

Foundations of Management

Meihuan Zhang

Drew University, Madison 07940, USA.

Abstract: Every person can empower and inspire other people. It is upon the individual to have the will to devote him/ her to individual development and growth as a leader. Authentic leaders control their story in a manner that allows them to view themselves as individual learning from his experience rather than a passive observer of life (George et al., 2007). Therefore, they make time to analyze past experiences and reflect on what lesson to learn from these experiences. One's experiences build a leader; the perception and attitude towards every situation in life have a significant impact on leadership and management. This paper analyzes the path one needs to take to be an authentic leader and analyzes the article as a basis for leadership development.

Keywords: Leadership Development

1. Experiences and People

Everyone can be an authentic leader since life teaches the individual who learns to understand his life story. Experiences in life can either break or build a person. The values meant to be the foundation for authentic leadership are derived from individual convictions and beliefs. Parents are an essential factor in a kid's life and the kid they grow up to be. Watching my parents and listening to them, well, not without some fights, enhanced some leadership and management skills that have been impactful since then.

The experience of financial constraints and other middle-income families' issues instilled management skills that could assist someone who deals with situations forever. Some experiences are unforgettable despite how much a person tries to leave them in the past; therefore, it is essential to derive meaning and lessons from the experiences to build an authentic leader. The best way to understand one's true values is when tested under intense pressure; since then, one knows how best to deal with particular situations (George et al., 2007). These are the lessons that everyone deserves to understand and hear, especially with those leading to help them become better people and leaders.

2. Self-awareness

The start of self-awareness calls for analyzing what one feels does and thinks in the real world. There is a lot of strength involved in playing fake or not being authentic, mainly to seek people's approval. The moment one stops doing or saying anything to please anyone else instead says what he/she feels and stands his ground is the first major step to self-awareness. There must be a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations since locking everything out is denial, which could be the greatest obstacle leaders experience in achieving self-awareness (George et al., 2007).

My authentic self is always revealed when I am talking and expressing myself, either physically and emotionally. Self-awareness is learning to listen to the inner voice allowing it to guide you towards the individual internally, and every other aspect of life follows. When one is highly self-aware, one can evaluate one objectively, manage emotions, align actions with internal standards, and properly understand how everyone else perceives you. Self-awareness is the most significant factor in becoming an authentic leader in managing people and situations in the best way.

3. Deeply Held Values

Life and most experiences as a young kid growing up to this level have trained me to be kind to people and be empathetic. Despite how little they show it, everyone is going through a particular situation and is dealing with some challenges. Some people try to hide their vulnerability, but it is essential to show my emotions to deal with them better for me. Self-awareness and self-drive have also taught me to be an independent, responsible person currently, from which I derive my confidence to lead everyone else.

The above values were instilled in me by the tough and happy experiences in life with people being lonely and not understood to be over-scrutinized and harshly judged by people. People have no idea or assume how their words and actions impact another person's life, not even understanding what someone is going through at the moment. It is essential to empower and uplift other people instead of bullying and tearing them down. Being empathetic isn't a weakness, but strength of not letting the world's challenges and evils define us.

My values have changed substantially growing up with my family and at school. There was a point where speaking to people and expressing my ideas felt so difficult since people's opinions affected me very much. Negative opinions from peers and teachers made me fear even talking my truth with anyone. With more confidence, it is not about being wrong or right but the ability to positively receive every aspect of that external force for personal development. As a leader, not everyone will agree with you, which does not mean you stop doing the best to serve your subjects in the best manner.

Being empathetic and self-aware has trained me to consider everyone's opinion and emotions when making decisions (George et al., 2007). However, a decision could negatively impact some people. It's on me as the leader to be accountable and transparent on how you make decisions to serve everyone equally as a leader. A leader should not be a supreme power controlling how and what people do without recognizing their opinions and interests. Leadership should not hinder you from practicing your principles and values.

4. Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation

Many leaders are stimulated to be better leaders by examining their success against the external world factors, although they don't like admitting it (George et al., 2007). My motivation has always come from making sure everyone is comfortable and appreciative of every decision we make together. A leader is only as good as the support he has from the people he leads. My motivation is also derived from seeing people happy and making the world a better place with my leadership skills.

