

Executive Book
Summary by
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THE SECOND EDITION

EXPLORING LEADERSHIP FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

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TOP 10 POINTS TO TAKE AWAY

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“Leadership
is like
beauty;

it’s hard to define,
but you know it
when you see it”
p. 24

- 1) Leadership is a lifelong learning process
- 2) Leadership can be learned
- 3) Leadership is about understanding yourself and others
- 4) Relationships are key
- 5) Leadership is about creating a personal philosophy
- 6) There is not one right way to lead
- 7) Leadership requires vision and intends to accomplish change
- 8) Leadership is a process which is purposeful, inclusive, empowering and ethical
- 9) Leaders understand and facilitate change
- 10) Leadership is listening more than talking

SUMMARY



The second edition of Exploring Leadership takes you on a personal leadership journey, while stressing you to think about your own experiences and who you want to be as a future leader. This book touches on several concepts such as Leading in a Changing World, Exploring Your Potential for Leadership, Context for the Practice of Leadership, Making a Difference with Leadership and Leadership De-

velopment and Renewal. It focuses on the Relational Leadership Model, describing foundational leadership principles and processes, stressing the importance of accomplishing positive change. Komives, Lucas and McMahon delve into the various generations of leadership theories looking at several leadership approaches as a way of assisting leaders to be effective in a society that is continuously changing.

It expresses the significance of knowing yourself and others as a means of shaping your values, beliefs, ethics and character into your personal leadership style. The book also looks at leadership from a group perspective stressing the importance of teamwork and development of community, concluding with the importance of renewal from an organization point of view and personally as an organization is only as strong as its leader.

“Relationships are the connective tissue of organizations; relationships built on integrity are the glue that holds organizations together” p. 7

PART 1- LEADERSHIP FOR A CHANGING WORLD

6 FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES

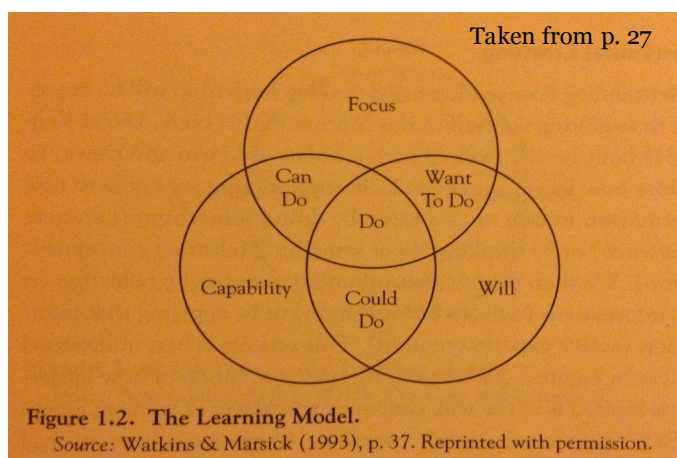
- 1) Leadership is a concern of all of us as we have the responsibility to contribute effectively
- 2) Leadership is viewed and valued differently by various disciplines and cultures, creating a multidisciplinary approach for a shared understanding
- 3) Conventional views of leadership have changed and do not stand still, as we continually look for new ways when relating to shared problems
- 4) Leadership can be exhibited in many ways for different settings call for various types of leadership
- 5) Leadership qualities and skills can be learned and developed as leaders are made, not born through self awareness and self understanding
- 6) Leadership committed to ethical action is needed to encourage change and social responsibility where leadership happens through relationships among people engaged in change



PURPOSES OF LEADERSHIP

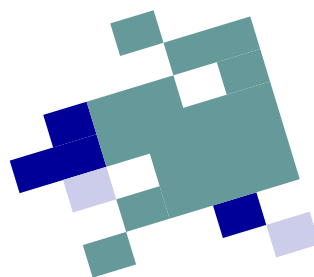
Leaders have a social responsibility and commitment to the public good; therefore, it is important to value relationships and act ethically while displaying honour and integrity. Leadership acknowledges what “we” can do

together as all of us are responsible for ourselves and helping others, creating a personal philosophy to guide our actions .



