

# 1 Theoretical Perspectives

Having seen expressions of leadership in the previous chapters, we will deal here with the theoretical representations that were developed to explain its many facets. One might question why it is important to have theories with respect to leadership and what benefits would come from their development. Considering theories is a traditional approach to discussing practical implications in addition to advancing knowledge and our understanding of our world. The primary advantage that theories offer is that they allow for the development of models that as abstractions of reality allow for a much easier understanding and provide a frame of reference and experimentation. Models allow us to communicate efficiently complex phenomena and to see how variations of their parameters and variables can lead to alternative interpretations that will eventually suggest practical improvements.

While it is great to have theories that realistically represent phenomena, we should always be aware of their potential disadvantages. In the social sciences in particular, which is where the study of leadership mostly belongs, we always need to be aware of the abstractions theories provide, as they are not complete representations of the phenomena they model. The explanation and motives for leadership could be simple enough, like necessity or to provide an evolutionary advantage that increases the chances of survival for the leader or even something like a call to arms. Allowing for some flexibility if what theories consider as motivations for leadership and adapting to what we are facing is probably the best we can make of them. As we will see in this chapter, this is the route that most theories of leadership follow.

## 1.1 Constituents of leadership

Factors that surround leadership can in general be classified according to three influential elements and the ways in which they interact and influence each other: the leader, the followers and the environment (see Figure 4.1). The latter includes the organizational/societal setting in which the leadership takes place, the projects and tasks the leader and the followers are involved in, and any stakeholders that influence the situation in any way. All three of these elements are dynamic in nature and are expected to change during the application of leadership. Change to 'Existing theories of leadership usually focus on some of these elements and account to an extent for influences of the others.

Before we get into the core elements of leadership, it is worth mentioning the extended environment in which it takes place. This includes the internal features of the organization in which a group operates and the wider environment (stakeholders that influence the organization). The former might be seen as the micro-environment where the leader, the group and the goals are set, while the latter includes the macro-environment of the society, market or world that influences the organization. The interaction of these two perspectives (micro and macro) is greatly ignored in modern leadership theories, as we will see later on. However, the fact that they are there and provide the background to the expression of leadership make their consideration necessary. The main elements that identify an organization in its extended environment (stakeholders and the world at large) are its structure and culture. Since the focus of this chapter is on the popular theories and practices that have been developed to explain leadership and given that organizational structure and culture were not specifically addressed by these theories, we will refrain from

discussing them until the next chapter, when we will attempt to put everything together into a cohesive framework.

The view of the three influential elements (leader, followers, and environment) clearly places the leaders in a prominent place in the traditional treatment of the phenomenon of leadership and, according to popular belief, they form the core of the phenomenon. As individuals, leaders are expected to possess certain qualities and characteristics that distinguish them from the rest of the individuals in the group. These include personality characteristics like maturity, influence, strong will, extraversion, etc. and physical characteristics like appearance (being tall and strong), intelligence, fluency, etc. Obviously some individuals possess such characteristics more than others and one would expect them to be more suitable for leadership positions.

