major changes in today’s highly competitive business world are crucial to compete effectively and to survive, and “more change always demands more leadership.”¹¹ Kotter also clarifies that “leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary systems of action. Each has its own function and characteristic activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment.”¹² Finally,

management ensures plan accomplishment by controlling and problem solving—monitoring results versus the plan in some detail, both formally and informally, by means of reports, meetings, and other tools; identifying deviations; and then planning and organizing to solve the problems. But for leadership, achieving a vision requires motivation and inspiring—keeping people moving in the right direction, despite major obstacles, by appealing to basic but often untapped human needs, values, and emotions.”¹³

In a similar vein, Peter Topping’s report of a statement by a company executive sums up very well the distinction between managers and leaders: “Managers wait to be told what to do, while leaders take initiative, figure out what has to be done, and then do it.” Topping emphasizes that it is important to have good managers, “people who are able to effectively plan, organize and control,” but, we also “have a great need for leaders inside organizations—people who inspire, motivate, and develop others. And we need leaders at all levels in our organization, not just at the top. . . . It is imperative that organizations have people who are capable as both managers and leaders.”¹⁴

What is expected of managers is pretty clear-cut, but this is not true with regard to leaders. The discussion of leadership attributes by Hurlbert may serve to further clarify the distinction:

Leadership is the ability to guide or move people in a particular direction and is a quality that must be able to induce, persuade, and motivate others to identify with the goals of an institution. . . . Leadership also has a visionary quality embodying

characteristics such as risk taking, good communication skills, and the ability to gain trust and lead by example.¹⁵

Similarly, Beverly P. Lynch points out that “leadership, an illusive variable, has had the attention of scholars and researchers in the organizational field for many years,” and cites several major approaches to its analysis:

Among the approaches to the study of leadership have been the trait approach, which seeks to discover what leadership traits make people great leaders; the skills approach, which focuses on skills and abilities that can be learned; and the style approach, which emphasizes leader behavior and, building on the Ohio State studies in the 1940s, emphasizes task behaviors and people relationships. More recent studies of leadership stress the situational, where different situations demand different styles; the contingency approach, closely related to the situational, attempts to identify the appropriate leader to the situation. More recently the study of team leadership has emerged as more organizations have moved to a team-based leadership structure.¹⁶

The competencies required for leadership are thus diverse and multifaceted, so that understanding them, much less practicing them, requires a broad approach.

A two-part study was done by Herson, Powell, and Young to determine what attributes (knowledge, skills, and critical competencies) are needed by university library directors in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL).¹⁷ The listing is extensive and reflects the numerous and complex challenges such directors face. This study also provides useful insights into managerial leadership in libraries in a wider context, beyond just in ARL. Desirable attributes are listed under the categories of managerial attributes (subdivided into managing, leading, planning); personal characteristics (subdivided into dealing with others), individual traits (general), individual traits (leadership); and general areas of knowledge. The following are examples of managerial attributes:

- **Managing.** Result-oriented, communicates effectively with staff, delegates authority, facilitates productive work environment, manages fiscal resources and budgets, and resolves conflicts.
- **Leading.** Builds a shared vision for the library, manages and shapes change, thinks “outside the box” (in new and creative ways applicable to the problem), is entrepreneurial, and keeps the library focused on its mission.
- **Planning.** Sets priorities and creates an environment that fosters accountability.

- **Dealing with others.** Treats people with dignity and respect, has good interpersonal and people skills.
- **Individual traits (general).** Has self awareness of strengths and weaknesses, is honest, analyzes and solves problems, and is able to ask the right questions.
- **Individual traits (leadership).** Is change-focused, exercises good judgment, articulates direction for the library, inspires trust, and is innovative.¹⁸

What we also see here is the applicability of the Competing Values Framework. It's not possible to have all these desired qualities. The complexity of managerial leadership can indeed be daunting, and allowances for shortcomings may be inevitable. Further, our examination of the different managerial leadership roles may suggest how these can be reconciled.