CHANGING THE NATURE OF LEADERSHIP

Leadership styles and approaches vary depending on the culture it is associated with and is hard to define as it carries a different meaning to everyone. Understanding leadership requires consideration of the context it is being practised in; however, a few leadership truths can be recognized across cultures .

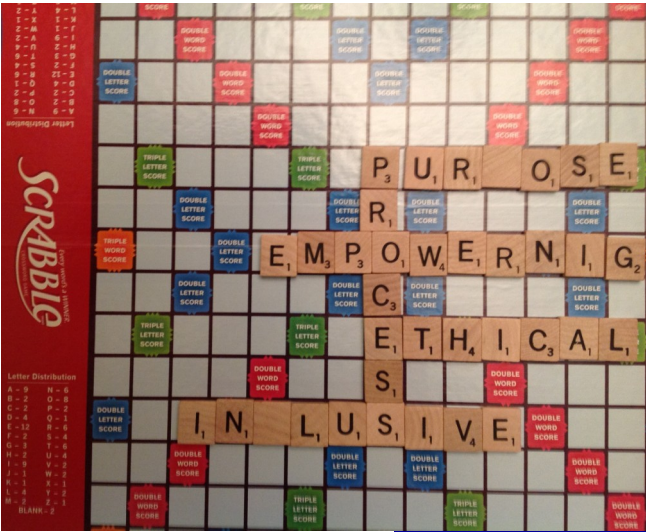


“Leadership is like a symphony; the conductor must bring out the skills and talents of the musicians, while the musicians work together to blend and harmonize the music” p. 42

5 LEADERSHIP TRUTHS

- 1) Leadership skills are developed based on environmental influences
- 2) Leadership is not hierarchical as it occurs at all levels in strong organizations as people are empowered when they make a contribution
- 3) Charisma is not a prerequisite for being a leader
- 4) There is no one right way to lead an organization as the context of the group decides how it will be led
- 5) Leadership is a teachable; lifelong process





Most leadership happens in interactive situations between individuals; therefore, it is about dealing with relationships.

COMPONENTS OF RELATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Process

- Relational leadership is a process where the outcomes are as important as the process itself, involving the community through collaboration and cooperation. Cooperation helps others achieve their goals and collaboration joins people together to accomplish shared goals.

Purpose

- Creating positive change is about working hard to resolve differences and find a common vision. Purpose is the driving force in relational leadership as each person must be involved in the process of building a vision with others.

Empowering

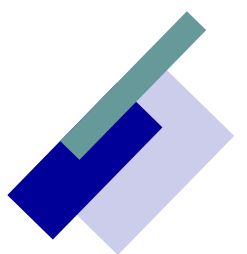
- Empowerment through relational leadership involves learning the climates people can be successful in but also learn from their mistakes. It is about understanding the expert, referent, legitimate, coercive and reward power dynamics. Sharing power, creates stronger groups who feel that they matter.

Ethical

- Leadership is good and moral in nature, but ethical standards help guide decisions and actions. Moral leadership is concerned with the 'good' where actions speak louder than words as long as you are being true to yourself.

Inclusive

- Relational leadership involves an understanding of how different people and groups approach issues differently and developing talents of others so they can be involved in the process. Individuals are important as they influence the whole of an organization while leading others to lead themselves.



Relational leadership can be compared to a game of scrabble in the way that a solid foundation sets the tone for the rest of the game and together the board is filled with endless opportunities. At a score of 98, relational leadership is at the top of its game !

PART 2—EXPLORING YOUR POTENTIAL FOR LEADERSHIP

“No one can teach you about yourself except you”
p. 121

UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

The most productive thing you can do when becoming an effective leader is learning to see yourself clearly. Knowing how you think, relate, learn and find meaning is an essential self-awareness skill. Self-awareness grows when you know your strengths and weaknesses; therefore, it is important to know your talents as an individual and learn to manage your weaknesses not always trying to turn them into strengths.

