

This chapter introduces you to leadership as a concept, common characteristics of leaders, leadership theories, and leadership styles. Leadership is not an exact science, and leadership traits and styles are simply examples identified by leadership scholars. Many great leaders possess some but not all the attributes you will learn about. The purpose of this chapter is to have you think about your own theories and preferences as you begin to develop a personal leadership style that will work for you.

## Leadership

**Leadership** is the process of inspiring, influencing, directing, and guiding others to participate in a common effort.<sup>1</sup> To encourage participation, leaders supplement the authority and power they possess with their personal attributes, vision, and social skills. Many leadership theories and expert opinions argue about what is (and is not) most effective. There is no perfect definition or theory. Developing leadership takes time, commitment, and the ability to learn from your mistakes.

As you reflect on your own leadership qualities, remember that each leader is unique. You may have some, but not all, of the leadership qualities mentioned. The fact that you do not have all the qualities does not mean you do not have the potential to be a great leader. Think about people you know in leadership positions: parents, past and present bosses, friends, coaches, deans, or the president of your college, for example. Do they all have the same qualities? Are they effective leaders just because they are in leadership positions? Often, people who are not in traditional leadership positions are effective leaders.

Developing your own leadership style and honing your leadership skills will take time and focused effort. Find ways to practice leadership skills both on and off the job. For example, serving in campus, community, or religious organizations will give you opportunities to experiment with different leadership styles. Leading effectively is learned by doing.

### Leadership Versus Management

Before we proceed, it is important to think about the difference between leadership and management. Warren Bennis, a leadership author, speaker, and business professor at the University of Southern California, described the difference as follows:

There is a profound difference between management and leadership. "To manage" means "to bring about, to accomplish, to have charge of or responsibility for, to conduct." "Leading" is "influencing, guiding in direction, and action."<sup>2</sup>

Managers and supervisors are not necessarily the organization's formal leaders. However, they use an array of qualities and skills, including

**Leadership**  
the process of inspiring,  
influencing, directing, and  
guiding others to participate in a  
common effort

**Jargon**  
Informal terminology unique to a business or industry, often not understood by new employees, customers, and other people outside the organization

FIGURE 4.1  
Characteristics of  
Inspiring Leaders

Characteristics of Inspiring or Charismatic Leaders	
<p><b>From the Leader's Perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong communication—storytelling and listening</li> <li>• Passion for learning and intense curiosity</li> <li>• Focus on developing people</li> <li>• Having fun and very energized</li> <li>• Strong self-belief, coupled with humility and humility</li> <li>• Committed to giving something back and to making a significant difference</li> <li>• Clarity of vision and ability to share it with their people</li> <li>• Dogged determination and often "relentless"</li> <li>• Very strong focus on priorities</li> <li>• Not afraid to show some vulnerability</li> <li>• Regular use of reflective periods</li> <li>• Almost universal dislike of jargon</li> <li>• Passion for and pride in what they do</li> </ul>	<p><b>From the Follower's Perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuine shared vision</li> <li>• Real confidence and trust in their teams</li> <li>• Respect for employees and customers</li> <li>• Commitment to developing people</li> <li>• Clear standards of ethics and integrity</li> <li>• Willingness to take risks</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from U.K. Department of Trade and Industry, "Inspired Leadership," 5.

Managers will frequently assess employee skills and prepare an action or professional development plan for the annual performance evaluation.

industry that is often not understood by new employees, customers, and other people outside the organization. Notice that the two lists include personal attributes. *Respectful, ethical, passionate, determined, energetic, confident, and humble* are among the characteristics of inspirational leaders. Another item that appears on both lists is the idea of developing people, which is essential for managers. One of the primary roles of managers is to get work accomplished through other people. To set people up for individual success in their jobs, a manager should be committed to helping each person develop and grow.

### What Does "Developing People" Mean?

The first step involves learning about your employees and their skills, knowledge, education, goals, and dreams. The next step is to meet with your employees individually to create a development plan that is consistent with their personal goals and that will help the organization.<sup>4</sup>

Managers will frequently assess employee skills and prepare an action plan or professional development plan as part of the employee's annual performance evaluation. The plan may include action items such as the employee's enrolling in training classes, taking some college courses, job shadowing, sitting in on meetings, working on special projects, cross-training, and/or accepting more responsibility.

