AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Recent studies have shown that there is a significant amount of dissatisfaction and stress associated with finances, job security, and work. There are many health related consequences that manifest in response to this continual stress that we experience in our professional lives. These include obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, depression, mental illness and reduced life expectancy. Current views on leadership would suggest that leadership positions are rewards for hard work and for due diligence. It his herein suggested that such a philosophy leads to a sense of entitlement amongst leadership and leads to actions which are not only detrimental to society but also undermine our very nature. An alternative to current conventional leadership philosophy is presented which is based on the biological underpinnings of human behavior and satisfaction. General techniques for effective leadership and management in keeping with this underlying philosophy are also presented.

Key Words: Leadership, Management, Authority, Relationships, Trust, Corresponding E-Mail Address: benjamin.sundberg@live.com © Copyright by Benjamin J. Sundberg 30 May 2014 All Rights Reserved The Philosophies of Leadership, Management, and Authority: How they're Different, and Why We So Often Get it Wrong

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Introduction

Purpose of This Study

"Our jobs are killing us!" (Sinek 2013).

In the 2012 Gallup Work and Education poll, it was discovered that less than one third of Americans feel satisfied with their jobs (Gallup 2012). Additionally, according to a study released by the American Psychological Association, nearly 25% of Americans report being under extreme stress due to finances, job stability, and work (2012). There are many health related consequences that manifest in response to this continual stress that we experience in our professional lives including obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, depression, mental illness and reduced life expectancy (Bergland 2013). In short, our jobs are literally killing us.

We all grow up hearing the same mantra, if you work hard enough, you will succeed. At work as well, we are told that if you put in the time and effort, you will advance in the company. In fact, if we work with a company for a significant period of time, and we don't advance and get promotions, we feel underappreciated. The current philosophy of leadership is such that when we are promoted to an office, we feel that we are entitled to the perks of that station as a reward for the time and energy we have thus far contributed. Another side effect of this is that these officers may come to believe that the authority afforded by their position are granted as a recognition that they are more knowledgeable and more intelligent than those they oversee.

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This philosophy was the way that I viewed leadership for many years. I served as an officer in many capacities within the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) for five years during my time at Oregon State University (OSU). During that time however, I had not yet been a part of a team that I would consider functional or cohesive, and none of them were ever as successful as we had set out to be.

Recently I was given the opportunity to be the chairman for the 2013 ASCE Pacific Northwest Student Conference as it would be hosted by OSU. This is the largest and most important annual event for our organization. As we only host the conference once every 15 years, I was determined that the 2013 Conference would be the best student Conference that the Pacific Northwest had ever seen. Pursuant to that goal, I began to research leadership and management with the hopes of identifying the tools and strategies that would make me a more effective leader. What I quickly discovered however, was that each area I looked into whether that be performance management, effective leadership qualities, business management policies seemed to have a common theme, but few if any of them seemed to explain these common ideas. It became my purpose to identify these common themes and to put together a philosophical strategy to guide the development of better leaders.

The purpose of this study is to define a framework for the understanding and application of the philosophies of leadership, management, and authority in such a manner as to encourage a more fulfilling life for individuals and society.

Proposed Philosophical Framework

It is proposed herein that the key to effective leadership lies not in a list of individual qualities nor a prescriptive list of actions, but rather in a philosophy of leadership. A philosophy that is grounded in human biology and defines the fundamental purpose of leadership. It is further proposed that the only necessary step that needs be taken by an individual in becoming a leader is to understand and embrace this philosophy. This philosophy is built upon the idea that there exists a social contract between leaders and their followers. This implied contract grants benefits to individuals in a position of authority with the understanding that when any form of danger threatens the group, the leaders will be the first ones to sacrifice their self-interest to protect their people.

Areas of Study

An understanding of leadership and management requires that we look at the behavior of an individual. We must understand what drives and motivates people to behave the way they do. Firstly, we will look at the empirical behavioral traits of people. These observations are based on the work of Aubrey Daniels in the field of Performance Management (Daniels 1999). Then, we will look at the brain chemistry that further explains these behavioral traits.

Secondly, we will look at the characteristics of the relationships between people; why relationships exist, the important factors in developing healthy relationships, and how we naturally derive the role of leadership within these relationships. These observations are largely based on the works of Simon Sinek (Sinek 2013).