Experiences and influences shape who we are as leaders, but we all have the capacity to make a difference. We all have our own personal style preferences as beliefs shape our values, which influence our thoughts and actions. Preferences are how we take information, relate it to others, make decisions and learn, as individuals are introverted, or extroverted, grounded in reality or think of possibilities, yet it is understanding ourselves that will make us more aware of those around us.

UNDERSTANDING OTHERS

Three questions to ask yourself in any setting:

- 1) How am I like no one else here?
- 2) How am I like some others here?
- 3) How am I like everyone here?

When taking the time to understand others, you become a more inclusive and empowering leader. People are more alike than different; however, the challenge of leadership is finding the common purpose that people bring to a situation. Once you know yourself well

enough, you will know how others see you; therefore, can modify your behaviour and attitudes to find the connection with others.

Understanding others refers to recognizing patterns in gender roles, appreciating multiculturalism, using it to build inclusiveness and collaboration, knowing about others countries to gain an understanding on international diversity and appreciating the value of other cultures and the experiences they have had. When connecting with others, it is important to

remember that their views are not wrong; people simply deal with situations differently.

Another critical aspect when understanding others is communication and the idea of listening more than talking. When listening with empathy, it is about using others standards and reference points to understand their experience. A challenge of relational leadership is having the ability to understand others, be understood and create an effective group environment simultaneously.

“The real tragedy of life is not that each of us doesn't have enough strengths, it's that we fail to use the ones we have” p. 124



LEADING WITH INTEGRITY AND MORAL PURPOSE

Leaders often find themselves in ethical dilemmas; therefore, the challenge is to slow down and reflect on the situation before acting. Understanding your own moral development can assist in creating and sustaining an ethical organizational environment. Not everyone in an organi-

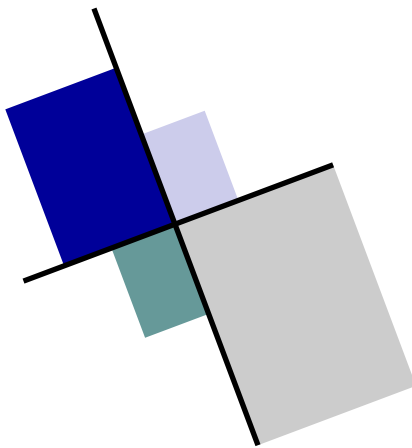
zation is willing to do the right thing, but effective leaders are often ethical as they are working toward accomplishing a common goal. Toxic leaders tend to be ineffective and cause harm to their followers; hence, unethical behaviours are huge factors in reputations.

When dealing with ethical situations, it takes courage to do the right thing, even if it creates the risk of losing something. Ethical leaders must be willing to put principles in place and stick to them as it is not about quick fixes and easy answers, but analyzing and using morals to solve problems.



8 ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

- 1) Ethics is the heart of leadership
- 2) All leadership is values driven
- 3) Personal values intersect with organizational values
- 4) Ethical Leadership can be learned
- 5) Ethical leadership involves a connection between ethical thought and action
- 6) Character development is an essential ingredient in ethical leadership
- 7) Ethical leadership is a shared process
- 8) Everything we do teaches – lead by example



PART 3- CONTEXT FOR THE PRACTICE OF LEADERSHIP

GROUP LEADERSHIP

Interacting with teams and groups is process oriented and requires you to attend to the process of the group development in order to get the most out of your members. Groups exist for various purposes, but are put in place to lead structures and processes. The structure of a group can be formal or informal, but relates to how people in the group respond to each other. Also, groups are needed for certain lengths of time depending on the task,

which all have challenges as a short time frame requires high efficiency and long periods of time require extensive member motivation.