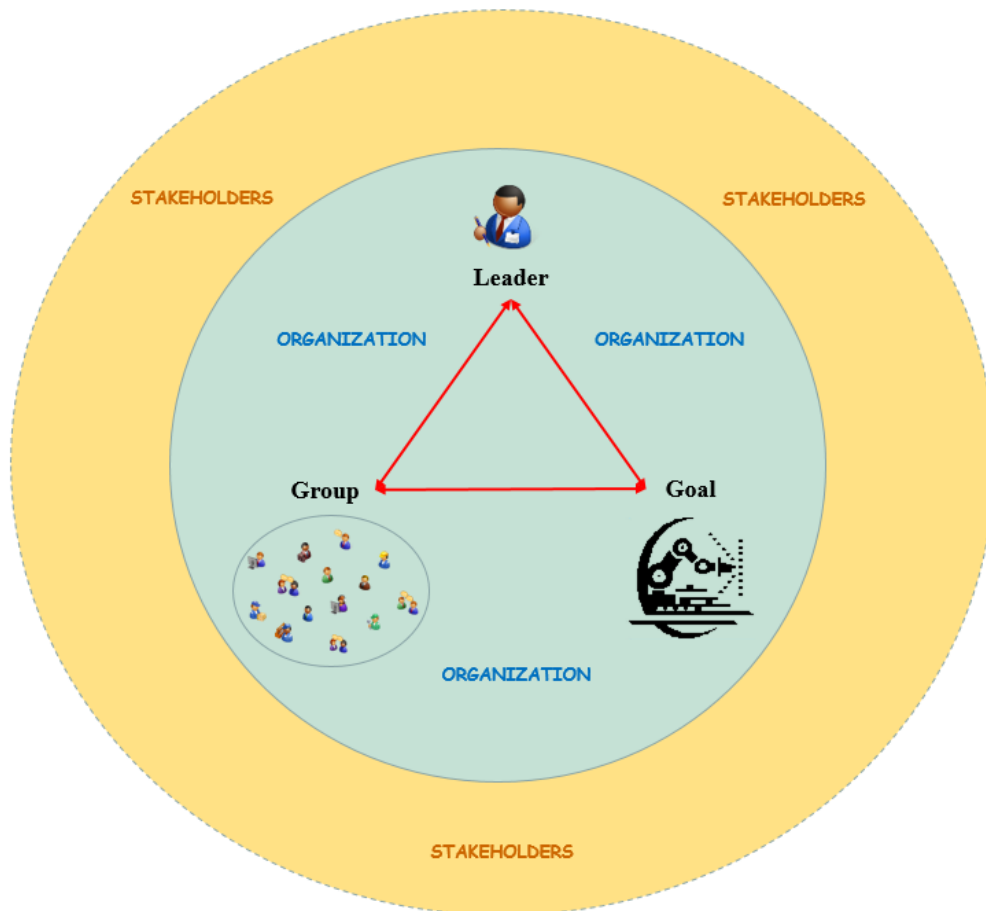


Figure 4.1 Constituents and factors of leadership

Another one of the elements involved in leadership is the goal. This is expressed in the form of a common purpose that the leader and the followers adopt. The word ‘common’ here is key as it provides the ethical tone that leadership is an acceptable arrangement that benefits everyone. It also stresses the need for leaders to work collaboratively and within acceptable norms with the followers in order to achieve their goals.

Alternative perspectives where leadership is viewed as a process focus on the dynamic nature and interaction of the three elements. This emphasis on the process inherently implies that

the three elements interact and affect each other during the application of leadership. In otherwise leadership exists in a social setting and a leader affects and is affected by followers and stakeholders. This approach emphasizes that leadership is not a linear, one-way phenomenon, but rather is an evolving interaction of its elements. One form that the interaction between leader and followers takes is influence. This refers to the ability of leaders to affect the behaviour of their followers and vice versa. When leadership is defined in this manner, it becomes available to everyone and appears as something that many can achieve, rather than being restricted to the formally designated leader in a group.

A basic question when studying leadership from the perspective of a process is how the leader is identified. Do they get assigned or do they emerge? When leadership is a function of a position within an organization, we consider this assigned leadership. This is typically what we experience in the organizational world where someone is raised to a management, head or executive position. When an individual is perceived as the central point in a group without having an assigned position, we consider this emergent leadership. In the former case, someone from above grants an individual the right to lead, while in the latter case, that right is granted by the leader's peers. While the former is based on some form of screening process, the latter is based on the involvement of the individual with the group (mainly through communication), the extent of their familiarity and expertise relating to the task, the interests of the group and their consideration of the group members' opinions. In a sense, an emergent leader fits the identity of the group and acts as its representative with the authority to engage the group in achieving the set goals.

A final characteristic of leadership that has been considered in leadership theories is the concept of 'power' as a contributor to influence. Power reflects the capacity to control the behaviour of others both directly or indirectly. This capacity can be appointed (position authority), gained (expert power) or entrusted (referent power), such as when the followers identify/elect a leader. Some expressions of power include the provision of privileges, rewards, penalties and punishments. These expressions are often considered as reward and coercive power. Another form of power that is identified in group and organizational settings is personal power. This refers to the capacity of leaders to incline followers favourably towards them. Role modelling best behaviour and practices is one way in which leaders can acquire this form of power.