As a manager, you must be patient as you work to develop your people into more effective employees and potentially future managers and leaders. Learning new skills and taking on new assignments are processes that take time and commitment. Plan to develop your people to the point where they can have confidence and trust in their ability to do their jobs without constant supervision.



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One of the keys to success in any organization is trust. When managers are trying to develop their staff, it is important that they provide the necessary training and resources. As trust grows among team members, managers no longer need to work side by side with their employees. However, they should routinely meet to solicit feedback and provide guidance and coaching when necessary.

## Basic Leadership Theories and Models

Scholars have spent decades studying various leadership theories and examining the traits, behaviors, and approaches used to lead people effectively. We will explore some basic leadership theories.

### Trait Theory

Perhaps no leadership theory has been more controversial than trait theory, which originated in the early twentieth century. **Trait theory** contends that effective leaders have similar personality or behavioral characteristics that

**trait theory**  
a leadership theory that contends effective leaders have similar personality or behavioral characteristics that ineffective leaders lack

Traits such as height, age, and education do not distinguish effective from ineffective leaders.

Ineffective leaders lack. Initial research focused on physiological factors (height, weight, etc.), particularly in military leaders, and on demographics (age, education, affluence, etc.). Subsequent studies showed these traits did not distinguish effective from ineffective leaders.

In later research, Shelley Kirkpatrick and Edwin Locke of the University of Maryland provided evidence that effective leaders differ from other people in certain respects. They identified six key leadership traits:

- Drive—a broad term that includes achievement, motivation, ambition, energy, tenacity, and initiative
- Leadership motivation—the desire to lead but not to seek power for its own sake
- Honesty and integrity—essential qualities for building credibility and trust
- Self-confidence—believing in yourself and controlling your emotions
- Cognitive ability—good judgment and strong analytical abilities
- Knowledge of the business—a high level of knowledge that also encompasses the industry and technical matters<sup>5</sup>

Certain leadership traits help leaders acquire skills, form a vision and plan, and make the vision a reality.

Kirkpatrick and Locke believe these traits help leaders acquire the necessary skills for leadership, formulate an organizational vision and an effective plan for pursuing it, and take the necessary steps to make the vision a reality.<sup>6</sup>

### Behavioral Styles Theories

This perspective of leadership is probably the most widely recognized. Rather than focusing on individual traits, behavioral leadership theorists examine patterns of leadership behavior, called **behavioral leadership styles**. The three classic styles of leadership behavior are authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire (or hands-off). Each has strengths and limitations.

#### Authoritarian

**Authoritarian leaders** retain all authority and responsibility. They assign people to clearly defined tasks, and there is primarily a downward flow of communication. This leadership style tends to stress prompt, orderly, and predictable performance. However, it can also stifle individual initiative and breed resentment.

#### Democratic

**Democratic leaders** delegate a great deal of authority while retaining ultimate responsibility. Work is divided and assigned on the basis of participatory decision making. An active, two-way flow of upward and downward communication is common. Democratic leaders typically enhance personal commitment through participation. However, this approach can be very time-consuming.

**behavioral leadership styles**  
patterns of leadership behavior

**authoritarian leader**  
one who retains all authority and responsibility

**democratic leader**  
one who delegates authority while retaining ultimate responsibility

**Laissez-faire** leaders grant responsibility and authority to a group of individuals. Group members are told to work problems and challenges out themselves and to do the best they can. Communication is primarily horizontal among peers. This approach permits self-starters to do what they think is appropriate without interference or guidance from their leader. However, in the absence of direction and guidance from their leader, groups may become unfocused and drift aimlessly.