Next, we will define and clarify the roles and responsibilities of managers, leaders, and officers. Lastly, we will summarize and codify the philosophies of good management and good leadership. These philosophies draw from the works of Mr. Sinek and Dr. Daniels mentioned above, but also incorporate the works of Jim Collins, Patrick Lencioni, and Tom Rath (Collins 2001, Lencioni 2002, Rath and Conchie 2008).

Behavior of the Human Animal

Antecedents and Consequences

These terms describe empirical observations made regarding human behaviors. Antecedents, or incentives, describe anything that tries to promote a behavior by suggesting a possible consequence to that behavior. Antecedents can take many forms such as: threats, memos, policies, or promises. However, antecedents are not limited to the workplace; product marketing is also an antecedent which is used by businesses to incentivize consumers to purchase a product. It is the purpose of an antecedent to cause a behavior to occur once. Once a behavior has occurred, it is the role of the consequence to dictate whether a person will continue or stop that behavior. Without a sufficient consequence to the behavior, the person will not believe that subsequent antecedents are likely to result in the consequence they suggest (Daniels 1999).

As the name suggests, consequences are anything which is experienced following and as a result to a particular behavior. The consequence to a behavior has a significantly greater effect than an antecedent would have on determining whether a person will choose to behave that way again. A person who has experienced the consequence to a behavior, can more easily imagine what such a consequence will cause them to feel. They will also have a greater sense of certainty that such a consequence is likely to happen again. This is why we more readily learn from our own mistakes than from the advice of others. This is why sustainable behavior is a

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function of consequences not of antecedents. Consequences can take one of four forms: Positive Reinforcement, Negative Reinforcement, Punishment, or Penalty (Daniels 1999).

Reinforcing consequences are those that increase or promote a behavior. A positive reinforcement is any consequence in which the subject receives something desirable following a behavior. Examples of positive reinforcement might include a bonus at work for completing a project early, a good taste from biting into an apple, or public recognition for some achievement. Negative reinforcement is any consequence which is based on the avoidance of an undesirable outcome. Examples might include not getting fired because you showed up on time to work or not getting a reckless driving ticket because you obeyed the speed limit (Daniels 1999).

Punishment and Penalty are defined similarly; except that they are consequences aimed at decreasing or stopping a behavior. Punishment refers to giving someone something undesirable. Examples include a prison sentence or physical pain. Conversely, penalties involve taking something away from someone. This could be money, rank, or property (Daniels 1999).

C.O.D.E.S.

Cortisol, oxytocin, dopamine, endorphins, and serotonin are the five principle chemicals released in the brain which are responsible for governing behaviors and for relationship development. These serve as the internal reactions to external antecedents and consequences. From a biological and evolutionary standpoint, these chemicals help promote activities that are in our best interest (Sinek 2013).

Dopamine is the reward and pleasure chemical. Biologically, one of the most important functions of dopamine is to encourage us to eat. More generally, it is responsible for the visualization of a goal and for the reward for achieving that goal. Food, resources, and potential mates are scarce in the natural world. To provide motivation to attain necessities, dopamine is extremely addictive. Other common stimuli that cause the release of dopamine include alcohol, nicotine, and email and text notifications. Our society has become so fixated on social networking and text messaging because we get a dopamine fix every time we get an electronic notification, we are literally chemically addicted to them (Adelson 2005).

Endorphins mask physical pain, boost immune response, and provide a sense of euphoria when they are released. Endorphins are released in response to various stimuli including prolonged exercise, sexual intercourse, and chocolate. These chemicals allow us to ignore pain so that we may exceed what our bodies are normally capable of in extreme circumstances. They also reduce stress which is why the three stimuli listed above are often used as stress relief strategies. (Sinek 2013)

Serotonin is the chemical which causes feelings of pride and status. When we are given public recognition for our achievements, we get a dose of serotonin which makes us feel important and confident. Unlike dopamine and endorphins however, the dose of serotonin is also experienced simultaneously by those in our communities and families who are proud of us because they had some part in helping to make the achievement possible. In this way, serotonin reinforces the development of

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relationships between people by providing a mutual positive reinforcement to helping each other reach mutual goals. This is one of the key chemicals which allows for the development of leaders and the social hierarchy. (Sinek 2013)

Oxytocin is the chemical which is responsible for the feelings of trust, love and friendship. It functions as a relaxant such that we let our guards down around people we trust. It is generated principally through two mechanisms, acts of selfless compassion and physical contact. However, it is only released very slowly, allowing for the necessary time to build trust in a relationship. Oxytocin also decreases stress and reduces addiction to dopamine (DeAngelis 2008).