A type of power that attracts a lot of attention in the leadership literature is coercive power. Coercion refers to forcing someone to do something against their will and include both punishment and reward practices. While many theorists who study leadership refused to consider coercive practices as an ideal form of leadership, it is undeniably true that many leaders (both well-known and unknown) rely on this form of power to control subordinates. A case in point is Adolf Hitler, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Such leaders are self-interested and use coercion to achieve their personal goals instead of focusing on the goals of the group or organization they represent.

## **1.2 Leadership and management**

In the context of organizational studies, leadership is best characterized in terms of its relationship to management. Before delving into the theories that have been developed to explain and guide leadership, we need to get cover the distinction between leadership and management, if there really is one. Scholars often express the relationship as leadership versus management, but both managers and leaders can benefit from seeing the two as intertwined and inseparable. Leadership involves processes of management and vice versa. Studies of management do not have such a long history as attempts to theorize leadership. Academics became concerned with management in the early

twentieth century at a time when organizations were becoming more complex in terms of their purpose, outputs and modes of production.

Early work by Frederic Winslow Taylor at the beginning of the twentieth century was one of the first approaches to scientific management that went on to influence models of mass manufacturing. During the same period, similar work by Max Weber on bureaucracies conceptualized the workings of large and complex organizations. A third strand to this work on management emerged later on in Taylor's principles of management, often referred to as Classical Management. He studied management holistically in the sense that he looked at the work of the whole organization rather than breaking down work into specific tasks. He identified five functions of management: planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling.

These classical functions of management were largely uncontested until in 1973, Henry Mintzberg carried out an in-depth study into the nature of management, in which he and his team observed managers at work and asked them to keep work diaries. The analysis of these diaries revealed that the idea of the manager as a rational, ordered planner was misleading, as most managers 'worked at an unrelenting pace ... their activities are characterized by brevity, variety and discontinuity and they are strongly oriented to action and dislike reflective activities'. In contrast to Taylor's study, Mintzberg found that managers often carried out their work in conditions of extreme ambiguity and that much of their time was spent developing relationships within the organization. This study clarified the instances in which management and leadership intersect – when a team lacks clarity and needs direction and when communication is crucial to success. Although at times they might both communicate similar information, the primary responsibility for leaders is the effective communication of a vision, while managers need to communicate the objectives for the accomplishment of that vision.

One of the 'deeper' conceptual differences is that while managers see mistakes as situations that need to be avoided and eradicated in order to sustain and improve efficiency, leaders see mistakes as opportunities for learning and growth. Another more classical and popular difference found in the literature is the long-term perspective leaders have (they work for the future) versus the short-term perspective of managers (they focus on the present). While this is typically true, a crisis situation or emergencies might force a change of roles in leaders and managers (see Figure 4.2). One needs to be careful crossing the boundaries between the two roles, as leaders can be in ineffective management roles, such as when they attempt to motivate when instead they need to organize teams, and managers can be in ineffective leaders' roles, such as when they attempt to suppress change when instead they need to embrace it.

