# EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP SIMPLIFIED

A guide for existing and aspiring leaders

**$SAGE**

At SAGE we take sustainability seriously. Most of our products are printed in the UK using FSC papers and boards. When we print overseas we ensure sustainable papers are used as measured by the PREPS grading system. We undertake an annual audit to monitor our sustainability.

# CONTENTS

# 1

# LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

In the 2015 Department for Education's (DfE, 2015b) advice to headteachers, aspiring headteachers and governing bodies, they claim that headteachers, together with those responsible for governance, are guardians of the nation's schools. The DfE further claim that headteachers in particular:

- occupy an influential position in society and shape the teaching profession;
- are lead professionals and significant role models within the communities they serve;
- have values and ambitions that determine the achievements of schools;
- are accountable for the education of current and future generations of children;
- have a decisive impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievements in the five nations' classrooms;
- lead by example the professional conduct and practice of teachers in a way that minimises unnecessary teacher workload and leaves room for high quality continuous professional development for staff;
- secure a climate for the exemplary behaviour of pupils;
- set standards and expectations for high academic achievements within and beyond their own schools, recognising differences and respecting cultural diversity within contemporary Britain.

It's little wonder therefore that a significant part of the Ofsted inspection report is about leadership and management. Mess up on this and you can kiss goodbye to any

chance of getting a good or outstanding grade. Mess up really badly and even good performance results may not save you from going into special measures. How therefore can you respond to the challenge of being an effective leader?

Reading McGrath and Bates (2017) *Little Book of Big Management Theories 2e* will give you over a dozen entries from which you can choose a leadership or management style that suits you. In this chapter of the book, we are going to summarise some of the popular ones, even throwing in a bit of the more controversial ideas on leadership and dispelling some of the myths about leadership. We are then going to give you something that will floor anyone who asks you a question about your leadership style. Hold on! Don't just jump to this, read the build-up to it.

Let's start by looking at the difference between leadership and management. There is a mass of literature covering the difference between leaders and managers. Most of this suggests that leaders and managers possess different characteristics and are psychologically very different people. The truth is that anyone who holds a senior position in any organisation has to combine the roles of leader and manager if they are to do their job effectively. We would suggest that if you want to distinguish between the two, then something like 80 per cent of the leader's role is inspirational and 20 per cent is aspirational and – wait for it – 20 per cent of the manager's role is inspirational and 80 per cent is aspirational. Okay, happy with this? Leaders have the vision about what kind of organisation they want to be the head of: managers have the responsibility for making it happen. Let's see if we can unravel this some more.

# LEADERSHIP

Being an inspirational or visionary leader doesn't come easy and there is a debate about whether great leaders are born or made. The nature–nurture debate is an interesting one and there are examples of great leaders spawning awful leaders (e.g. Edward I and Edward II) and great leaders being born from humble beginning (such as Joan of Arc). We don't have a firm view on this issue. We can accept that there are genetic traits that may be passed down that will influence performance as a leader. We also believe that experience and learning are important in shaping good leadership.

Whatever your position is in the nature–nurture debate you need to be aware that there are many myths about leadership that have grown up over the years that may affect your thinking on the subject. Here are six myths covering intelligence, power, action, personality, style and expertise that we now want to consider.

## MYTH # 1: YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE INTELLIGENT TO BE A GREAT LEADER

No, you haven't misread this. We are claiming that only intelligent people can be great leaders. We need to qualify what we mean here.

Intelligence has for many years been measured using intelligence quotient (IQ) tests. In more recent years, these tests have been criticised for failing to take account

of the complex nature of the human intellect and the inference that there are links between intellectual ability and characteristics such as race, gender and social class. If your perception of intelligence is based on IQ tests, then we would suggest that there is no correlation between intelligence and the ability to lead.

**Daniel Goleman** (1996) suggested that intelligence is not just about developing a high IQ or being technically skilled, but that people also need to develop their emotional intelligence. He argued that there were five key elements of emotional intelligence, which we have interpreted for leaders. These are summarised as:

**Self-awareness**: Leaders must be aware of the relationship between their thoughts, feelings and action. They must be able to recognise what thoughts about a situation sparked off which emotions and the impact these emotions can have on themselves and those around them.

**Managing emotions**: Leaders must analyse what is behind these emotions and be able to deal with them in a positive manner.

**Empathy**: Leaders must also be able to deal with the emotions of those around them in a positive manner. This requires them to be able to understand more about the nature of any concerns being expressed about their leadership.

**Social skills**: Leaders need to develop quality relationships. This will have a positive effect on all involved. Knowing how and when to take the lead and when to follow is an essential social skill.

**Motivation**: Leaders can't always rely on external rewards to motivate others. They must support their staff to develop their own source of intrinsic motivators by encouraging them to appreciate what they can do and not to focus on the things they can't do.

Goleman argued that having a high level of self-awareness, and an understanding of others, makes you a better person as well as a better leader. He also argued that rather than losing brain cells through the aging process, the brain continuously reshapes itself in line with the experiences we have. Goleman suggested that by persisting with positive thoughts and actions your newly reformed brain will ensure that you will have a positive outlook in how you work as a leader and will result in you naturally doing the right thing for your followers, in the right way. Of course Goleman's theories are speculation. But don't they sound good and worth trying out.

If you agree, then here are some tips to help you:

■ Develop your self-awareness by keeping a record of any key incidents that took place connected with your leadership. A simple note of what happened, why it happened, what you did and what impact it had on you and those around you will suffice.
■ Try to look at the situation from your followers' perspectives. Although you may disagree with them, recognising that they are entitled to their views and beliefs will make you more understanding towards them and the problems they may be facing.

- Listen carefully to what others in your organisation (not just your staff but also the learners and their parents) have to say and never be afraid to re-examine your own values in light of what they have to say.
- Always try to find a win–win solution to any situation arising with you and your followers.

Although he has a popular following, critics of Goleman claim that he can only speculate that his theories on intelligence are any more valid than the reliance on IQ testing.