### Comparing the Three Styles

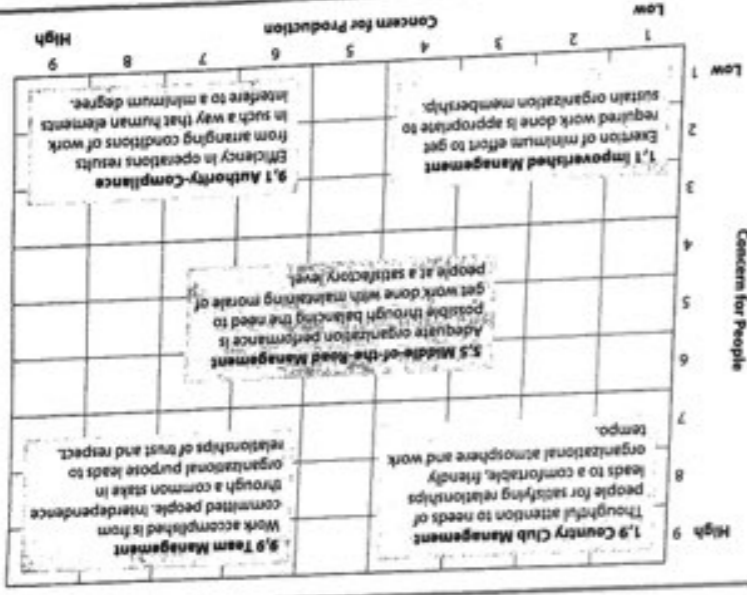
For a number of years, theorists and managers hailed democratic leadership as the key to productive and happy employees. Eventually, however, their enthusiasm was dampened when critics noted that the original study relied on children as subjects and virtually ignored productivity. Although there is a general agreement that these basic styles exist, debate has been vigorous over their relative value and appropriateness. Practical experience has shown, for example, that the democratic style does not always stimulate better performance. Some employees prefer to be told what to do rather than to participate in decision making. This can be the result of cultural differences. For instance, in some cultures, publicly disagreeing with a leader is considered disrespectful, even if you think the leader is wrong. Figure 4.2 provides an overview of each of these leadership styles along with their strengths, their weaknesses, and examples of situations where each approach may be used in the workplace.

**Laissez-faire leader**  
one who grants responsibility and authority to a group of individuals, who are told to work problems out themselves

FIGURE 4.2 Behavioral leadership styles

Characteristics	Authoritarian	Democratic	Laissez-faire
Authority	Leader retains all authority and responsibility.	Leader delegates a great deal of authority while retaining ultimate responsibility.	Leader grants responsibility and authority to group.
Work Assignments	Leader assigns people to clearly defined tasks.	Work is divided and assigned on the basis of participatory decision making.	Group members are told to work things out themselves and do the best they can.
Communication	Primarily a downward flow of communication	Active, two-way flow of upward and downward communication between peers	Primarily horizontal communication
Primary Strengths	Stresses prompt, orderly, and predictable performance	Enhances personal commitment through participation	Permits self-starters to do things as they see fit without leader interference
Primary Weaknesses	Tends to stifle individual initiative	Democratic process is time-consuming.	Group may drift aimlessly without leader direction.
Examples	Urgent/emergency situation such as a team of firefighters responding to a call. The leader takes control and assigns others specific tasks and responsibilities.	Planned change such as extending a restaurant's hours to provide lunch as well as dinner service. Employees are involved in menu planning and promotional ideas.	Routine staffing such as a team of home-care nurses responsible for round-the-clock, on-call scheduling. The nurses negotiate among themselves to accommodate personal preferences and vacation days.

FIGURE 4.3 Blake/Mouton Leadership Grid



### Blake/Mouton Leadership Grid

Many attempts have been made to categorize different patterns of behavior and to promote them as styles. One of the most popular and best-known schemes for developing behavioral styles in the workplace is the Blake/Mouton Managerial Grid (1964), which later became the Blake/Mouton Leadership Grid (1991). This grid has been used extensively in management development programs. It blends concern for people and concern for production or the task to create five alternative styles as shown in Figure 4.3.

1. Which behavioral leadership style would be best for this situation? Explain your answer.
2. After the crisis is resolved, the partners ask that you create an emergency plan to address a power outage. Which behavioral leadership style will you use when preparing the plan? Explain why.



