

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ON MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

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*A true shepherd leads the way. He does not merely point the way*

*Leonard Ravenhill*

## **Abstract:**

In today's international environment big businesses are having fierce completion and changing markets, it is paramount to continuously monitor the trends in management and leadership development. As it is arguing that much of the current growth is driven by financial, political and market pressures, to the relative neglect of philosophical and pedagogical perspectives on the nature and purpose of management, leadership and education within contemporary society. Whilst there is a general shift from formalised programmes towards flexible, experiential and customised provision, it seems that insufficient attention remains directed towards individual and organisational needs and requirements. Thus, for example, the majority of provision remains focused on the development of 'leaders' rather than the contextually embedded and collective processes of 'leadership'. Management and leadership are presented as distinct rather than integrated and complementary activities/processes and limited consideration is given to the impact of contextual factors on individual and organisational performance. The article discusses issues for individuals and organisations to consider when investing in leadership and/or management development.

**Keywords:** Management, leadership, organization, groups,

## **Introduction**

Changing conceptions of the nature of management and leadership, along with challenges to traditional approaches to their development, are driving a number of trends in management and leadership education.

Williams identifies a particular increase in demand for postgraduate and short course or executive education within university provision.

Hirsh and Carter identify an increasing modularisation and flexibility within all types of formal training programmes, an increasing demand and provision of informal and personal development (including mentoring, coaching, 360 degree feedback, project working, learning

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sets and team facilitation) and a shift from managed career structures to more open internal job markets. Central to many of these trends is a shift towards more flexible, experiential and informal approaches, tailored to the requirements of individuals and organisations. Such a shift requires the reversal of many traditional educational priorities: from theory to practice, parts to systems, states and roles to processes, knowledge to learning, individual knowledge to partnerships, and detached analysis to reflexive understanding. A representation of how this impacts upon programme structure and content is displayed in below:

Key trends	From	To
The Programme	• Prescribed course • Standard • Theoretical	• Study programme & real issues • Customised • Theory in context
The Time-frame	• One-off event	• A journey with ongoing support
The Mode	• Lecturing/ listening • Conceptual	• Participatory, interactive & applied • Experiential & conceptual
The Focus	• Individuals	• Individuals within a group, for a purpose
The Consultant	• Supplier	• Partner, co-designer, facilitator, & coach

Underlying these changes is a number of transforming concepts about the purpose of management and leadership development. There are, of course, the practical concerns of creating more effective managers and leaders, enhancing the competitiveness of organisations and providing programmes that people will pay for, but associated with these are changing philosophical perspectives on the role of management and leadership within organisations and how best to develop them.

Author Mole makes a distinction between the notions of management training, education and development the focus of training, he argues, is the employee's present job; the focus of education is the employee's future job; and the focus of development is the organisation. Whilst some of the more traditional modes of provision, especially formal management programmes aimed at disseminating skills and knowledge, tend to adopt a training approach it is clear that the current trend is more towards education and development: "development programmes prepare individuals to move in the new directions that organisational change may require".

A similar distinction is made by Bush and Glover in their review of leadership development, where three contrasting models of leadership development are identified. These include the

‘scientific’ (managerial/technicist) that depends on training to meet clearly defined targets; the ‘humanist’ (empowerment/persuasive) which is more people-focussed and emphasises strategically planned transformational interaction; and the ‘pragmatic’ (rational/reactive), which is project-focussed with an emphasis on the immediate needs of individuals and groups. It is possible to identify relative merits and weaknesses of each of these approaches and an associated series of development activities, yet each also represents a significant philosophical perspective on the nature of management and leadership in organisations.

Holman cites four recurring themes in debates about the purpose, nature and value of Higher Education (as identified by Barnett); and adds **five** relevant to the understanding of management education in particular:

- 1 Epistemological: reflecting assumptions on the nature of knowledge pursued;
- 2 Pedagogical: referring to the nature of the learning process, the intended outcomes and the teaching methods
3. Organisational: regarding the management and organisation of education
4. Social: reflecting the perceived role of education in society; and
- 5 Management: referring to conceptions on the nature of management practice.

Given the diversity of views on each of these themes it is unsurprising that a range of qualitatively different approaches to management and leadership development have evolved. On the basis of his review Holman identifies four contemporary models of management education depicted in table 2, but concludes that academic liberalism and experiential vocationalism are somewhat wanting as approaches to the development of practicing managers (the former due to its over-reliance on theory and the latter for its over-reliance on action). He proposes, instead, that experiential liberalism and experiential/critical approaches are most likely to create managers capable of meeting the future needs of organisations and society. Their experiential pedagogies go a long way to promoting learning and development because of the way in which they build upon ‘natural’ learning at work and the ability to address the complexity and non-mechanistic nature of actual management practice.

<i>Experiential liberalism</i>	<i>Shares many of the same assumptions as academic liberalism but argues for a more practical approach, grounded in managerial experience rather than theory. The principle aim of this approach is to create the ‘reflective practitioner’ equipped with appropriate practical skills and knowledge and the ability to adapt to and learn from the situation. Primary teaching methods would include group work, action learning and self development.</i>
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In the context of this debate on the nature and purpose of management and leadership education it is perhaps unsurprising that we are seeing a trend from traditional formal programmes towards more flexible, experiential initiatives, but there are also a number of other trends, such as those identified by Weindling.<sup>xvii</sup> In particular, it is noted that remarkably few programmes are underpinned with explicit theories of management and leadership practice and/or the educational processes associated with their development; and, despite widespread recognition of the value of systematic needs analysis, this remains largely absent in practice. Leadership and management development: similarities and differences In the discussion so far the terms ‘management’ and ‘leadership’ development have been used largely interchangeably as there is a significant degree of overlap. But what exactly is leadership (as opposed to management) development and how can individuals and organisations get the most out of it?

Day proposes that leadership development is distinct from management development in the extent to which it involves preparing people for roles and situations beyond their current experience. He argues, equips managers with the knowledge, skills and abilities to enhance performance on known tasks through the application of proven solutions, whilst leadership development is defined as “orientated towards building capacity in anticipation of unforeseen challenges”. He continues by making a distinction between leader and leadership development, whereby leader development is about developing individuals in leadership roles, whilst leadership development takes a more relational view of leadership as a process involving everyone within the organisation. To this extent, Day views leadership development as being fundamentally concerned with the development of collective organisational capacity.

Mabey and Ramirez ranked HR and Line Manager Preferences for management development methods in European companies as follows:

1. Internal skills programmes
2. External courses, seminars and conferences
3. Mentoring coaching
4. Formal qualifications
5. In company job-rotation
6. External assignments, placements and/secondments
7. E-Learning

## Conclusions

People have an overview of the organization beyond their specialty and function, and adapt their working patterns to it. 14. "Lessons learned" sessions are conducted so as to produce clear, specific and permanent structural and organizational changes. 15. Management practices, operations, policies and procedures that become obsolete by hindering the continued growth of people and the organization are removed and replaced with workable systems and structures. Continuous improvement is expected and treated receptively. Akers believes that market success and ethical conduct go hand in hand: "Ethics and competitiveness are inseparable. Compete as a society. No society anywhere will compete very long or successfully with people stabbing each other in the back; with people trying to steal from each other; with everything requiring notarized confirmation because you can't trust the other fellow; with every little squabble ending in litigation; and with government writing reams of regulatory legislation, trying business hand and foot to keep it honest. Marquardt seems to support these findings in his research by advocating; "There are many attributes that make up a learning organization, however many of them are organizational focused." He further states, "learning is best conducted by the organization as a whole using a systems thinking philosophy" (Marquardt, 1999)

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