Within every group are various dynamics that contribute to how decisions are made. Every group has roles, some that build the relationships, others that focus on the tasks and those who have negative roles and do not participate. We all have preferred practices that we are most comfortable with; however, it is important to use a combination of group building and task roles to empower participants. Group strength is not in individuals, but in the team; therefore, should share a common goal,

“Put a group of superstars together on any team, whether baseball, hockey, football, or soccer, and they will still lose if they operate as individual superstars.” p. 235

Exhibit 7.1. Relational Leadership and Stages of Group Development.

When the group is . . .	Relational leadership philosophy would encourage participants to . . .
Forming	Be inclusive and empowering. Make sure all the shareholders and stakeholders are involved. Seek diverse members to bring talent to the group. Model the processes of inclusion and shared leadership. Identify common purposes and targets of change.
Storming	Create a climate in which each person matters and build commitment to the group as a community of practice. Be ethical and open. Be patient, to give divergent views a full hearing. Be aware when you may be biased or blocking the full participation of another. Handle conflict directly and openly, encouraging participants to identify their biases. Revisit the purposes of the group and targets of change.
Norming	Be fair with processes. Practice collaboration. Keep new members welcomed, informed, and involved. Clarify the individual's responsibility to and expectations of the group and the group's responsibilities to and expectations of individuals.
Performing	Celebrate accomplishments and find renewal in relationships. Empower members to learn new skills and share roles in new ways to stay fresh. Revisit purposes and rebuild commitment.

Exhibit 7.1 illustrates the aspects of the Relational Leadership Model that might help the group successfully deal with each stage of its development (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).

Taken from p. 221

working together to be effective. Team learning happens through dialogue and reflection of shared experiences, as discussion encourages others to share their ideas while engaging in change. Team leaders are facilitators who monitor the group's progress and relationships, taking action when appropriate.

UNDERSTANDING COMPLEX ORGANIZATIONS

Organizations are large collections of groups that interact among each other; therefore, more ways and ideas of doing things appear. Organizations exist to present views or produce a product and follow a mission that defines this existence. The success of an organization depends on how well the groups within it stay connected and move toward the mission. Organizations can be seen as a system where the interactions among people pro-

duce outcomes that affect each individual. Leadership in an organization helps the multiple groups work together to accomplish a purpose, while operating under structures that make daily operations easier. It is important to remember that the organization is the people who have come together for a certain purpose and the structure is just a formation that must be changed when the purpose cannot be met.



COMMUNITIES

Knowing, believing and being skilled at developing a community are essential to Relational Leadership as a healthy community leads to expectations and norms of working together effectively. Community is an attitude of connection and commitments as human beings want meaningful connections to others. A group does not automatically become a community; it has to be built intentionally.

Scott Peck identifies 4 Stages of developing a community:

- 1) Pseudocommunity- things seem fine, but it is just on the surface
- 2) Chaos- various views come together and clicks are formed
- 3) Realization- understanding that feelings, emotions and stereotypes become barriers
- 4) Create the 'we' not the 'I'- community is a process, not an end state as they are always changing

*“Find your comfort zone, and stay out of it”
p. 424*

PROCESS OF RENEWAL

Groups, organizations and communities all need renewal at one point or another. Change is an inevitable psychological process; therefore, older leaders should leave the organization better than they found it, meaning they need to coach, mentor and prepare the less experienced members. Within the renewal process, it is important to look back on the mission and values of the organization and

rediscover its purpose. Leaders who take action for their responsibilities and encourage others to do the same is essential to the renewal process as every organization is doing something right, but it is about identifying those positive aspects and move forward. Groups and organizations are like humans as they need energy to fuel their minds, bodies and spirits.



PART 4- MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH LEADERSHIP



“Change means movement; movement means friction; friction means heat; heat means controversy.” p. 351

UNDERSTANDING CHANGE

Change brings about a fear of losing control; therefore, leaders understand that the smallest change can be huge in the eyes of others. The change process is not bound by rules and there is no guarantee of success, but understanding others and their expectations is important when trying to implement change. Successful change efforts need to be based on core values and helping people get out of their comfort zones as they try new behaviours.