## CASE STUDY

Lesley had not long been appointed as the curriculum leader for mathematics in her primary school when she set about trying to raise pupil achievement by implementing a published scheme of work that had proven effective in a number of other school settings.

She was disappointed when a year on from implementing the scheme there had only been a limited overall improvement in pupil achievement. Part of the evaluation she subsequently carried out focused upon the role that leadership and management had played in the relative lack of success of the initiative.

It became apparent that her analysis of the issue had been too superficial and had therefore failed to identify key factors contributing to low pupil achievement within the school. Consequently she concluded that the adopted solution (the published scheme), however effective in other settings that she had considered, may not have been the most appropriate for her school.

Despite exhaustive monitoring during the year, Lesley felt that there had been insufficient feedback to staff and a failure to communicate effectively with those members of staff who were charged with delivering the new initiative. Although they had been thoroughly familiarised with the scheme, and had received appropriate training and support materials, little account had been taken of such factors as the differing aptitudes and attitudes of the staff.

When Lesley examined her motives for implementing the change she concluded that at least in part they reflected a desire on her part to make an impact and prove her worth to others, in particular senior leaders. In adopting standard, rigid and inflexible targets Lesley had left little room for maneuver, which proved to have a demotivating effect on some staff and inhibited her capacity to empathise with others.

Lesley concluded that her leadership and management of the project was a prime cause of its relative lack of success. This helped to frame a strategy for the second year of the project and proved to be an important lesson for her professional development towards becoming a successful senior leader.

It's clear that Lesley's self-awareness was heightened by keeping a record of events that took place during her efforts to implement the change and the impact that it had on those involved. Her willingness to look at the situation from others' perspectives helped her to adopt a more successful strategy.

> **Hot Tip**: Be prepared to look at situations from other people's perspectives and never be afraid to re-examine your own values in light of what they have to say.

## MYTH # 2: POWER CORRUPTS AND ABSOLUTE POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY

Of course, history is riddled with people who have abused the power they have been given or taken. Before we accept or reject this myth, we need to understand what we mean by power. There are numerous models of power. One of the most compelling was outlined by **John French** and **Bertram Raven** (1959). They identified five sources of power that a leader can call upon to encourage or compel compliance. These are:

**Positional power**: As a leader you hold a position of authority in the organisation. Identify the limits of that authority but act with confidence when you do exercise authority and expect staff to comply with your legitimate requests. Expect compliance and enforce it.

**Reward power**: As a leader you control key resources within your organisation. Identify the range of rewards you can give staff and remember they need not be financial. Public recognition or a private appreciation of a job well done may mean more to a person than promotion or a pay rise. Always deliver on any promises that you make to reward someone.

**Coercive power**: Some leaders will have reached the position they hold through force (physical or psychological). Identify the limits of your coercive power. Never use coercive power to bully people, but it is perfectly legitimate to deal forcibly with poor performance and apply a suitable sanction. Always carry through with any threats that you make to punish someone.

**Expert power**: Most leaders gain recognition as a leader because of their experience and expertise in the job. Identify what, if any, expert power you have. If you have a professional qualification you will per force have a degree of expert power. Continuously update specialist knowledge in one or more areas of your discipline and use it in your organisation.

**Charismatic power**: Some leaders gain recognition as a leader because of their charismatic hold over their followers. Remember that charisma is in the eye of the beholder. So think about how you appear to your staff. Act with confidence and integrity and they will think you have charisma.

French and Raven argue that leaders should work to accumulate as many sources of power as possible. Typically some degree of positional, reward and coercive power comes with the leadership role. Leaders need to test the limits of each and build up their expert power. As for charismatic power, that's something we all need to work on.

It's not the nature of power that corrupts therefore, even if this power is absolute and unchallenged, but the people who wield it. Both Hitler and Martin Luther King had a powerful hold over their followers, one used it for violent purposes the other to promote peaceful demonstrations.

Here are two cases of college principals that one of us has worked with who demonstrate the differences in exercising power.

## CASE STUDY

Mary was a surprise choice to be the principal of a new community-based college formed out of the merger of two adult education centres that delivered vocational training throughout a network of community centres in the borough. She had ousted the incumbent principals of the two centres, who became her vice-principals. Many were impressed by Mary's talk of her vision for the new college and the values of openness and trust that she wanted to underpin the vision. She won everyone over with her charisma. In the space of three years, she took the college from an adequate institution to an outstanding one. But there was a price to pay for this. In a document that she marked 'Confidential – for management only' she wrote about her desire to take education provision away from community centres and into libraries. This would mean significant job losses and inconvenience for community-based learners who would have to travel further to attend classes. Staff morale was at an all-time low, with five cases of harassment being waged against her. Sickness due to stress was quadrupled.

Mary left after three years as principal during which time no members of the original nine-strong senior management team were still in post, seven out of the original ten community centres that delivered training had closed down and funding for community-based vocational training was reduced to less than a quarter of its previous level.

It's difficult to weigh up here whether power was being used for the good of all or in the interests of the individual wielding it. Mary's intention was always to leave after three years having taken the college to an outstanding grade. She achieved this, but at a price. On visiting the college regularly it's distressing to hear what people there are saying about morale and their concerns for the future of the college. Tom's college in the next case study no longer exists as a separate entity but even after fifteen years, he is still talked about with respect and affection.

> ## CASE STUDY
>
> Tom was the principal of a large FE college. He had worked his way up from an engineering instructor through to the principal's post. He was generally looked on as a bit of pragmatist whose philosophy was 'If it works, it's good'. He had a knack of finding resources to fund even the most outrageous ideas if he thought it would benefit his staff or learners. This never endeared him to inspectors, with the college never scoring highly for Leadership and Management and overall grades never better than good. He was, however, widely respected by staff and most people who came into contact with him. On one occasion, concerned that staff had nowhere to have a break from students, Tom gave up his office to them.
>
> When he was asked where he would sit, he replied, 'In the classrooms or the canteen, anywhere where I can get the low-down on how we are doing and I don't get pestered every minute with phone calls and emails. If they want me they know where I'll be.' There never was a title to describe his leadership style and we doubt whether he would have thanked anyone who would have given him one.
>
> Tom retired after twenty years in the same college. The college grades flitted between adequate and good (never inadequate or outstanding) and they merged with another college to form one of the country's largest further education colleges.