Innovator and Broker (Open System Model)

In recent years there has been a dramatic change in work processes and the types of services provided by libraries. An example is the demand for library materials and services online, which necessitates that library personnel be skilled in the use of new technologies. This change, which is an ongoing process, calls for adaptability and readiness of the leaders to act in the roles of innovator and broker. Faerman describes the innovator role as follows:

As innovators, leaders create the vision for change which defines the future direction of the organization. In this role they also help others within the organization to adapt to change. . . . Thinking creatively about opportunities, library administrators performing in the innovator role will search for new ideas and approaches to organization of the library, and will not be limited to current configuration or structures. Moreover, they will be concerned with establishing a climate in the organization where new ideas and approaches are valued, where creative thinking is encouraged among all employees, and where appropriate risk taking is rewarded.¹⁹

By extension, library administrators acting in the role of broker are expected to influence important people outside of the library, secure funding, and obtain approval for organizational change.

Plans for the future direction of the organization need to be based on an adequate understanding of current conditions, specific barriers that need to be addressed, and analysis of the feasibility and benefits of proposed organizational changes and new projects. Organizational change may be implemented and innovative projects undertaken because of perceived desirable benefits, but the innovator and

broker must recognize that if nothing is done to address prevailing obstacles, then not much will be accomplished. It is all very well to have an ambitious and well-formulated vision and goals statement detailing where the organization should be in five or ten years, but the planning must begin with a realistic assessment of current realities or innovative projects may never reach completion.

In *Managerial Leadership*, Topping discusses some prevalent reasons for resistance to change, such as inertia, fear of the unknown, fear of failure, not understanding or disagreeing with the need for change, and so forth. In many cases, the disagreement with the need for change is not that employees do not understand "the reasoning behind the changes but rather that they believe the reasoning is flawed." Topping argues further that:

This is particularly commonplace in organizations that have generated high levels of skepticism from a track record of frequent and ineffective change initiatives. . . . The decisions made to pursue any of these [changes] often lacked total commitment, were poorly thought out and wound up being ineffectively implemented.²⁰

Taking steps to balance the drive for innovation and the instinct to broker means by which to make it happen must require conscious leadership decisions.

In "A Critique of Some Contemporary Conceptions of Reengineering-Based Library Leadership," Champion discusses leadership practices in the context of reorganization of libraries. His particular concern is workplace justice and fairness. In the business world, "a particular 'leadership' tactic that radically alters an organization, even dismantles traditional services, could be tolerated or even promoted if increased profits result."²¹ The idea of reengineering the library has found fertile ground among library directors; however, it is not always implemented in the proper way. Ideally, the reengineering of the library will result in "a flattened organization with empowered cross-functional teams . . . new knowledge and information infrastructures and reinvented and re-engineered work process focused on customer service."²² Unfortunately, "management's desire for a quick fix" is more the norm than "substantive and meaningful planning," the outcome of which is "staff reductions and reassignments." Champion emphasizes the need for "consensual decision making," which allows for a "wide ranging debate on the nature of the organization's problems and on proposed solutions." The "true library leader is one who stands on the principles of collective agreement," and not simply mandates change.²³

Being a change agent is of vital importance. In "The Library Director as Change Agent," Shaughnessy speaks about the creation of new mental models of library organizations, which he considers to be one of the chief tasks of a library director. Unfortunately, all too frequently the best ideas are never put into practice and creative insights are

never implemented because they conflict with deeply held beliefs of how the organization should operate and are contrary to people's familiar ways of thinking and acting. Here the organizational culture needs to be changed, and the library director plays a crucial part in the endeavor. Shaughnessy writes: "The library director needs to help the organization develop a new and powerful vision of its future, a vision with the power to propel it forward, both individually and organizationally."²⁴

Elaborating upon that theme, Shaughnessy further discusses his experience of reorganizing a large library at the University of Minnesota. The objectives of implementing a new organizational structure were "to reduce bureaucracy, empower staff, create a team-based culture, develop a deeper ownership of the library by staff, and become more responsive to the library's customers." Both the design and its implementation were carried out without undue influence from the university librarian: "The library's administration adopted a hands-off policy with respect to the processes associated with the reorganization." Initially, much time had to be spent on the clarification of essential characteristics of teams and team work; for example, referring to a group of people who are providing reference services as the "reference team" may be misleading unless this group of people works together according to basic norms of teams and team work, "such as commitment to common purpose, performance goals, and an approach to work in which staff hold themselves individually and mutually accountable."²⁵ The objective was to make the process as open and participative as possible.