Advocates of the Blake/Mouton Leadership Grid believe the 9,9 Team Management style is the preferred style. It emphasizes appropriately balanced concern both for people and for the work to be done. However, they recognize that one style may not always work or be effective in every work environment. For example, in a crisis situation, a 9,1 Authority-Compliance style may produce the best results. The limitations of the Blake/Mouton Leadership Grid are that it is based on only two dimensions—concern for production and concern for people—and that generally one style of leadership is recommended as the best to use. These limitations led to the development of situational leadership models.

## Knowledge to ACTION

1. As a general style (knowing you may have to alter your style depending on the situation), which of the five styles in the Blake/Mouton Leadership Grid would you prefer to use? Why?
2. Which style would you be least comfortable with as a general style? Why?

### Situational Theories and Models

Convinced that no one best style of leadership exists, some management experts have identified situational or contingency thinking as a more effective approach. **Situational leadership** occurs when the leader's style matches the situation. Three different approaches to situational leadership, which were briefly introduced in Chapter 2, are discussed here: (1) Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey's model, (2) Fred E. Fiedler's contingency theory, and (3) the path-goal theory.

#### Blanchard and Hersey Model

Ken Blanchard and Paul Hersey have been called the pioneers of situational leadership.<sup>7</sup> The framework for **Blanchard and Hersey's situational leadership model** is based on four different leadership styles or characteristics: (1) directing, (2) coaching, (3) supporting, and (4) delegating.<sup>8</sup> Blanchard and Hersey emphasize that "no single ... leadership style is universally successful."<sup>9</sup> They provide this overview of situational leadership:

Successful leaders can adapt their behavior to meet followers' needs and the particular situation. Effectiveness depends on the leader, the followers, and situational elements. Leaders must be able to diagnose their own behavior in light of their environments.<sup>10</sup>

To be successful using the Blanchard and Hersey model, managers need to shift styles to handle the situation and accommodate the needs of their employees. For example, imagine you are the manager of a bank

branch. When you hire a new employee and he or she is scheduled to open the bank for the first time, your leadership style needs to be directive. As you build trust in the employee and the employee's confidence and level of readiness increase, you can shift to coaching, supporting, or delegating leadership styles. In other words, your leadership style accommodates the individual's personal growth and development.

#### Fiedler's Contingency Theory

**Fiedler's contingency theory** is based on the notion that a leader's performance depends on the likelihood that he or she can successfully accomplish the job and the leader's basic motivation. Although it is closely aligned with Blanchard and Hersey's situational leadership model, there are unique aspects and distinct differences that are worth exploring. Among the leadership theories discussed so far, Fiedler's is the most thoroughly tested. It is the product of more than 30 years of research by Fred E. Fiedler and his associates. Fiedler's contingency theory gets its name from the following assumptions:

The performance of a leader depends on two interrelated factors: (1) the degree to which the situation gives the leader control and influence—that is, the likelihood that (the leader) can successfully accomplish the job; and (2) the leader's basic motivation—that is, whether (the leader's) self-esteem depends primarily on accomplishing the task or on having close supportive relations with others.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the second factor, the leader's basic motivation, Fiedler believes leaders are either task-motivated or relationship-motivated. These two motivational profiles are roughly equivalent to managers' being primarily concerned about production (task-motivated) or about people (relationship-motivated).

As illustrated in Figure 4.4, task-motivated leaders seem to be effective in extreme situations when they have either very little control or a great deal of control over situational variables. In moderately favorable situations, however, relationship-motivated leaders tend to be more effective. Consequently, Fiedler and one of his colleagues summed up their findings by noting that "everything points to the conclusion that there is no such thing as an ideal leader."<sup>12</sup> Instead, there are leaders, and there are situations. The challenge, according to Fiedler, is to analyze a leader's basic motivation and then match that leader with a suitable situation to form a productive combination. He believes it is more efficient to move leaders to a suitable situation than to tamper with their personalities by trying to get task-motivated leaders to become relationship-motivated, or vice versa.