**Hot Tip**: Know what sources of power you have access to and identify who in your organisation exercises power and what you can learn from them.

## MYTH # 3: THE MEANS DOESN'T JUSTIFY THE ENDS

The converse of this concept is usually attributed to Niccolo Machiavelli. Machiavelli was a 16th-century Italian writer, who, out of work and looking for a job, wrote a job application to the Magnificent Lorenzo de Medici. In the history of the world it was one of the longer job applications and was later published as *The Prince* (Machiavelli, 2004).

*The Prince* has become described by many as an amoral guide to leadership and the term 'Machiavellian' as being something that is characterised by deception and ruthlessness. Never one to avoid controversy, we're going to tease out a few extracts from *The Prince* that we hope will show Machiavelli in a different light, with some useful tips for leaders (please excuse the political incorrectness in the extracts – it was written in the 16th-century):

- **'There is no other way to guard yourself against flattery than by making men understand that telling you the truth will not offend you.'** Surround yourself with people who are not self-serving and will advise you honestly and challenge you.

- **'The first method for estimating the intelligence of a ruler is to look at the men he has around him.'** Never fool yourself, or allow anyone else to mislead you, about the reality of the situation you face. Only by confronting them and the reality can you deal with the present and plan for the future.
- **'Acknowledge the possibilities for failure: a skilful leader does better to act boldly than to try to guard against every possible eventuality.'** Don't be afraid of failure. Only those that do nothing never fail.
- **'Without an opportunity, their abilities would have been wasted, and without their abilities, the opportunity would have arisen in vain.'** Your staff are your most valuable resource, so make sure they are allowed every opportunity to develop themselves.
- **'It is not titles that honour men, but men that honour titles.'** Don't appoint people into the roles of Safeguarding Manager or Quality Manager in your organisation. Make safeguarding and quality themes that everyone in the organisation take responsibility for.
- **'All courses of action are risky, so prudence is not in avoiding danger but calculating risk and acting decisively.'** Don't be afraid to take calculated risks. The future is not set, but you can help shape it by your willingness to take risks and act with conviction.
- **'It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things.'** Never do anything illegal, but there will be occasions when you need to act in a ruthless manner in the interest of your organisation or your learners.
- **'He who becomes a Prince through the favour of the people should always keep on good terms with them; which it is easy for him to do, since all they ask is not to be oppressed.'** Be aware that anyone who helped you to reach a position of authority may see you as a threat. If this is a possibility, make yourself useful to them or plan your escape.

There was something of the fable of the Emperor's new clothes in the next case study. While people believed in Nick, he was able to wield power from a number of sources. He controlled resources within his team, had a steady stream of jokes and anecdotes that amused people and the support of senior staff within the university. Once the belief started to diminish, his jokes ceased to become funny and his disposition changed to one of intimidating others around him. He had forgotten the advice of Machiavelli that '*He who becomes a Prince through the favour of the people should always keep on good terms with them; which it is easy for him to do, since all they ask is not to be oppressed.*'

Remember, if you believe in this myth you are not the only Machiavellian in the world. They are evident in the policy makers, the managers in your organisation, the staff, the parents and even your learners. If need be, protect yourself against others who believe that the ends justify the means. They are unlikely to shy away from causing you problems if it suits their purpose. Remember that it's better to be useful to another Machiavellian than to be their friend.
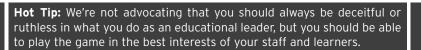
> ## CASE STUDY
>
> Nick was something of an enigma. He reached the position of curriculum leader within the education faculty of a university via a training role within industry. He had a reputation for risky decision-making, which although causing concern amongst others in his department, who had a more traditional outlook on education, was bringing in a substantial amount of revenue for the department.
>
> As Nick's reputation grew, so did the size of his team. He was given a lot of scope to recruit new members to his team whom he felt had a similar outlook to him. The team was immensely successful in the first year or two, bringing in a lot of work for the department in non-traditional areas such as the manufacturing and health sectors. Members of Nick's team were reveling in the praise and no-one, either inside or outside of the team, questioned Nick's decisions.
>
> It may be that Nick felt that he was insulated from any criticism but, as one or two of his decisions backfired on him, he tried to blame the members of his team. A group of people that had once been in awe of Nick now began to question him and bit by bit, the team fell apart. Other curriculum leaders, who had been jealous of Nick's success, saw this as an opportunity to attack him in curriculum leaders' meetings.
>
> Eventually, Nick's team was disbanded and he was moved into a more marginalised role where as his head of department claimed 'he could do less damage'.

**Hot Tip:** We're not advocating that you should always be deceitful or ruthless in what you do as an educational leader, but you should be able to play the game in the best interests of your staff and learners.

## MYTH # 4: NICE PEOPLE DON'T MAKE SUCCESSFUL LEADERS

We work on the principle that leaders can only lead if people are prepared to follow them. In the two case studies above, we've looked at the power that leaders possess that might compel people to follow them. We guess that we all like nice guys (like Tom) as good human beings, but do they need something more (like Mary) to make them successful leaders?

The argument in favour of nice people making successful leaders is based on the feel-good assumption that the best leaders are collaborative, compassionate, empathetic and free of most defects of character. Opponents argue that the best human beings do indeed have these qualities, but the most successful leaders usually have something different. In this respect, they describe 'successful leaders' as being people who consistently show the ability to get things done, the ability to sell others an idea, the ability to talk their way out of a jam and the ability to bounce back from setbacks.

Nice people can make successful leaders. If you need proof – read the following case study.