Cortisol is the hormone secreted when your body is stressed, and it is the first stage in the "Fight or Flight" system. The initial effects of cortisol release include a heightened heart rate, suppressed immune function, increased mental acuity, and increased glucose release to muscles. These are all beneficial actions for our survival in short term events as our bodies shut down non essential systems and prepare for a physical confrontation. However, prolonged and continuous release of cortisol due to anxiety has immensely detrimental health effects including obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, depression, mental illness and reduced life expectancy. Chronic stress and the health effects it causes are generally regarded as the greatest health issue faced by Americans today. Additionally, in an effort to promote self preservation in the face of danger, cortisol inhibits oxytocin; thereby making us paranoid and self centered (Bergland 2013).

Human Relationships and the Social Hierarchy

The Role of Relationships

On the surface, the role of relationships is very simple, there is power in numbers. When people work together as a team to achieve common ends, they increase their capacity for doing work and achieve higher goals. However, when everyone in a group has a similar skill sets and general levels of capability, there is an upper limit to the benefit gained by increasing the size of the team. According to Brook's Law, there are two factors that limit the effectiveness of teams as people are added: the start up time required for new members and the communication costs necessary to maintain coordination between the members.

The next level of relationships and cooperation is the division and specialization of labor. This allows for increased efficiency as each person in a group focuses on doing only the things that they are most fit to do. By exchanging the products of their labor amongst each other, everyone is able to provide for all of the necessities and comforts of life. Moreover, when one person focuses on one task, they become specialized in that field and they are able to produce the same amount of goods and service with much less effort and resource input. Excess time and energy can be used to improve the quality of life of the community. This system of cooperation and trade between people is the basis for society (Rath and Conchie 2008).

Trust is Key

The development and survival of society, however, is dependent heavily on the presence of trust between the members of the group. It is necessary to have trust before taking risks, because it is trust which ensures us that we will not be abandoned by our peers. As all progress involves some level of risk, trust is the fundamental basis for developing successful long lasting relationships and improving our society. (Sinek 2011)

Trust must be formed when we feel safe within our surroundings and when we share common values with each other. When we are put in foreign situations, our cortisol levels increase to prepare us for unknown dangers. This inhibits oxytocin and therefore the formation of trust. Similarly, when we are surrounded by people who do not share the same values and beliefs as ourselves, we cannot be assured that these people will not try to harm us or that we can count on them for support. This is because we don't understand what truly motivates them. When we find people with similar values as us, we can more easily understand their motivations and can therefore more readily count on them to behave in a way that is compatible with us (Sinek 2009).

Social Hierarchy and the Purpose of Leadership

Social hierarchy exists as a biological and systematic response to competition for resources within an interdependent community. In a world where resources are scarce, if there is no established social system for distributing those resources and

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ensuring that everyone will get what they need to survive, uncertainty exists in each individual as to whether they will get what they need to survive. This prompts the release of cortisol, which inhibits oxytocin and therefore dissolves the bonds of trust that define the community and allow it to function. This is in essence the basis for the Tragedy of the Commons (Sinek 2013).

In response to this problem, humans form hierarchies in which we assign rank and status to members of our communities. This hierarchy is facilitated through the release of serotonin whereby the more we have achieved and the higher we rank in our community's concept of social status. The more serotonin we get and the more confident and dominant we are. Subsequently, the people lower in the hierarchy will voluntarily submit to the more dominant and confident people around them. This is why your boss has a higher salary and more benefits. This is why we say that you should respect your elders. It's good to be the king (Sinek 2013).