An important issue addressed in this article is the lack of understanding and appreciation of the work done by library administrators. One of the objectives of the reorganization was the elimination of several administrative and managerial positions in order to achieve a flattening of the organizational structure. Responsibilities of these positions were either eliminated or reassigned to other staff. Then, the question arose what the roles of remaining library administrators should be, to which Shaughnessy comments on the complexity of the work done by administrators, which is often neither understood nor appreciated. Unfortunately, there is an underappreciation of the "values that they [administrators] bring to the organization—experience, skill, professional knowledge, training ability, and overall competence," such that: "Superior achievement and performance on the part of most administrators seems either to be taken for granted or ignored."²⁶

Director and Producer (Rational Goal Model)

Another essential role of library administrators is that of director and producer. The emphasis is "on planning and goal setting (as means) and productivity and efficiency (as ends). Criteria of effectiveness emphasize rational analysis and action. Here, it is believed that clear direction

will lead to productive outcomes."²⁷ A good example of a crucial part of the director and producer role is strategic planning. Common elements of the strategic plan are the mission statement, key result areas referred to as goals, and strategic and tactical objectives. When working out a strategic plan, careful analysis must be conducted to identify the strengths and limitations of the library, and how much can be accomplished with the resources available. Furthermore, because the library is but one part of a larger institution, the strategic plan needs to be in line with the goals and objectives of the larger academic institution.

Once a strategic plan has been worked out, implementation calls for organizing work activities and giving clear directions that will lead to productive outcomes. As Stueart and Moran have written, organizing involves (1) determining the specific activities necessary to accomplish the planned goals; (2) grouping the activities into a logical framework or structure; (3) assigning these activities to specific positions and people; and (4) providing a means for coordinating the efforts of individuals and groups.²⁸ Thus, the role of director and producer requires the ability to formulate plans and the specifics about how they can be achieved, to oversee progress along the way, but also, on the other hand, to keep the focus on broader issues and longer-term goals.

Coordinator and Monitor (Internal Process Model)

Closely related with the role of director and producer is that of coordinator and monitor concerned with organizational effectiveness. The emphasis is on information management (as a means), and stability and control (as ends). Criteria of effectiveness are the smooth flow of information and work processes; measurement and documentation of such are considered to be important. In the coordinator role, leaders "engage in situational engineering and the manipulation of assignments—managing the structure and flow of systems, analyzing task requirements, and organizing and coordinating the efforts of others." While acting as the monitor, they "are concerned with the flow of information in the organization, making sure that organizational participants are familiar with important facts and details, and with organizational rules and regulations."²⁹

Optimum organizational structure, which encompasses the division, assignment, and coordination of job duties, maximizes effectiveness. Mintzberg clarifies succinctly how organizational structure provides the framework for specialization and coordination:

Every human activity—from the making of pots to the placing of a man on the moon—gives rise to two fundamental and opposing requirements: the *division of labor* into various tasks to be performed and the *coordination* of these tasks

to accomplish the activity. The structure of an organization can be defined simply as the sum total of the ways in which it divides its labor into distinct tasks and then achieves coordination among them.³⁰

As explained by Stueart and Moran, an organization's structure "provides a system through which people can perform assigned activities contributing to the goals, objectives, and programs of the organization," but "an organizational structure that provides for the efficient achievement of the planned goals and objectives is not an easy structure to develop."³¹

A major issue is the structural effectiveness of the organization. For example, delegation of job duties and granting adequate authority to carry out assigned tasks is essential, but this rubs against the grain of many managers. Stueart and Moran point out that delegation should not be practiced half-heartedly, that it must be accompanied by requisite authority, without which a roadblock is created. Thus, "effective managers are those who have learned to delegate. They are willing to let go of some of their authority and trust their subordinates."³² The delegation of authority is also related with the question of how much the organizational structure is centralized or decentralized. Thus:

In highly centralized organizations, authority is concentrated in the highest echelons of the hierarchy; almost all decisions are made by those at the top. In decentralized organizations, the authority to make many decisions is pushed down in the organization.³³

The coordination of decision making in the organization is simplified if the power of decision-making is only given to those at the top, but if decisions can only be made by those at the top, timely decision-making at lower levels will be obstructed. Also, there is a cognitive limitation to how much important information can be processed by those at the top. This point is well stated by Mintzberg: "Unfortunately, in complex conditions, this inevitably leads to a state known as 'information overload': the more information the brain tries to receive, the less the total amount that actually gets through."³⁴ Those at the top may not recognize their own shortcomings and wrongly blame subordinates for the lack of productivity and efficiency. They may also be too distant from the actual work processes to understand them thoroughly.