---

## CASE STUDY

Like many parents whose child is starting secondary school, Bob was concerned over whether he had made the right choice of school for his daughter, Amy. By the end of the first term all doubts had disappeared. Not only was his daughter doing well academically but she was a member of her school netball and rounders teams and was participating in the school orchestra. The icing on the cake was when the school staff performed a pantomime at Christmas, with the Head Teacher playing the arch villain.

Bob met his daughter's Head Teacher some three years after the Head had retired, and when he opened by saying 'You won't remember me but ...', the Head cut Bob short and said 'Of course I do, you're Amy's dad; how's she doing at university?'

---

**Anthony Bryk** and **Barbara Schneider** (2002) wrote about the importance of the social exchanges, such as that between Bob and his daughter's Head Teacher, that take place in a school community. They referred not just to what takes place in the classroom and staffroom but also to the relationships that develop with all stakeholders and their mutual dependency on each other to achieve desired outcomes. You don't get this by being nasty to people.

Bryk and Schneider refer to this principle as *relational trust*, and claim that this dependency is based on the obligations and expectations that people have of each other and can be categorised under the following headings:

> **Respect:** This is marked by a leader's willingness to listen to what others are saying and a genuine commitment to take others' views into account.

> **Regard:** This grows as a result of the leader being willing to extend themselves beyond the basic requirements of their role.

> **Competence:** This can be measured by the confidence that everyone has in the leader's ability to lead.

> **Integrity:** This is recognised through leaders behaving ethically and keeping promises.

Bryk and Schneider argue that *relational trust* cannot be taught, rather it occurs as a result of day-to-day exchanges and that even the simplest interactions can have a significant impact on building trust in the organisation. They suggest that educational leaders, managers and teachers have a key role to play in developing and sustaining relational trust. How they behave towards others, and the vision they have for their organisation, set the standards for respect and integrity.

Here are two lessons that can be learned from Bob's daughter's school:

- The Head Teacher embodied everything that is critical in relational trust. We've seen many Heads who *talked the talk* (their words were more impressive than their actions). Bob's daughter's Head Teacher was loved and respected by everyone in the school because he *walked the walk* (he believed actions spoke louder than words).
- Through their actions in extra-curricular activities, the staff at the school demonstrated their obligations to their pupils and their parents and each other. Through the pantomime, staff were interacting socially with each other, parents were acknowledging the extra effort staff were putting into rehearsals and pupils were seeing a different side to their teachers.

Of course, we accept that not all staff have the time in their busy caseloads to devote three months of their own time rehearsing for a one-off pantomime performance and that success should not be measured purely in terms of the time being spent by staff on such activities, but certainly, from a parent's perspective, this will do much to dispel any fears that parents have about their child's secondary education.

Whether you agree or disagree with the myth really depends on what you consider to be nice. There is a disease called *santaphobia*; a morbid fear of Father Christmas. Even Mother Teresa isn't exempt, as there is a phobia called *hagiaphobia*; a morbid fear of saintly people. Unless there is something called *Virginaphobia*, people like Richard Branson are living proof that nice people (most people think he's nice) do make good leaders. But, is Sir Richard the rule or a very rare exception? We could make a list of nice and nasty people who are proven good leaders, but we'll leave you to do that.

> **Hot Tip:** Be aware that the day-to-day exchanges, including even the simplest interactions, can have a significant impact on building trust and respect in the organisation.

## MYTH # 5: LEADERS SHOULD HAVE THEIR OWN UNIQUE STYLE THAT THEY STRICTLY ADHERE TO

You probably read a lot about the importance of having the right style of leadership. Early on we mentioned the often asked question 'What is your style of leadership?'. We promised you an answer to floor the person asking you the question. Be patient, it's coming, but first here are some good responses from respected theorists that you might want to consider:

**Action-centred leadership:** John Adair (1983) argues that a leader must be concerned with the needs of the task, the individual and the team and that they must

ensure that these different needs are met. Explain that you see your priorities as setting work standards, deadlines and targets and providing the resources and well-trained, motivated staff to achieve those targets.

**Contingency leadership:** Fred Fiedler's (1967) theory suggests that when you find yourself in an unfavourable situation you should change the situation not your leadership approach. This is suggested because it is assumed that leadership characteristics are psychological traits which are difficult to change. Explain that your priority is to identify the source of any problems you face and analyse how best to respond to them.

**Situational leadership:** Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard (1969) suggest that as a leader you need to provide a combination of direction and support when dealing with a member of staff. Direction involves giving the person detailed instructions on how to complete the task/job. Support requires you to provide the encouragement and emotional support that they need to complete the task/job. Explain that your priority is to get to know and understand the people who work for you before deciding what level of support and direction is needed

**Transactional leadership: James MacGregor Burns** (1978) popularised the phrase 'transactional leadership'. It describes the, often informal, bartering process that goes on between leaders and staff all the time. He categorised these as: (a) constructive transactions, which involve the leader offering inducements to the follower to comply with their request; and (b) corrective or coercive transactions, which occur when the leader threatens the follower if they refuse to cooperate or if they fail to stop acting in a certain way. Explain that your priority is to get to know and understand the people who work for you before deciding whether they will respond better to offers of rewards or threats of punishments.

**Distributed leadership:** Today it has become nearly impossible for an individual to properly administer and lead any form of educational institution. Education leaders must assume responsibilities in an ever-wider range of areas: instruction, organisational culture, management, strategic development, budgeting, micro politics, human resources and external development. Any one leader will have difficulty successfully managing all these areas on his or her own and will need to delegate responsibilities. Cecil Gibb (1958), who is generally acknowledged as having coined the term 'distributed leadership', argues that securing staff members' full participation in the organisation's decision-making processes promotes meaningful collaboration and harmonious work relationships, generates passion for accomplishing goals, and boosts student and teacher productivity. Explain that your priority is to create and leave behind new leaders with the capability of serving their organisation and the wider community, and you can't fail to impress.

Here's a quick test: Which of the above leadership styles did the new Head in the following case study adopt?