However, these benefits come at a cost. We allow the more dominant people in our communities to have certain perks to provide for their survival and increased fitness. This is done with the understanding that when the community is threatened by some form of danger, that they, being the most fit, most confident, best fed, and strongest among us, will be the first ones to charge towards the threat and lead us into battle. This is the social contract that defines the responsibility of leadership. The danger may be an invading army, the weather, a disease, a computer virus, competing businesses, or famine. We are all part of many different communities whether it be a city, the company we work for, our family, or a social group; and each of these communities have their respective leaders. It is the responsibility of each of those leaders to provide for the safety and security of their communities against the dangers of the world. (Sinek 2013)

Leaders, Managers, and Officers

As our society has developed and become more formally stratified with respect to social rank and position, the term "Leader" has come to be used to describe anyone who holds a position of authority. However, this describes an officer not a leader. At the simplest level, leaders are those who lead followers. In the context of the discussion on societal relationships, leaders must be in the process of fulfilling their responsibility to provide for the safety and welfare of their communities. Until such time as this responsibility is fulfilled, these people are only officers. Additionally, the act of following must be voluntary.

If people are compelled to act by force or threat thereof, this is obedience to an officer, not following a leader. Officers are simply people who hold a position of authority. Officers may be leaders if they fulfill the responsibilities of leadership and have voluntary followers. Leadership, however, is not a position, nor may it be granted by any entity other than the follower. Officers who compel their subordinates by force or threat are rulers or authoritarians (Sinek 2011).

Management is often paired with leadership, although frequently inappropriately. A manager is an officer with the specific responsibility of planning, organizing, and coordinating people and resources to meet goals. The manner in which this is done will dictate whether leadership or authoritarianism is being employed. The terms leader and manager describe different roles in society; relating the two should only be done when there is substantial belief that both are appropriate. (Daniels 1999)

Effective Leadership

A Philosophy not an Equation

Most people considering the virtues of effective leadership are officers and are looking at ways to become leaders. As there is no strategy conceivable that can prepare you for every possible situation, the most effective thing that can be done in to become a leader is to understand and embrace the philosophy of leadership. The only necessary step an officer has the power to make in becoming a leader is to believe that their purpose is to provide for the safety and wellbeing of the people in their community. This is because becoming a leader is ultimately at the discretion of the people around them. They have to make the decision to follow that person. In order that they will do so, they must develop a trusting relationship which necessitates that the officer demonstrate and state that they are not in their position for their own benefit.

Generally sound principles of effective leadership include: a willingness to sacrifice self interest in favor of community welfare, representing your beliefs and actions honestly, and make preparations for the development of future leadership. All of these principles boil down to one thing: maintain the trusting relationship between leadership and followers (Sinek 2011).

Willingness to Sacrifice Self Interest

The most important component in the relationship between leaders and followers is trust that the leader is willing to sacrifice the perks of their position and even their very existence to ensure that their people are taken care of. The biggest mistake a leader can make is to violate this trust. We don't take issue with the perks given to leaders, we take issue with "leaders" who take the perks, but don't deliver on their responsibilities. The reason we are so viscerally offended when a leader abandons their followers is because they have violated a natural social contract and have in effect stolen from their communities (Sinek 2013).

Jim Collins is a former professor at Stanford University who now runs a management research company. Collins and his team studied 11 companies that made transition from "good to great"; that is those companies that made a change in their operations and subsequently outperformed the general market and similar "comparison companies" in their own industries by a factor of at least three for a sustained period of time (Collins 2001). Collins found that in every "good to great" case, the leader of the company during the transition possessed the same psychological traits. Collins' team refers to such leaders as "Level 5 Leaders". A "Level 5 Leader" is defined as:

... an individual who blends extreme personal humility with intense professional will... [whose] ambition is first and foremost for the institution, not themselves... they were self-effacing individuals who displayed the fierce resolve to do whatever needed to be done to make the company great. (Collins 2001)

This definition parallels our biological definition of a leader. A confident and ambitious, dominant type person with an unwavering commitment to the welfare and progress of the people around them.

Collins also notes that these leaders shared another trait. Whenever the company realized success, these leaders would give the credit for the success to the people who worked for them or to good fortune but never to themselves. However, when the company failed at something, the leader would assume the entirety of the responsibility for the failure. Collins noted that the "leaders" of the "comparison companies" were exactly the opposite, they would take all of the credit for successes and blame everyone around them for failures. These are the officers take the perks of leadership yet refuse to uphold their responsibility to protect their community; at best, they are thieves (Collins 2001).