#### Path-Goal Theory

Another situational leadership theory is the **path-goal theory**. This theory gets its name from the assumption that effective leaders can enhance

#### situational leadership

the concept that successful leadership occurs when the leader's style matches the situation

#### Blanchard and Hersey's situational leadership model

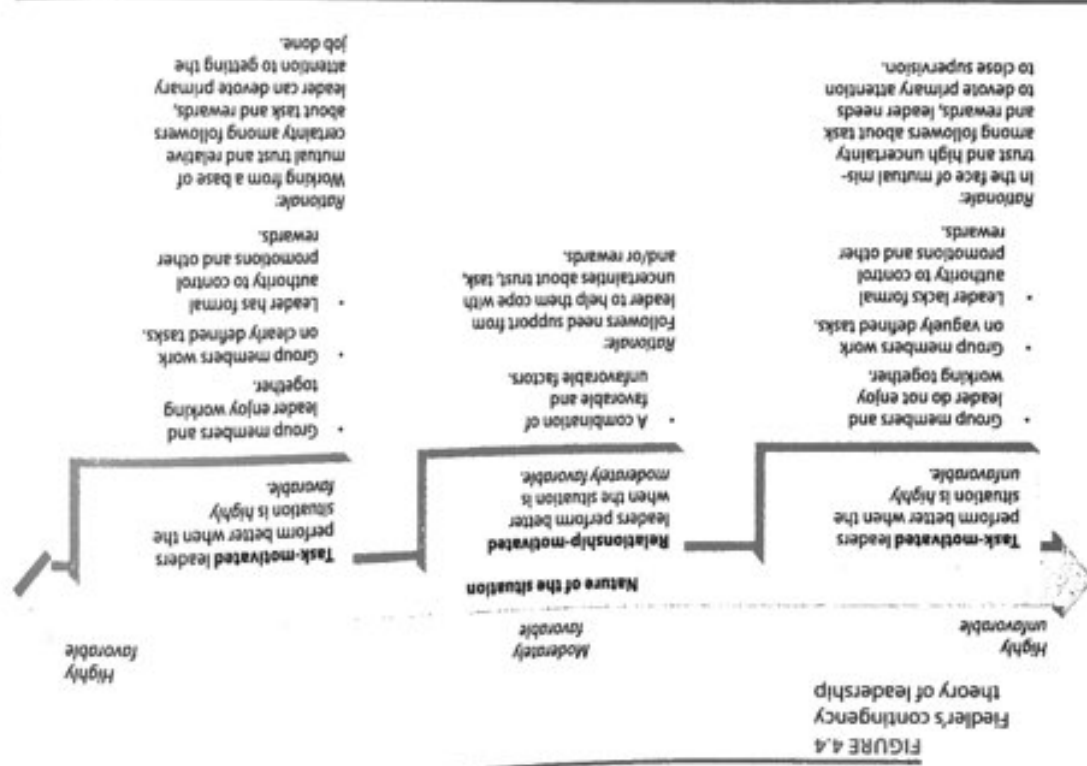
a model based on four different leadership styles or characteristics: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating

#### Fiedler's contingency theory

a model based on the notion that a leader's performance depends on the likelihood that he or she can successfully accomplish the job and the leader's basic motivation

#### path-goal theory

a model that suggests leaders motivate their followers by providing clear goals and meaningful incentives for reaching them



Motivation is essential for successful supervision.

employee motivation by (1) clarifying the individual's perception of work goals, (2) linking meaningful rewards with goal attainment, and (3) explaining how goals and desired rewards can be achieved. In short, leaders need to motivate their followers by providing clear goals and meaningful incentives for reaching them. Motivation is essential for successful supervision in the path-goal model.

According to path-goal theorists, leaders can enhance motivation by increasing the number of opportunities for their employees to earn personal rewards for goal attainment. This level of achievement will increase personal satisfaction on the job as well. To set up their employees for success, leaders should provide a clear path to goal attainment, make necessary resources available, and eliminate potential barriers.<sup>12</sup> Path-goal proponents believe managers need to rely on four different leadership styles, choosing the one that is best suited to the situation. These four leadership styles are (1) directive, (2) supportive, (3) participative, and (4) achievement-oriented.