Organizational effectiveness is difficult to measure, and as such is often not given sufficient attention. Barriers to productivity and efficiency are evident to employees on a day-to-day basis, but reorganization mandated from above may not address these concerns and can fail to achieve the desired results, or may actually result in efficiency diminishing from satisfactory to poor. Here effective managerial leadership or lack thereof becomes very much evident.

Mentor and Facilitator Role (Human Relations Model)

As Faerman points out, crucial factors in the human relations model of organizational effectiveness are "the maintenance of cohesion and morale and smooth functioning of group processes (as a means) and the long-term growth and development of individuals in the organization (as ends)."³⁵ The emphasis is on participation and consensus in decision-making. Involvement of subordinates promotes commitment.

The maintenance of effective human relations is very important in any organization, although it may not always be given adequate attention. In "Visionary Leadership," Riggs asks: "Why is it that so many of the books written on leadership in general do not mention the followers? Can there be leadership without followership? Followership of some nature has to exist before there is leadership."³⁶ Chancellor Robert McTeer of the Texas A&M University System similarly writes: "Remember that, to be a leader, you must have followers. A good cowboy looks back occasionally to see if the herd is still there. Even if the herd is still there, watch out for those head butts."³⁷ Without effective human relations, little can be accomplished in managerial leadership roles.

Typical failures in the mentor and facilitator role are micromanagement, lack of delegation, misuse of authority, poor decision-making, and poor interpersonal communication styles. These mistakes can lead to a situation where the manager exhibits a disregard for basic principle that one style does not fit all, a lack of understanding of human behavior and self-knowledge, no feeling of empowerment among subordinates, and the inability to cope with overwhelming responsibilities that could be delegated. While subordinates' motivation and initiative may become stifled to the point where necessary tasks are not carried out, the causes of the poor workplace situation may be obvious to everyone except the person in the leadership position.

At the other end of the spectrum of managerial leadership style is the laissez-faire attitude characterized by leniency and a failure to assert necessary authority and legitimate powers. As a result, subordinates lack discipline and fail to complete assigned tasks and responsibilities. There needs to be an effective balance between the enforcement of control and discipline, and enabling subordinates to exercise authority and control over their job responsibilities. As expressed by Piccininni, people in managerial leadership positions should "balance three sets of opposing interests: treating subordinates fairly, but as individuals; holding subordinates accountable, yet tolerating their mistakes and deficiencies; and maintaining control yet providing autonomy."³⁸

Empowerment of subordinates is crucial. As pointed out by Khan, "successful empowerment will increase employee productivity, improve attitudes by assigning responsibility and authority to those who are responsible

for work output.”³⁹ Topping uses the word “enabling” in his discussion of empowerment:

Enabling your associates to work at their best is at the core of managerial leadership. Note that selection of the word *enabling* is purposeful—“making able; making it possible for”—as leadership today is so much more about creating environments where people can succeed than it is about making decisions or getting things done individually. You cannot possibly handle by yourself everything that must be done. Nor are most managers in situations where they are capable of making all decisions by themselves and simply dictating actions to their subordinates. That is just too slow and non-empowering for organizations to function effectively.⁴⁰

Enabling subordinates to perform to their fullest potential necessitates their continuous professional development.

Effective managerial leadership in the human relations model requires the manager to provide support by means of coaching, teaching, and mentoring. As explained by Topping:

As coach, you are zeroing in on results and developing your associates’ performance capabilities. As a teacher, you are concentrating on helping them to learn and apply new knowledge as skills they acquire. As a mentor, you are focusing on their long-term career and personal development.⁴¹

If a subordinate is afraid that asking for advice on how to handle a specific task or problem will be perceived as weakness, then that is obviously a barrier. It is also an indication of a poor interpersonal relationship and poor interpersonal communication.

The manager cannot sustain a good working relationship without respect for the following basic ethical values of managerial leadership:

- dignity and integrity of the individual;
- establishment of mutual trust and confidence;
- fairness and justice;
- openness; and
- absence of fear and autocratic decree.