The Right People

According to Collins, the first step that all of the "good to great" companies took during their transformations was to "first [get] the right people on the bus and then figure[] out where to drive it" (Collins 2001). By first establishing a cohesive team, these companies ensured that they could adapt more readily to changing conditions and could make a collective decision about where they wanted to take the company (Rath and Conchie 2008). According to Simon Sinek, the common thread between these people must be similar "Why's", or that their motivations for being a part of the organization are the same. By "Starting with Why," their motivations and aspirations will be aligned with each other. This provides for greater trust between them because they know that nobody on the team is motivated to act in a way that would be contrary to the interests and motivations of the rest of the team. Additionally, less effort is needed in management to keep everyone on task and moving in the right direction because they will naturally be inclined to move in the same direction (Sinek 2009) (Collins and Porras 1994).

According to Patrick Lencioni, there are 5 common dysfunctions of a team. These are: absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results (Lencioni 2002). By first developing a cohesive team bound by a common motivation, companies can at least reduce the degree of all these dysfunctions. A team bound by common values and like motivations will inherently have a greater chance of building trust. When the members of our organizations trust each other, they are more willing to be vulnerable to each other and therefore more willing to suggest and openly discuss new ideas. A cohesive group is also more likely to make unanimous decisions. And lastly, a group that trusts one another, will look out for each other and hold each other accountable for the results of the entire team (Lencioni 2002).

Successor Planning

No matter how much we may wish to believe otherwise, there is always an end to our term of service as leaders. Whether it be at the end of a prescribed term or at our deaths, we will not be leaders forever. Our communities however, will continue after we have gone. In order that they may continue to thrive and prosper as they hopefully did while we oversaw them, it is our responsibility to groom the next generation of leaders. Collins notes that a lack of effective successor planning was a key factor in the failure to maintain long term success in a large majority of the companies which failed to meet the Good to Great criteria. (Collins 2001)

Effective People Management

Performance Management

Performance management is based on the concept that human behavior is predictable and manageable. Antecedents and consequences are the tools available to managers in influencing their people. As noted before, it is the role of antecedents to get a behavior to happen once, it is the role of the consequence to dictate the continuation of that behavior. Effective managers should understand and implement the concepts of performance management not to manipulate their employees, but to provide them with the opportunity to be successful (Daniels 1999).

Consequences of Consequences

Effective managers should be the leaders to their employees, because this fosters the development of trust in the organization. Consequently, positive reinforcement should be used as the commonplace method for motivating employees. If managers must rely on their positional authority to demand behaviors and compliance, they and their employees do not belong together. The use of positional authority as a management technique relies on the use of negative consequences and the threat thereof to drive behavior. The consequence of this is that employees will live in constant fear of punishment or penalty and will therefore be subject to increased cortisol levels. This biologically inhibits their ability to develop trusting relationships even when they are meeting all of their objectives and doing everything

that they should be. This undermines the entire organization and promotes the employees to be concerned only for themselves. This means that they will work inefficiently and will only ever do enough work to avoid negative consequences. (Sinek 2013, Daniels 1999)

Conclusion

Summary

In summary, leadership and the perks of an office are not rewards for the time and energy we've put into an organization. Neither are they a reason to look down on the other people in our organizations. Leadership represents a responsibility to guide the community towards a better state of being and the willingness to sacrifice one's self interest in pursuit of that end. This is based on a deep seated and biological need for us to work together in trusting and functional relationships. I believe that when we can accept this as part of our nature and embrace the philosophy of leadership, we will see a dramatic improvement in the quality of life of our species.

Personal Testament

During my research I came to believe in these principles to such an extent that I embraced them and tried to implement them in the best ways possible while in charge of the ASCE Pacific Northwest Student Conference. I did not, however, view this as an experiment, as I did not believe it to be ethical to perform studies on my team. However, I can report that after having embraced this philosophy, every team member involved was more engaged, productive, and fulfilled than I have previously seen in my leadership roles. Additionally, for the first time, we were able to achieve what we had set out to do and feel fulfilled doing so.

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