## CASE STUDY

Phil was the recently retired Head of a primary school in North Yorkshire and a hard act to follow. He was hard in many respects; his physical presence and aggressive nature meant that he was rarely challenged. His replacement, Simon, was a less imposing individual, both in terms of his size and nature. When Simon took over, Phil invited him out for a pint and told him not to take any nonsense from anyone, especially the parents.

Following an altercation between two parents in the playground, Simon stepped in to break up the argument. By now a crowd had gathered and, feeling that he needed to stamp his authority, Simon demanded that both parents apologise to each other. One of the parents shook his head and started to walk away. Simon told him to 'get back immediately'. As he continued to walk away, Simon repeated his demands. At this stage, the parent did return and punched Simon in the face.

It wasn't that Simon was wrong to intervene; indeed, it was important that he did. It was the aggressive way in which he did this that led to the unfortunate consequences. Simon had now lost any credibility and it was clear that it would take a lot to restore this.

We'd be surprised if you found any one of the listed styles that adequately described Simon's approach to leadership. There was certainly a bit of action-centred and contingency stuff in there, but nothing from the transactional style of leadership. Simon had clearly felt that he would gain respect by copying the previous Head's style of leadership. What he failed to do was to find out whether his predecessor was respected or feared.

If none of the entries in this section appeal to you, try 'chameleonistic leadership'. Tell anyone asking you what your leadership style is, that you adapt your style to suit the environment and circumstances you are in. Let's take a trip to the art gallery in the case study on the next page to see if we can unravel what we mean by this term.

Chameleon leadership is therefore predicated on the belief that when leaders make a decision, they must take into account all aspects of the current situation and act on those aspects that are key to the situation at hand. For example, if someone is leading staff during an Ofsted inspection, an autocratic style is probably best, where command and control may be necessary. If someone is leading on a programme to develop a more inclusive curriculum, a participative and facilitative leadership style is probably best, where cooperation and collaboration are vital.

Don't bother searching the web or buying McGrath and Bates's (2013) book or any other book on leadership to find out more about this form of leadership; it doesn't exist (yet) and will therefore floor anyone asking questions about your leadership style. Throwing in a bit of an art analogy, though, might confuse anyone who doesn't share your love of a particular art genre.

## CASE STUDY

Derek had been a headteacher for over thirty years. He became poacher-turned-gamekeeper around the start of the millennium when he became an Ofsted inspector. Whenever he inspected a school, he would ask the headteacher to draw a quick illustration of their school in terms of leadership and management. Every picture was different. Derek saw: a ship with the head staring out to sea (figurehead?), a ship with the head at the wheel ('aye, aye captain'), a ship with the head on the bridge with binoculars ('I spy the promised land'), a ship with the head looking through his telescope with his blind eye ('I see no ships') and dozens more.

Derek found that this was a useful exercise and gave him an unprepared, from-the-gut insight into the school environment and school leadership. Not every headteacher participated in the exercise, with one head saying, 'If you ask me, the staff, the children, the parents, the Local Authority, you'll get a different picture from each!'

Derek found this exercise was always very enlightening and thought that Ofsted should have included this in their guidance! He told us that 'The secret is not to give the artist too much time to think, to anticipate what you are expecting and to make a neat job of it.' We can't resist including Derek's full thoughts on this (if art isn't your thing, then maybe skip over the next bit).

Derek told us, 'I think I might have alighted on a useful way of understanding some modern art. Just imagine the outcome of a Jackson Pollock work had he spent more time planning, for example choosing his palette range. Let's just consider this: Pollock's *Autumn Rhythm* was completed in his "Drip Period" and has been described as "chaotic" (kindly described, I must add). Every part of the work has equal significance, there being no focal point.'

We are left wondering if some of those sketches, now sadly consigned to the Ofsted shredder, were in fact the headteachers' contribution to abstract expressionism. Perhaps it is just better sometimes to say it as it is, or commit to your oeuvre quickly, or go with your first thought, reaction or response. We're not saying Pollock did this, but the headteachers being Ofsteded by Derek did. Why not have a go yourself (and remember to have a title)?

**Hot Tip:** Adapt your style of leadership to suit the environment and circumstances you are in.

## MYTH # 6: YOU HAVE TO HAVE BEEN A GOOD TEACHER TO MAKE A GOOD HEADTEACHER

There is a shortage of good teachers wanting to become Headteachers. In some areas of the UK, between one-third and a half of all Heads will retire during the next five

years which, with a shortage of suitable replacements, will create a crisis situation in the profession.

According to Malcolm Trobe, deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, in an article in the *Guardian*, 'negativity and over-accountability have combined to mean that, especially in schools where there are extra pressures, it's much more difficult to attract candidates for job vacancies at the top'. Trobe adds that 'What you want are high-quality leaders,' he says. 'Bringing people in from outside is great if it works – but it can only be part of a programme, and the other part of the programme should be enabling good senior teachers to take on headship roles in schools – and that's what's missing at the moment' (Press Association, 2016).

Trobe also claims that 'Right now, good people are being turned off becoming Headteachers because the element of risk involved in the job has increased significantly. We're in a situation where the knee-jerk reaction is that if a school has problems, the answer is to get rid of the head. It's the football manager mentality, whereas what schools need is stability, and what heads need is constructive support, not the adversarial system we're in now where school inspections are hit-jobs.'

For Sion Humphreys, of the National Association of Head Teachers, also in an article in the *Guardian*, the crucial thing for outsiders coming into headships is the need to prove themselves: 'There have always been career shifters coming into education, and there's often a suspicion that hard economic times is part of what's fuelling that. It's not always the case, but these people do have to prove themselves in the classroom – they have to get professional credibility' (Moorhead, 2012).

## CASE STUDY

Geoff was appointed head of a middle school in the South West. He had been a teacher for twenty years before becoming a Headteacher. He felt that it would be difficult for someone who had only been a teacher for a handful of years to go into a classroom and talk about learning pedagogy. When he sits down and observes lessons, teachers know he can do it because he's been a teacher for twenty years. Geoff doesn't object to appointing Headteachers from outside industry or commerce, or fast-tracking, but in terms of credibility he believes there's no substitute for teaching experience.

