

### EXHIBIT 12.3

#### Behaviors of Effective Followers

1. **Volunteering** to handle tasks or help accomplish goals.
2. **Accepting** assignments in a willing manner.
3. **Exhibiting** loyalty to the group.
4. **Voicing** differences of opinion, but supporting the group's decisions.
5. **Offering** suggestions.
6. **Maintaining** a positive attitude, even in confusing or trying times.
7. **Working** effectively as a team member.

SOURCE: Adapted from Holden Leadership Center, University of Oregon, [http://leadership.uoregon.edu/resources/exercises\\_tips/skills/followership](http://leadership.uoregon.edu/resources/exercises_tips/skills/followership).

Strategic leadership involves anticipating and envisioning a viable future for the organization and working with others to initiate changes that create that future.<sup>27</sup> For example, Indian business leaders prioritize their top responsibilities<sup>28</sup> as providing input for business strategy (which you studied thoroughly in Part 1 of this book); being keepers of the organizational culture (introduced in Chapter 2); and guiding, teaching, and serving as role models for employees (employees being the focus of this part of the book).

### Leading and Following

Organizations succeed or fail not only because of how well they are led, but because of how well followers follow. Just as managers are not necessarily good leaders, people are not always good followers. One leadership scholar stated, "Executives are given subordinates; they have to earn followers."<sup>29</sup> But it's also true that good followers help produce good leadership.

As a manager, you will be asked to play the roles of both leader and follower. As you lead the people who report to you, you will report to your boss. You will be a member of some teams and task forces, and you may head others. Although the official leadership roles get the glamour and therefore are the roles that many people covet, followers must perform their responsibilities conscientiously and well.

Good followership doesn't mean merely obeying orders, although some bosses may view it that way. The most effective followers are capable of independent thinking and at the same time are actively committed to organizational goals.<sup>30</sup> Exhibit 12.3 lists additional behaviors of effective followers. Robert Townsend, who led a legendary turnaround at Avis, said that the most important characteristic of a follower may be the willingness to tell the truth.<sup>31</sup>

The best followers master skills that are useful to their organizations, and they hold performance standards that are higher than required. Effective followers may not get the glory, but they know their contributions to the organization are valuable. And as they make those contributions, they study leaders in preparation for their own leadership roles.<sup>32</sup>

Effective followers also distinguish themselves from ineffective ones by their enthusiasm and commitment to the organization and to a person or purpose—an idea, a product—other than themselves or their own interests.

## Power and Leadership

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Central to effective leadership is **power**—the ability to influence other people.<sup>33</sup> In organizations, this influence often means the ability to get things done or accomplish one's goals despite resistance from others.

### power

The ability to influence others.

### Sources of Power

One of the earliest and still most useful approaches to understanding power identifies five important potential sources of power.<sup>34</sup> Exhibit 12.4 shows those power sources.

**EXHIBIT 12.4**  
Sources of Leader Power



SOURCE: Adapted from French, J. R. P. and Raven, B., "The Bases of Social Power," *Studies in Social Power*, ed. D. Cartwright. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, 1959.

**Legitimate Power** The leader with *legitimate power* has the right, or the authority, to tell others what to do; employees are obligated to comply with legitimate orders. For example, a supervisor tells an employee to remove a safety hazard, and the employee removes the hazard because he has to obey the authority of his boss. In contrast, when a staff person lacks the authority to give an order to a line manager, the staff person has no legitimate power over the manager. As you might guess, managers have more legitimate power over their direct reports than they do over their peers, bosses, and others inside or outside their organizations.<sup>35</sup>

**Reward Power** The leader who has *reward power* influences others because she controls valued rewards; people comply with the leader's wishes in order to receive those rewards. For example, a manager works hard to achieve her performance goals to get a positive performance review and a big pay raise from her boss. On the other hand, if a company directive dictates that everyone receive the same salary increase, a leader's reward power decreases because he or she is unable to give higher raises.

**Coercive Power** The leader with *coercive power* has control over punishments; people comply to avoid those punishments. For instance, a manager implements an absenteeism policy that administers disciplinary actions to offending employees. A manager has less coercive power if, say, a union contract limits her ability to punish. In general, lower-level managers have less legitimate, coercive, and reward power than do middle and higher-level managers.<sup>36</sup>

**Referent Power** The leader with *referent power* has personal characteristics that appeal to others; people comply because of admiration, personal liking, a desire for approval, or a desire to be like the leader. For example, young, ambitious managers emulate the work habits and personal style of a successful, charismatic executive. An executive who is incompetent, disliked, and less respected has little referent power.

**Expert Power** The leader who has *expert power* has certain expertise or knowledge; people comply because they believe in, can learn from, or can otherwise gain from that expertise. For example, a seasoned sales manager gives her salespeople some tips on how

to close a deal. The salespeople then alter their sales techniques because they respect the manager's expertise. However, this manager may lack expert power in other areas, such as finance; thus her salespeople may ignore her advice concerning financial matters.

People who are in a position that gives them the right to tell others what to do, who can reward and punish, who are well liked and admired, and who have expertise on which other people can draw will be powerful members of the organization.

All of these sources of power are potentially important. Although it is easy to assume that the most powerful bosses are those who have high legitimate power and control major rewards and punishments, it is important not to underestimate the more personal sources such as expert and referent powers. Additional personal sources of power that do not necessarily stem from one's position or level within an organization include access to information and the strength of one's informal network.<sup>37</sup>

## Traditional Approaches to Understanding Leadership

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Three traditional approaches to studying leadership are the trait approach, the behavioral approach, and the situational approach.

### trait approach

A leadership perspective that attempts to determine the personal characteristics that great leaders share.

### Leader Traits

The **trait approach** is the oldest leadership perspective; it focuses on individual leaders and attempts to determine the personal characteristics (traits) that great leaders share. What set Margaret Thatcher, Nelson Mandela, Julius Caesar, and George Washington apart from the crowd? The trait approach assumes the existence of a leadership personality and assumes that leaders are born, not made.

From 1904 to 1948, researchers conducted more than 100 leadership trait studies.<sup>38</sup> At the end of that period, management scholars concluded that no particular set of traits is necessary for a person to become a successful leader. Enthusiasm for the trait approach diminished, but some research on traits continued. By the mid-1970s, a more balanced view emerged: Although no traits ensure leadership success, certain characteristics are potentially useful. The current perspective is that some personal characteristics—many of which a person need not be born with but can strive to acquire—contribute to leader effectiveness (see Exhibit 12.5).<sup>39</sup>

1. *Drive*. Drive refers to a set of characteristics that reflect a high level of effort. Drive includes high need for achievement, constant striving for improvement, ambition,

**EXHIBIT 12.5**  
Personal Attributes That Aid Leader Effectiveness