Self-awareness is the most substantial source of internal motivation at a point when everyone seems to be against you; one has an internal voice pushing to be better and achieve the highest standards of ourselves (George et al., 2007). My inner voice pushes me to have a positive attitude, no matter how hard a situation may seem. This strength and confidence help me achieve a safe space to be good and kind to everyone else. Also, everyone is going through certain situations that impact their lives in a manner; being empathetic makes it easier for that person to deal better with such a situation instead of a continuous cycle of violence.

Despite how much one is self-aware, one needs to listen and face external forces that affect our lives. Finding a balance by making sure you are ready to listen to other people without compromising individual standards. My experiences have trained me to have a positive attitude towards negative criticism to become better versions of ourselves. Therefore, it is easier to maintain a level of control in your life, utilizing both internal and external factors to become a better leader.

5. Support Team

Quality leaders create and utilize a support team to help them remain focused on the important aspects of leadership and Management. My support team comprises people who are as real as they come since people who do not tell you their truth instead want to show you how every decision made is the best don't build an authentic leader. We all need to surround ourselves with people who help build better values and principles since life is a continuous learning process. Learning from

each other experiences and helping each other deal with situations should be every support team's primary purpose.

The support team provides a balanced perspective and feedback and earns the power to speak into a leader's life. This group helps me with correction and focus when required while allowing me to be my authentic self while challenging and coaching me. People trust a person who is authentic and genuine and not a replica of another individual. My support team has been a critical part of broadening my perspective while maintaining my standards to lead most effectively.

6. Integration of the various aspects of life

It is very important to achieve control over the personal, family, community, and work-life to ensure balance. Despite the amount of time spent, every aspect of life has a significant impact on our personal growth and development. Therefore, it has been my individual goal to be overall aware of myself and utilize my principles effectively in managing my life. Once you chose to become a leader in school or at work, you find that all these skills are still essential at home and in the community. Staying grounded has made me integrate my life to be the same person in every aspect of life.

7. Authenticity

When one is authentic and genuine, he faces his share of challenges that make someone feel like letting go of his standards to be appreciated by the people. One's true principles and values are evident when one is under pressure since that is the moment most likely to lower his standards (George et al., 2007). Being authentic, in my opinion, refers to the ability to stand ground and following one's inner voice as soon as it occurs to you instead of worrying about public perception. Keeping up day after day with acting like a different person is eventually tiresome; therefore, authenticity is as much practical as it is ethical.

Authentic leaders are always better leaders since people trust them with decisions and empower people to become leaders. When one tries to be different to achieve good results, the eventual result is people see right through you. Despite how much your instructions and leadership are productive and sensible, people will still not be comfortable with a leader who doesn't believe in what they say (Liu et al., 2018)⁸. Despite the challenges and negative opinions from people, it is critical to understand what really has meaning and behaving authentically to become an effective manager. One is regarded as authentic when the actions and conduct are per what he truly believes in and values.

8. Steps to Take to Develop My Authentic Leadership

As recognized earlier, life is a continuous process of learning and self-discovery. A good leader is focused on understanding his strengths and weaknesses since no person can be good at everything. It helps someone become more aware of his values and principles while making ethical choices and treating subordinates with dignity (Liu et al., 2018). Goal setting is also critical for every authentic leader. The leader should ensure he has a clear set of goals and follows them to achieve the set targets.

Leadership isn't about producing copies of a certain leadership approach; instead, leaders should discover the type of leader they wish to be themselves. One must always seek meaning from the intrinsic self to understand the reason behind a specific persona. A person's leadership styles could take a while to evolve and changes as one explores different and new opportunities. Therefore, it is my position as a leader to stay true to my intrinsic leadership objective, which is essential in achieving leadership influence and success by staying authentic. By being authentic, one is confident and aware of their gifts instead of emulating another behavior and personality, which only brings more frustrations.

With everything explained in this paper concerning authentic leadership and management foundations, leaders' primary goal should be to be true to the individual leadership approach. An authentic leader should also empower other leaders to treat people correctly, regardless of the situation. Some aspects, such as transparency, self-awareness, clarity of purpose, empathy, and effective decision-making, should be a pillar in every leadership, whether at work or in the community (Liu et al., 2018). To become a better leader, one should also ask the boss or colleagues for their opinions and perspective concerning

a particular situation, making effective decisions.

References

[1] George B, Sims P, McLean AN, & Mayer D, (2007). Discovering your authentic leadership. *Harvard business review*, 85(2), 129.

[2] Liu Y, Fuller B, Hester K, Bennett RJ, & Dickerson MS. (2018). Linking authentic leadership to subordinate behaviors. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*.