Although Geoff loves being a Headteacher he now recognises that more and more of his senior teaching colleagues think twice before applying for a headship. He questions who in their right mind is going to place themselves in the firing line to head up a school that needs improvement and undergoing the pressure when someone's livelihood is going to be determined by a two-day inspection. Geoff claims that many good senior teachers don't put themselves forward for the final step because they are smart enough to know that if they take that step and things go wrong, they could be out of a job.

The problem, which Geoff and others are facing, is that the current system is so adversarial that it puts the best applicants off. It makes observers go into a classroom and pick all the bad things you see going on there to use as a basis for improvement, instead of going in and look for the positive and then trying to build on it to make things even better. That's the approach the authorities need to take with schools and with headships because, while things are bad at the moment in terms of headteacher recruitment, it's possible that they're going to get a lot worse.

*Future Leaders* is a leadership development programme for those who share our commitment to eradicating educational disadvantage, and have the talent and commitment to become headteachers of schools in challenging contexts. The idea of *Future Leaders* is to identify people who were able and prepared to take on headships in the country's toughest schools – the ones that find it hardest to recruit leaders – and what *Future Leaders* always expected was that a proportion of those who applied to the scheme wouldn't come from traditional backgrounds.

*Future Leaders*' chief executive, Heath Monk, explains that the project wasn't conceived as a way of enticing those from other backgrounds into becoming heads, but over the five years it has been in existence, that has been one of the outcomes. He claims that, 'you don't have to have been a teacher for 20 years to be able to step up to these top jobs in tough schools.' The people that *Future Leaders* bring on board often have experience that turns out to be highly relevant to their work as heads, and, as Monk argues, 'far from being stale and not interested in reflection or change, they're brimming with enthusiasm and keen to bring in change' (Henshaw, 2016).

## CASE STUDY

Colin enjoyed a successful career in the pharmaceutical industry before becoming a *Future Leader* and being appointed head of an independent school that focused on the needs of children at risk of being excluded. The school used creative and performing arts as a means of engaging with children. Although widely read in the arts and literature, Colin had no teaching experience in these subjects. What he did bring to the school was originality and a passion for working with governors, staff, learners and their parents to get them to challenge chronic under-achievement and tired attitudes to education.

Colin has been a head at the school for four years and many feel that he has bought an innovative approach to teaching in an environment that has been steeped in educational failure, neglect and low self-esteem.

So, what do you think? Do you need to have been a good teacher to make a good headteacher?

Someone who excels as a teacher may have demonstrated their love for their subject and have excellent subject knowledge. They may be able to deliver a lesson with pace

and interest, use digital resources effectively, mark work efficiently and record those marks, know how best to teach tricky concepts and how to ask challenging questions of pupils in the most effective way. Finally, they need to have high expectations of their pupils and be determined to ensure that every pupil will master their subject.

Although these qualities set the scene for everything that's good in teaching, they may not be the ones looked for in a good headteacher, where the patience, tenacity and diplomacy to deal with awkward school governors, aggressive Ofsted inspectors or an uncooperative Local Authority, or the ability to conduct a charm offensive on a potential private sector investor, may be what's needed.

If you are an aspiring headteacher, contemplating an upward move, here are five factors to take into account:

- Don't fall into the trap of believing that competence or even excellence in your current role suggests that you will be competent in a higher-level role.
- Match your capabilities with the demands of the new job. Your starting point should be an analysis of the skills you already possess and those required to achieve success in the new role.
- Realise that it's not always necessary to gain satisfaction at work by seeking promotion because you are good in your existing job. Sometimes, without any significant change in your responsibilities, you can find a reward for your hard work through other incentives.
- If you have been promoted and discover that you are not competent at that level, additional training, mentoring or shadowing someone who is competent may give you the tools you need to succeed.
- If this doesn't work, never be afraid to revert back to your previous role. Your talent and skills were clearly appreciated at that level.

# MANAGERS

By their nature all management theories are just a partial explanation and simplification of the complex reality they try to explain. To expect one theory to explain fully what is going on or to work in all situations is on a par with expecting that a map of the Moscow underground, with station names written in Cyrillic script, will help you navigate your way across the city (one of us tried it this year and got hopelessly lost).

Some theories that you read about will immediately appeal to you; others you will reject out of hand. That's fine. Some approaches won't suit your personality and unless they reflect your beliefs about how people should be treated you will find it difficult to use them effectively. What you should aim to do is take from each theory that which is useful to you. You can then combine it with aspects of other theories and your own personality and experiences to form your own unique management style. In the rest of this part of the book we summarise some of the great theories on management.

We start with the theorist who influenced early thinking on management practices that focus on the needs of the organisation before moving on to more contemporary models of management that focus on the needs of the individual.

---

**Fredrick Winslow Taylor** (1911) rose from shop-floor labourer to become a director at Bethlehem Steel, the largest steel maker in the United States. He was more interested in efficiency than the social aspects of managing people. His book *The Principles of Scientific Management* cemented his reputation as the father of scientific management. Here are three of Taylor's key management principles and how you can apply them:

**Plan and control work:** Review how each job is done in your team and ask the following questions: Do we need to do this job? Can it be done more efficiently? Does the work allocated to each member of staff match their abilities/strengths?

**Use time-and-motion techniques:** Regularly review the work that staff do and look for efficiency gains. Set deadlines and benchmarks for performance but don't sacrifice effectiveness for efficiency by relying exclusively on performance figures. Sometimes the quality of teaching isn't reflected in performance figures alone.

**Carefully select and train staff:** This was revolutionary at a time when most workers were given no formal training. It's now taken for granted that additional training can improve your team's productivity greatly. Make sure you have a well thought out process for identifying training needs and don't just rely on the annual performance review.