- Under the **directive leadership style**, managers tell employees exactly what is expected of them. They provide specific guidance for performing tasks, set schedules and performance standards, and ensure employees follow rules and regulations.<sup>14</sup> This leadership style is often used when employees are new, lack experience, and need direction. It is also common in situations that require quick decisions and have a sense of urgency, such as a team of firefighters responding to an emergency call.
- Under the **supportive leadership style**, managers treat employees as equals in a friendly manner while striving to improve their well-being. This style may be appropriate, for example, in a professional office setting such as an accounting firm where knowledgeable employees perform the majority of the work. They typically do not need much direction or guidance. However, they want to be treated with respect and to know they are valued.
- Under the **participative leadership style**, managers consult with employees to seek their suggestions and then seriously consider those suggestions when making decisions. This style of leadership is often used in organizations where the employees understand the organization and can contribute creative ideas that will help the company grow and succeed.
- Under the **achievement-oriented leadership style**, managers set challenging goals, emphasize excellence, and seek continuous improvement while maintaining a high degree of confidence that employees will meet difficult challenges in a responsible manner.<sup>15</sup> Supervisors with talented and goal-oriented people are likely to use this leadership style at some time.

#### Comparing Fiedler's Contingency Theory With Path-Goal Theory

**directive leadership style**  
a leadership style in which managers tell people what is expected of them and provide specific guidance, schedules, rules, regulations, and standards

**supportive leadership style**  
a leadership style in which managers treat employees as equals in a friendly manner while striving to improve their well-being

**participative leadership style**  
a leadership style in which managers consult with employees to seek their suggestions and then seriously consider those suggestions when making decisions

**achievement-oriented leadership style**  
a leadership style in which managers set challenging goals, emphasize excellence, and seek continuous improvement

## Knowledge to ACTION

Select a situation from your job or an extracurricular group you are involved with. Choose a situation that will ultimately lead to change, such as a new sales campaign, a fundraiser, or a recruitment drive.

1. Describe the situation.
2. Which situational leadership style do you think would be most effective in the scenario you described above? Explain why.
3. What variables did you consider when selecting a leadership style?

## Transformational and Servant Leadership

Researchers have continued to study leadership from a variety of different perspectives. Transformational leadership and servant leadership are somewhat similar to charismatic leadership (see Figure 4.1 on page 69), but they also have significant differences. A concern about charismatic leadership is that it has been used to inspire, manipulate, or brainwash and to lead followers to death and destruction as well as to great things. If you think about history, the following examples might come to mind: Alexander the Great, Adolf Hitler, and Jim Jones. All were charismatic leaders who used and exploited their followers to their peril. Transformational leadership is used to motivate employees to reach a shared organizational vision and goals.

### Transformational Leadership

Researchers including James MacGregor Burns and Bernard M. Bass defined transformational leadership theory. Burns's philosophy was that leadership was either transactional or transformational. Transactional leadership is based on transactions between managers and employees with rewards given when performance is good and punishment when it is not. **Transformational leadership** is based on relationships between managers and employees that result in a higher level of motivation and achieving shared goals. Transformational leaders inspire followers to share a vision, motivate and empower them to achieve it, and provide the coaching and support needed to develop their personal potential.<sup>16</sup> Bass extended Burns's work and identified four behavior characteristics of transformational leadership. Transformational leaders:

1. Influence their employees in a positive way so that employees trust them and consider them role models. When employees trust and emulate their leaders, they share the vision and believe it can be achieved.
2. Motivate and inspire their employees to understand the importance of their jobs and to work together to achieve the vision and goals of the organization, not just their own goals.

### transformational leadership

leadership that inspires followers to share a vision, motivates and empowers them to achieve the vision, and provides coaching and support to develop their potential

3. Encourage their employees to use their intellectual abilities to solve problems in creative ways and to explore new ways to do things.
4. Coach and develop individual employees to help them reach their potential for personal growth as well as for the benefit of the organization.<sup>17</sup>

### Servant Leadership

**Servant leadership** differs from transformational leadership in that transformational leadership focuses on leaders who inspire employees to achieve a shared vision. The leader's ability to inspire and empower employees is a key part of the theory. Servant leaders focus on employees and meeting their needs first rather than the organization's needs. Ethics is a key component of servant leadership.