Human relations problems are numerous and varied, and beyond the scope of this article. However, effective managerial leadership in these matters is crucial. The importance of human relations is summed up very well by Topping: “If you find a unit that is performing well, with motivated employees who work well together, the probability is high that a primary reason for their success is that the unit’s manager is an effective leader.”⁴²

Conclusion

All four managerial leadership roles in the Competing Values Framework are important, yet no one person is likely to fulfill them in equal measure. Faerman emphasizes this point:

Although the managerial leadership roles represent conceptually competing sets of behaviors . . . this does not mean that they cannot mutually exist in one individual. . . . In order for managerial leaders to be truly effective, they must take responsibility for ensuring that each of the leadership roles is performed to some degree within each work unit and within the organization more generally and probably should be present in some balance.⁴³

Failures in specific roles can be observed to varying degrees, the most obvious one to subordinates being in the human relations role.

In *Executive Leadership*, Jacques and Clement emphasize that the level of managerial responsibility needs to be based on the ability to deal with complexity, which increases at higher hierarchical levels:

Competence demands that the managerial leaders should be able to operate at a level of cognitive complexity that is consistent with the category of task complexity and level of work in the role and, by the same token, should value the role and have the necessary skilled knowledge and wisdom. Given this competence, managerial leaders must be in the next higher cognitive category than their subordinates, and the roles they occupy must also be one true organizational stratum and category of task complexity apart.⁴⁴

If a person in a managerial leadership position resorts to micromanaging, it is probably an indication of that person’s inability to deal with the complexities of the roles. A library director who spends time on tasks that could be delegated to subordinates fails to attend to tasks appropriate for the leadership role.

No one is perfect. Subordinates are quick to find faults with people in managerial leadership positions and vice versa. Furthermore, as Jatkevicius reminds us:

[Leadership problems] may sometimes be defined by unrealistic expectations or misplaced blame (often linked, the former leading to the latter); for example, when we want the leader to both steer and row, then complain when we feel left out of the process. The simple fact is that employees have expectations that they want their organization to fulfill, often regardless of whether these

expectations are in any way related to the mission of the organization. Indeed, in any organization employees are at different stages of personal and professional growth or stagnation, different levels of competence and recognitions, callowness and experience, enthusiasm and jadedness, willingness and lethargy. All of these attitudes feed into employee expectations for the organization.⁴⁵

When judging the performance of people in managerial leadership positions one needs to take into account the complexity of their duties and the barriers to the adequate performance of their duties. Nonetheless, subordinates' expectations make a difference.

Leadership does make a difference in organizational performance.⁴⁶ The institution should ask itself if there is an adequate performance assessment procedure in place. Improvement in performance requires assessment, and persons in managerial leadership positions should be given adequate feedback in this regard. The dilemma there is that:

The higher you climb the ladder in this organization, the less chance you have of getting feedback about your performance. The working rule of thumb is: "the farther up you go, the stranger things get," especially in the way you are reviewed and rewarded.⁴⁷

In *Managerial Leadership*, Topping discusses leadership practices, which he believes can be improved only to a certain extent. However, a "heightened understanding of how leadership behaviors affect others and impact performance can help anyone enhance his or her own effectiveness."⁴⁸ Topping emphasizes that, "so much of being a strong managerial leader is connected with the values of openness, integrity, trustworthiness, respect for others, and honesty that people lacking these qualities can never be effective leaders."⁴⁹

Finally, James Neal speaks from extensive practical experience on the challenges and complexities of librarian leadership:

Leadership is best described in the context of outcomes rather than inputs, in the sense that leadership is evidenced by the ability of an individual to inspire an organization and its people to achieve its objectives, and to have an impact on its community. . . . A leader consults with those who work within an organization and those it serves to define a direction and agenda. A leader cheerleads in the sense of being responsible for the culture and vitality of the organization. A leader has responsibility to represent the organization effectively in a whole range of external venues. . . . Also, a leader is an individual who can attract innovative people and provide the work environment for those individuals

to thrive and grow individually and collaboratively to get things done.⁵⁰

Thus, while managerial leadership on this order may require a set of skills and attitudes that may sometimes emphasize one role over another, to some degree all of these roles must be balanced in order to maximize organizational effectiveness.

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