

Situational leadership: a useful approach for the group success

De Andreis F. *, Petruzzo S. **

* Università degli Studi "Giustino Fortunato", Benevento, Italy.

** Università degli Studi "Giustino Fortunato", Benevento, Italy.

Corresponding Author: De Andreis F

ABSTRACT

Working collaboratively within a team or an organization, is necessary to reach an assigned goal.

Furthermore, we can state a good leadership style is essential in all the organizations, regardless of their field, since it makes possible to achieve the fixed goals.

We have an efficient and effective management, when the members of a group cooperate together, using their knowledge and skills to achieve a common goal, overcoming individual conflicts, pursuing a common objective, interdependently, i.e. the objective could be achieved only if the groups works together and it means that the success of a member correspond to the success of the team and vice versa.

Working together, within a team or an organization, assures the group: a greater potential; the multiplicity of skills; a greater ability to tolerate stress and to work under pressure and, finally, a psychological and motivational support.

Specifically, we could state that the management has to create the "right" psychological conditions to facilitate the expression of each individual capability.

The company management can do that with a particular leadership style. This style has to be different in each situations.

Sometimes it has to be tough and authoritarian and sometimes it has to be more participative.

Therefore, an unique approach is not useful to lead an organization or a team. This approach, in fact, has to be situational, which means that has to be modify in order to achieve in each situation, in each group, the best possible outcome.

This article examines the situational leadership approach, i.e. a style that should be adapted to the particular demands of the situation, the particular requirements of the people involved and the particular challenges facing the organization or the team.

Keywords - Leadership, leadership style, management, management approach, team management, teamwork.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Before going through the "situational leadership", we have to identify what leadership means, in order to the study this complex phenomena within a company, a team or an organization.

The term "to lead" means the ability to drive or to guide and the leader, therefore, is the one who exercises this leadership role, or rather directs and indicate the path to follow; so the leadership consists in the interaction of those in a structure (an enterprise, an organization or a workgroup) occupy the higher position than the other.

In other words the leadership can be defined as the ability to influence and in a group or a has also the function to combine the needs of the individual (members) to the needs of the group itself (company or organization) and vice versa, to achieve the final goal [1].

II. THE LEADERSHIP STYLES

Referring to companies, the business goal is the creation of wealth, reached when the product (good or service) of the enterprise has a market value greater than that of the resources used.

The goal of an enterprise in fact, regardless of the sector of production, is to maximize profit, namely pushing production of the good or service to the point where the marginal revenue can exceed or equal the marginal cost.

In this case, the enterprise will have to produce, because it will have a profit and therefore will increase its production.

As a result, the production will increase or decrease, depending on whether the marginal revenue is greater than or less than the marginal cost, until reaching the condition of equality, because until that point the company will have convenience to increase production or decrease it.

This theory, linked solely to the maximization of profit, however, was overtaken by

scholars of Economics, since it is necessary the enterprise itself as an organization that interacts in an external context, in which the stakeholders are numerous and diverse.

The evolution of enterprise's goal becomes to maximize stakeholder satisfaction, distributing equally the wealth created.

The two purposes remain obviously related to each other, because wealth creation for the benefit of shareholders, means also the great satisfaction of the interest of all stakeholders and is realized in a context of relationship, with the environment and with the stakeholders themselves [2].

Maximizing profit means then also maximizing the value of the enterprise itself, and then maximizing the satisfaction of interests of stakeholders, and is realized under the rule of management that maintains strategic, operational, investment and financial choices, since the same management - within an enterprise - is the leader.

It is important to underline that management is responsible to define and to formulate the global strategies of the enterprise, to allocate the resources and to establish the organisation, controlling the results. The decision-making process, internal to the enterprise, is then a role of the management that, through the different styles of leadership – from the most authoritarian to the most participative - governs labour relations in the organization itself, influencing the results.

As we told, in an organization or in an enterprise, the leadership has the function to combine the needs of the individual with the needs of the group (or the organization) and vice versa, to achieve the final goal, i.e. the creation of wealth which it could be reached when the product (good or service) that the company gets, adding, modifying, transferring resources, has a market value greater than the one used by the resources themselves [3]. Thus, if the goal is the creation of value, within the enterprise or organization the company management takes a key role, i.e. setting of strategies that the business can take to operate the company and to produce value.