Exhibit 12.1. Common Characteristics of Real Change Leaders.

1. *Commitment to a better way.* They share a seemingly inexhaustible and visible commitment to a better way.
2. *Courage to challenge existing power bases and norms.* They develop the personal courage needed to sustain their commitment in the face of opposition, failure, uncertainty, and personal risk.
3. *Personal initiative to go beyond defined boundaries.* They consistently take the initiative to work with others to solve unexpected problems, break bottlenecks, challenge the status quo, and think outside the box.
4. *Motivation of themselves and others.* Not only are they highly motivated themselves, but they have the ability to motivate, if not inspire, others around them.
5. *Caring about how people are treated and enabled to perform.* They really care about other people, but not to the extent of blind self-sacrifice. . . . They do not knowingly manipulate or take advantage of others.
6. *Staying undercover.* They attribute part of their effectiveness to keeping a low profile; grandstanding, strident crusading, and self-promotion are viewed as sure ways to undermine their credibility and acceptance as change leaders.
7. *A sense of humor about themselves and their situations.* This is not a trivial trait. A sense of humor is often what gets them through when those around them start losing heart.

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Taken from p. 354

PART 5— LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND RENEWAL

LEADERSHIP IDENTITY AND RENEWAL

Leadership is about developing your own philosophy based on principles and values that work into your relationships. Knowing yourself begins with trusting yourself and having the confidence that you can do something specific. It is critical to learn from past experiences and make meaning from them. Within every leader is the ability to bring renewal to the organization and yourself.

Self renewal is a way to reach your full potential while paying attention to your ‘inner voices’. It is important to realize that you cannot be all things to all people at all times, taking the time to recover. Always stretch yourself to learn new things as a fear of failure will come between you and your growth, keeping in mind that what you do matters.

*We can do
no great things,
only small things
with
great love.*
- Mother Teresa

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

“Leadership is a relational and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive

If you want to make a difference, read this book to learn about becoming a leader who cares about people and the events going on around you. You will learn about foundational principles of leadership and how you yourself can learn to lead. Ignore that myth that leaders are born, because you can learn how to implement change and make an impact. The critical aspect of an effective leader always originates at knowing yourself, which sometimes is not an easy task. It is about taking risks

and leaving your comfort zone to better the lives of others. Take time to know your strengths values and beliefs which all help shape your identity as an individual. Knowing yourself will help you understand others, in which you can relay to leading groups, develop communities and eventually running an organization.



CRITIQUE

The second edition of Exploring Leadership is a great book filled with valuable information for students in university or those who are new in the work place and want to make a difference. The book did a great job in outlining the Relational Leadership Model in a way that was easy to read and understand, highlighting some great quotes that are a true inspiration to any leader. The book took you on a personal leadership journey often challenging you to

think critically and put yourself in the situations presented as its goal was to help develop your own views of a leader. Every chapter ended with activities and discussion questions to enhance learning and discovery, outlining additional readings if you wanted to pursue the topic further. I learned a lot of valuable information from this book, as I did not realize there were so many components to one single leadership model. After reading this book, I

feel as if I have a better grasp on who I want to become as a leader, it is just about putting the pieces together. Even though this book could be made into several more books going further in-depth on many topics, I would highly recommend it to young people wanting to further their understanding and skills and find their platform as a leader.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Susan R. Komives is an associate professor and director of the student personnel graduate program at the University of Maryland,

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POINTS TO PONDER

- 1) What can you do that will assist in knowing yourself and others better?
- 2) What are some ways you can build on your leadership strategies?
- 3) Which of the foundational principles and truths pertain to you and your leadership ideas?
- 4) How can you see yourself using relational leadership?



Komives, S., Lucas, N., & McMahan, T. (2007). *Exploring leadership: for college students who want to make a difference*. San Francisco, California: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.