## CASE STUDY

Ed's school had always had a deputy headteacher. However, when Tom, the long-serving deputy headteacher, decided it was time to improve his golf handicap by calling it a day it seemed an appropriate time for Ed to review the role. From the outset it was obvious that Tom was going to be a hard act to follow as over the years he had developed a vast repertoire of skills, practices and so on that it would be hard to replicate in one individual. Although individual prospective candidates offered great potential in specific areas, no one appeared to have the range and experience to undertake what under Tom's tenure had become a wide-ranging and very idiosyncratic role.

Ed's instinct was to innovate rather than try to replicate, redefining the roles and responsibilities of the senior leadership team and replacing the more general job of the Deputy Headteacher with two Assistant Heads who would undertake specific clearly defined roles, aligned to the skill sets of the most appropriate candidates. The newly appointed Assistant Heads recognised the need for an intensive programme of training to ensure that they were fully equipped to undertake their roles. Rather than rely on the laissez-faire model that had served well in the past, targets were drawn up and reviews were completed which provided essential information on the effectiveness of the new system. A year later an inspection report of the school was highly complementary about the effectiveness of senior management.

Although most of what is referred to as *Taylorism* isn't considered to be acceptable in modern management parlance, Taylor's ideas do have some support and may be appropriate for the right reason in the right situation with the right people.

Here's a case study based on a contemporary of Taylor's, A. S. Neill, that shows a different approach to management.

## CASE STUDY

David was considered an outstanding music teacher. He had been recruited as deputy head of an independent school that used performing arts as a medium for attracting 15/16 year olds who were at risk of exclusion in what were being considered as failing schools. This was a bold move by David who had been in his comfort zone for a number of years but had also recognised that waiting for promotion in his previous school was like waiting for a dead man's shoes.

David had read about A. S. Neill's (1960) work as a headteacher at Summerhill at the beginning of the last century. Neill's approach, where he put his pupils' personal developmental needs before academic achievement, meant that although exam performance results were low, a much higher proportion of pupils found work after leaving school.

David felt that his new role offered him the opportunity to emulate Neill some hundred years after Summerhill was first thought of. Unfortunately, although you could sense the morale of both staff and learners had improved during David's year there, performance figures hadn't.

Dave realised that he wasn't best suited to his new role, when his Head resigned after a heated discussion with the governors over performance. He turned down the role of temporary Head to revert to what he felt he was more comfortable at doing: teaching.

So far we have presented management theory as something where managers are in control, able to take into account all aspects of the current situation and act on those aspects that are key to the situation at hand. If only life was that simple. Very often, managers find themselves having to deal with the swampy lowland messes that occur as a result of the idiosyncratic and unpredictable nature of the people they are managing. **Jon Ronson** (2011) has written an interesting (and amusing) book in which he describes the psychopathic tendencies of people you will meet in the workplace.

It was **Robert Hare** (2003) who developed the Psychopathy Checklist (PCL) as a means of diagnosing psychopathic traits in individuals for clinical, legal or research purposes. Ronson's interpretation of Hare's work offers a more light-hearted perspective. Here is a summary of how we have adapted Hare's theory, using our own headings, to show how the key traits could be found in the people that you are managing:

- The **Seducer**: Charming you and others in a glib and superficial manner.
- The **Ego-maniac**: Having an exaggeratedly high estimation of their ability and refusing to accept criticism.
- The **Procrastinator**: Always coming up with excuses for not meeting set objectives.
- The **Deflector**: Failing to accept responsibility for their own actions and seeking to blame others.

## CASE STUDY

Diane thought many of these terms perfectly described the members of her team, though in frequent moments of frustration with the individuals concerned she could also provide a few more colourful ones.

How could she forget the first term in post? One member of her team, Lesley, appeared to lack any drive and the amount of time and effort it needed to motivate her sapped even Diane's much vaunted energy. Another, Mo, was the classic procrastinator, constantly failing to meet deadlines, who also had an unpredictably dangerous mix of the ego-maniac on those occasions when she felt cornered. A third, Norma, was never prepared to accept criticism however justified, looking to pass the blame elsewhere whilst at the same time being only too eager to find fault with others and bring it to the attention of Diane herself. Then there was Paul; always so supportive and encouraging on the surface, but you could not escape the fact that there was a highly personal agenda.

Yet despite the manifestation of such a wide range of traits, Diane concluded there were common themes behind them and that these behaviours were stimulated by any one or a mixture of insecurity and inadequacy or a desire for personal advancement or aggrandisement.

Proposed improvements to homework policy had the potential to trigger the usual battery of behaviour in her team, but an increased awareness of them and the people concerned, whilst not ensuring a smooth transition, helped to obviate the worst excesses. As soon as Paul got wind that there was change in the air, he needed to feel that he was in the vanguard of innovation, collecting points for his CV. Lesley and Mo needed reassurance that the changes were in their own interests, for their negative reactions were the product of a difficulty achieving a work–life balance in the case of Lesley, who had severe family demands, and a real lack of confidence in Mo's case. As for Norma, her antagonism was undiminished and was, as usual, a front for a basic lack of ability. Still you can't win them all. Not all at once anyway, but Diane is still working on it.

Here are six other character traits that you might find amongst the people that you are managing:

- The **Sponge**: Constantly needing to be stimulated.
- The **Shell**: Showing no remorse or guilt if they offend you or others through inappropriate comments.
- The **Unmovable**: Displaying callousness and a lack of empathy with others who may not share their points of view.
- The **Parasite**: Living off the knowledge and skills of their colleagues and falsely claiming credit for ideas.
- The **Results Merchant**: Lacking any drive for long-term development and being obsessed with completing tasks.
- The **Disrupter**: Displaying a tendency to act impulsively and irresponsibly and causing disharmony amongst others they may be working with.