Robert F. Greenleaf, founder of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, is known for defining the concept of servant leadership in 1970. This approach to leadership reflects a philosophy that leaders should think of their employees first and be concerned about serving their needs rather than their own needs or their organization's needs.<sup>18</sup> In a practical sense, this approach views leaders and employees as being on the same level of the organizational pyramid. The goal is to develop the employees so that they all become servant leaders and everybody in the work group serves and is responsible for each other. Many of the behavioral characteristics of the servant leader are similar to those of charismatic leaders listed in Figure 4.1 and to those of transformational leaders. A strong commitment to honesty, integrity, ethics, and building trust is important to servant leadership.

Many researchers are critical of servant leadership because of its strong tie to religion or spirituality and label it as a philosophy rather than a theory subjected to extensive empirical testing. They also point out that it is not practical as a leadership theory because it does not place primary emphasis on achieving organizational objectives. Most of the support for servant leadership comes in the form of anecdotal evidence from companies who have implemented some of the tenets of servant leadership. Concepts of servant leadership having been implemented in a number of companies both large and small, particularly those classified as service organizations.

### They Said It Best

1. *The foundation of effective leadership is thinking through the organization's mission, defining it and establishing it, clearly and visibly.*
2. *The second requirement is that the leader sees leadership as responsibility rather than as rank and privilege.*
3. *The final requirement ... is to earn trust. Otherwise there won't be any followers— and the only definition of a leader is someone who has followers.*

—Peter F. Drucker (known as the father of modern management)

Source: Peter F. Drucker, "Drucker on Management: Leadership. More Doing Than Duh," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 6, 1988, 1.

**servant leadership**  
ethical leadership that focuses on employees and meeting their needs first rather than the organization's needs

In the past two decades, a number of researchers have tested different assumptions of servant leadership and have also compared transformational and servant leadership. Some conclude that transformational leadership is better suited to a competitive organization, whereas servant leadership is better suited to a public, religious, educational, or nonprofit organization.<sup>19</sup>

## LARGE-GROUP COMMUNICATION

Most leaders believe face-to-face communication and interaction is the most effective way to communicate important information to the entire organization. In small businesses, leaders often have that luxury. In large enterprises that are geographically dispersed, it may not be possible. Today's technology provides a workable alternative.

Assume you are a manager in a company that has ten offices with 250 employees in the United States, Canada, and South America. Your team has developed a new product, and the CEO has asked you to participate in an announcement about the product to the entire company. Your team includes a representative from each office. It is not feasible to bring in all the employees for a live presentation.

The first step in using technology effectively is to determine the barriers to communication enabled by technology:

- *One-way versus two-way communication.* Will information be provided without feedback, or will employees be able to comment and ask questions?
- *Time and language differences.* Can all employees be reached at the same time during the workday, and can they all speak English?
- *Individual or group reception.* Will employees listen to the announcement streamed on their own computers or in groups in the various office locations?

In this scenario, overcoming the barriers is much easier with one-way communication than with two-way communication. One effective method is video. Another is a presentation in the main office with a live audience, streamed to all computers via a webinar or webcast with slides in the appropriate language. A follow-up discussion period with local leaders in the remote offices would allow for feedback.

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## Knowledge to ACTION

1. Assume you are the manager in the scenario described above, and the CEO made a one-way presentation that all employees watched together in a large training room. How would you follow up the CEO's presentation?
2. What types of questions and comments would you expect from your employees? Think about how you might respond.
3. What would you expect to accomplish in your follow-up session?

### What Is the Ideal Leadership Style?

You have learned about several leadership behaviors, theories, models, and styles. With the wide variety of options, it can be somewhat overwhelming to try to figure out which style is best. Put your mind at ease because there is no such thing as the ideal leadership style. In fact, the best answer to this question is, "It depends." Choosing the appropriate leadership style depends on many variables, including the following:

- Your personal leadership style and experience
- The level of readiness of your followers
- The organizational culture
- The situation



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Supervisors should adapt their leadership style to the situation. What is the ideal leadership style for a supervisor of firefighters during and after the fire?