The management, therefore, defines the operating approach of the enterprise and organises the resources to achieve the strategy decided to adopt. All activities related to the enterprise management are based on the leadership style that, associated with the corporate style, i.e. how an enterprise should be handled, can be considered as the *modus operandi* of the organization.

Leadership represents therefore the ability to lead other group members; it means a role the leader himself exercises within a social group to achieve a purpose.

Holding the leadership within an organization, it means thus to lead the members

along a route of acquisition of self-awareness, their emotional status, their beliefs, their motivations, their skills, their resources, their personality and their attitude; it also means to create awareness of members' way of relating with the group, development of strong sense of belonging, integration and synergy with the group, creating an environment/a positive atmosphere; stimulate motivation and energy by channelling toward change and skills development of each one and finally work on skills and specific skills, own and other methodological both relational databases.

We can state that the leadership style puts into practice the strategy of the enterprise management and how to implement it.

Several have been the studies conducted on this subject and in particular should be mentioned those of Ron Lippit and Robert White, under the direction of the German psychologist, pioneer of social psychology Kurt Lewin.

Lippit and White, in fact, carried out the concept of authoritarian leadership and of democratic and participative leadership, after a series of researches conducted in 1938 on after-school activities of groups of kids, when they recreated three different social atmospheres caused by different styles of leadership [4].

In the ideological climate of the moment, the intent was beyond the study of the groups and was to demonstrate the superiority of democratic systems at all levels, from the small group to the organizations, the states and the governments.

Specifically, it is possible to define an authoritarian leadership approach when there is low freedom for subordinates; all the decisions are imposed; there is a strong command and control and there are sanctions if members are not complying with the commands.

Instead, is possible to identify a democratic participative leadership style when the subordinates have ample freedom to take decisions; the decisions are not imposed but taken with a consultative and participatory behaviour; all the decisions are based on the decentralisation and the members are delegate by the business management [5].

III. SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP

At this stage, it is therefore important to underline that leadership does not presuppose a unique approach to each situation.

Those holding leadership, must be able to know and to understand when and how to modulate their leadership style in order to achieve the expecting results, especially since the behaviour of members of a group, as well as of an enterprise or organization, depends above all on attitude of leadership that guides them.

When talking about leadership, it is important to underline that it could be democratic or authoritarian, assuming in fact there are different ways to do the same thing – leading or coaching, following the path of the centralization of power, or of the decentralisation and the consensus research. In an organization, members' behaviour therefore depends a lot on the attitude of the leadership that guides them.

Thus, the different leadership styles, as mentioned, could influence the leadership of the organization, namely the social process that brings an individual within a group, to be able to influence the behaviour of others without the use of coercive methods or threats. This means that the leader can influence thoughts, attitudes and behaviours of others, through methods ranging from motivation to communication, by empowering the creation of common objectives. Corporate leadership is the ability to drive a business, a group or a team toward a common goal, taking advantage of the skills and efforts of each member. The concept of group becomes therefore essential, since without followers, the de facto leader does not exist, although he may possess all characteristics and qualities to be a perfect guide.

The leadership is a complex phenomenon and there are many theories about it, but all combine personality, charisma, objectives and formal position, without, however, arriving to a universal definition or defining clearly what the leadership itself should or should not involve.

Despite the lack of a formal and unique definition of leadership, there is no doubt that having a good leader at the head of a business group is vital to the health of the group itself.

The leader, in fact, must be able to diagnose problems and to find appropriate solutions to solve them, whether facing relationship problems among different collaborators, or obstacles about the strategy, to adopt [6].

Thus, no matter which is the difficulty or the obstacle, but the leader must always be able to find a way to overcome it. The different style of leadership determines the results of the organization or of the group, since good leadership, adapted to the environment, ensure that all the goals, that the management has set, are achieved.

The target of the leader is to implement his situational leadership; it means to be able to modulate his behaviour with the members of the organization in different situation that a group or a organization is facing.

IV. CONCLUSION

We can state, basically that leadership is a quality, i.e. the ability to conduct one or more subjects (such as the direction of companies or teams) and that is essential for the success in a business context.

As mentioned, the leadership mostly consists in the ability to influence others and its power is made up of a potential for influence. Each time, it tends to affect the behaviour and is essential for the achievement of goals.

The different style of leadership determines the results of the company or of the group, since good leadership must be adapted to the environment; in other words we can state that the leadership must be situation, i.e. must change according to other factors, such as the members' behaviour, the external and internal environment, leaders attitude and personality etc. That is, in fact, the best way for a team or a company to achieve an objective.

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