The actual PCL test is administered by trained professionals and done under strict clinical conditions. The model is only used here for illustrative purposes and serves to highlight the extremes in people's behaviours that you may encounter. Should you have to manage people displaying these traits in your organisation, we would advise you to:

- Start by assuming that they will always do the worst thing possible within their trait characteristic.
- Have a strategy in mind for handling the worst possible scenario. If they don't do the worst thing possible, celebrate with a quiet drink and save the strategy for next time. If they do the worst possible thing, keep a clear head and follow the old boxing maxim of defending yourself at all times.
- Implement the planned strategy and keep a record of everything that was said or done. You can still have a quiet drink, but this time to relax.
- Make sure that whatever course of action you take, you follow the rules and regulations set down by your organisation for dealing with people. Even if you were in the right, failure to adhere to correct procedures could result in legal action against you or your organisation.

It's worth making the point here that you will also almost certainly display some of these traits. You need to reflect on this and explore the impact that you have on others.

**Hot Tip**: Ask yourself: What's making me think the person I am managing has psychopathic traits? Have I got a strategy in place for dealing with them? Am I aware of my own psychopathic traits?

**Tony Bush** and **David Middlewood** (2006) are two of the most influential contemporary thinkers on educational management. They argue that education provides a

unique management challenge because it is geared to the development of human potential. They base this argument on the belief that, if the development of learners is at the heart of the organisation's business, this can only be done effectively if managers in education value the staff who deliver this service. They suggest that if managers want to support staff to flourish they should:

- **Be good role models** by demonstrating a commitment to their own learning and personal and professional development.
- **Support all staff as learners** by recognising that all members of staff are different and have different aspirations both personally and professionally.
- **Encourage the sharing of learning** by developing a network of people who they share knowledge and processes with and act as mentors and mentees with them.

## CASE STUDY

Wendy was surprised when her Head, Alan, suggested she become the IT curriculum leader, feeling that she lacked experience and sufficient specialist knowledge of the subject. This was unlike her predecessor, Peter, who had established a local reputation and was on the way to developing a national one too. However, Alan knew that what Wendy lacked in subject expertise she more than made up for in areas that would be far more important in leading and managing a successful department.

For all his expertise in the subject, Peter had struggled to develop new systems of working within the department and often complained to Alan of his frustration with staff because of their failure to implement change at the required pace.

Wendy did not have the baggage of expertise that had made it difficult for Peter to empathise with the problems and shortcomings of staff. Indeed, she herself shared some of these. What Wendy had in abundance was a commitment to self-improvement, which meant honestly and publically admitting her own shortcomings and working hard to redress these. When staff asked for help or advice they quickly learned that they would be dealt with honestly. Wendy was not on an ego trip that made it impossible to say 'I don't know' or 'I didn't think that would happen' (unlike her predecessor), instead opportunities to learn together as a team would be grasped. She was also prepared to take a personal lead, which meant that she was prepared to face the same problems as her staff and on occasions to fail and then react positively by working hard to overcome difficulties.

Although she was no extrovert, in fact she was naturally rather shy and retiring, Wendy was naturally sensitive to team members, aware of their different strengths and weaknesses and conscious that a one-fix-fits-all was not sufficient to get the best out of them. During her time in post Wendy developed a strong, cohesive team who were a strength within the school.

- **Build an emphasis on learning into all management processes** by not getting caught up in the trap of doing things how they've always been done if these are not proving effective.
- **Develop a culture of enquiry and reflection** by not reflecting in isolation and developing communities of reflective practice where enquiry and reflection becomes a shared activity.
- **Assess the effectiveness of staff learning** by having an appreciation of whether or not staff learning policies and practices are proving effective.

Bush and Middlewood claim that valuing and developing staff provides the best prospect of enhanced and sustainable performance by the organisation, but that progress in this direction is likely to be uneven and possibly turbulent. They argue that dealing with this is the ultimate task of management. Here is a member of staff that one of us dealt with during our time as a Head of School.

We've offered the above as examples of how management theory has shifted in emphasis away from the needs of the organisation, with the focus on efficiency gains, to the needs of the individuals, their behaviour patterns and their personal and professional development. But don't get the idea that we think management is all about theory. Practical experience is essential if you want to develop as a manger. You cannot become a great manager by just reading and watching others exercise their skills. You have to jump into the messy lowland swamp that, unfortunately, is often the reality that is management, and get stuck in (not stuck in it).

Management is both an art and a science and anyone can learn the basics. What distinguishes the great from the merely average artist or scientist is their willingness to take risks, to try out new ideas, to fail and to learn from their mistakes. Just reading about management theory is not enough – you have to try out your ideas in practice. You also have to be prepared to fail occasionally.

> **Hot Tip**: There is no disgrace in failure. Remember the only failure you can be criticised for is not trying.

In this chapter we have looked at the distinction between leadership and management. The factor that is common to both is the need to demonstrate professionalism. It's important, however, to draw the distinction between being *a professional* and being *professional*. The former suggests someone who abides by the standards to operate required by licensing authorities (*they do things right*). The latter relates to someone who makes the work-based experience the most valuable one possible for the individual (*they do the right thing*). Inevitably, there has to be a balance between efficiency (*doing things right*) and effectiveness (*doing the right things*), which may be tipped in one way or the other by the financial demands placed on an organisation. This creates a dilemma:

- Being inefficient and failing to satisfy the requirements of the licensing authorities may result in funding being withdrawn from the organisation.
- Being ineffective and failing to satisfy the needs and expectations of its learners may result in learners failing to achieve.

Either way, the organisation becomes vulnerable and may not survive.

The final word on leaders and managers:

- 80 per cent of leadership is inspirational and 20 per cent aspirational.
- 80 per cent of management is aspirational and 20 per cent inspirational.
- Be prepared to look at situations from other people's perspectives and never be afraid to re-examine your own values in light of what they have to say.
- Know what sources of power you have access to and identify who in your organisation exercises power and what you can learn from them.
- Be aware that the day-to-day exchanges, including even the simplest interactions, can have a significant impact on building trust and respect in the organisation.
- Don't think that that you should be deceitful or ruthless in what you do as a leader, but you should be able to play the game in the best interests of your staff and learners.
- Adapt your style of leadership to suit the environment and circumstances you are in.
- Have a strategy in place for dealing with difficult people.
- There is no disgrace in failure: the only failure you can be criticised for is not trying.