

Reflections on Leadership as Distinguished from Management

September 7, 2011

Roles—Leadership is establishing the vision (desired outcome) and exciting the organization about pursuing it; management is charting the course to the vision and guiding and supporting people in their efforts to achieve it. Put another way, leadership focuses the organization on doing the right things; management enables the organization to do things the right way.

Strategies—Leadership seeks to inspire change in the organization by describing a positive view of the future, putting forth a clear and compelling case for change, and expressing high expectations; the ultimate goal is to create a better enterprise. Management, by contrast, employs guidance, incentives, and supports, through various systems and processes, with the ultimate goal to create a more productive organization.

Sources of Power—The power of leadership derives from the leader's intrinsic authority—a combination of conceptual and communication skills, persuasiveness, and the regard in which he or she is held by others. The power of management derives from the manager's skills—planning, organizing, delegating, communicating, but also from the extrinsic authority of his or her position.

Levels of Thinking and Working—Leadership provides transformational thinking and work: the things that are done to help the organization grow and become better in significant ways, for example, to become more innovative and open to change, supportive of growth and development among its people, focused on quality and value for its customers, or having a greater impact on the world around it. Management provides operational thinking and working: the ongoing organization-wide processes that enable it to function effectively and achieve its mission.

Relationship between Leadership and Management—Leadership and management are inextricably linked, and both are essential if organizations are to thrive. Management skills are important for implementing the leadership vision and bringing it to life in the real world where work is done and great results achieved. At the same time, leadership skills are important to managers, enabling them to motivate employees at a deeper level to achieve those great results. To paraphrase a common wisdom about visions and plans¹, it can be said that *Leadership without management is just good ideas; management without leadership is just work.*

¹ A vision without a plan is a dream; a plan without a vision is drudgery.