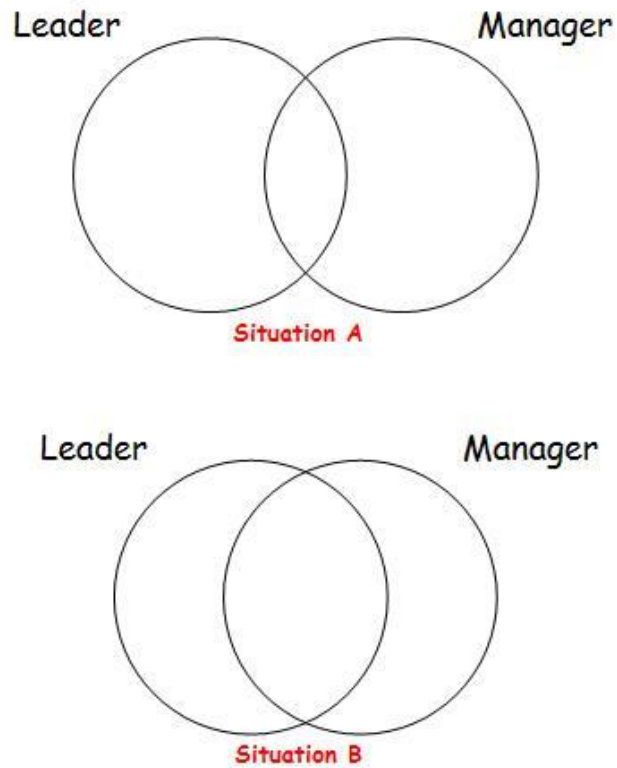


Figure 4.2 Overlap of the roles of leader and manager

Of course, focusing on differences distracts from the similarities and overlaps that could be essential for the success of organizations. Prominent among these is that both leaders and managers work for the same organization and their purpose is to ensure organizational goals are achieved. To ensure this success, they can motivate, inspire, discipline, plan, supervise, mentor, etc. It could be said that the two roles are not different and are probably two sides of the same coin. It could be that both roles are different expressions of leadership that according to the task at hand the role of leader or manager is assumed. Hopefully, the rest of this book will provide a lot of material that will help to answer this question.

### 1.3 Early approaches to describing leadership

The scientific methods and practices as we know them today have not been with us for very long. In that respect, early attempts to describe leadership are mainly in the form of principles and guidelines for prospective leaders to follow. Often, these guidelines address specific situations like political engagements, fighting wars and building sustainable organizations. Some representative texts highlighting aspects of leadership as perceived by their authors will be presented here as a prelude to the more modern attempts to explain leadership and guide its practice. As we hope to see, the contrast between the old and the new is not so great. For these early approaches, only a descriptive presentation will be attempted without any critique of their advantages and disadvantages in describing the ideal leader. Given that the scientific approach was not fully developed during the times that the early theories were formed, the criticism will be reserved for those theories that appeared later on, which have no excuse for their shortcomings in that respect.

### 1.3.1 The Sage Kings

Early discussions on leadership come from Chinese mythology in the form of representations of culture heroes who set up civilization and were collectively called the Sage Kings. Their roots go back as far as records indicate (twenty-third century BC and beyond) and all the way up to the third century BC, as reflected in the *Analects* of Confucius and other Chinese scholars. Among the Kings, we can find probably the first account of a female leader (Nu Wa). While chief among their roles was delivering and enabling innovations like writing, music, agriculture and medicine, their political and leadership abilities extended to modern leader characteristics like meritocracy, team cohesiveness and harmony among the various components of society and virtue, to name but a few.

A case in point in terms of meritocracy was emperor Yao, who as a conscious ruler saw his son as an unworthy successor and arranged for a competent and virtuous common man (Shun) to succeed him. He spent years training and coaching Shun, who eventually followed in his footsteps and established a meritocratic state where promotion was based on fairness, integrity and respectfulness when interacting with the public. Shun, like his predecessor, appointed his best official Yu as his successor towards the end of his life, conscious of the fact that his son wouldn't make for a good leader.

We see expressions of the Sage King in the writings of Confucius, where the leaders, in addition to their political function, also serve as educators for their people. This refers more to the form of teaching that leaders project as role models in their societies. In this way the teaching that is based on the learning of principles is enhanced by the real-life models the leaders portray by their behaviour and actions. Modern similarities exist in the terms of the maxim of acting towards others in the way you want others to act towards you. A noted difference compared to modern beliefs is that the educational Confucian policy is not about intelligence and skills, but about virtue. Any training and the skills one develops are all for the purpose of cultivating character and not just for the achievement of physical or intellectual strength. A noted example is the case of one of his disciples, Zi You, who as a magistrate he emphasized the importance of music education for his people.

This eventually led to a system of practices and formal etiquette aiming to instil discipline and guide someone towards moral behaviour. To achieve this end, the leaders, according to Confucius, needed to work towards developing their own morality. Virtue in the words of Confucius is like the wind for the noble leaders and like the grass for the common person. When the wind sweeps over, the grass will gently bend. According to the Confucian philosophy, the greatness of leaders directly associates with their concern for the good of the people.

### 1.3.2 The Philosopher King

At approximately the same time as Confucius is said to have written the *Analects*, in another part of the globe, in ancient Athens, Plato was developing his ideas on what a leader (ἡγεμών) should be (fourth to third centuries BC). Plato's core idea of leadership was presented in *The Republic* and is expressed through the ideal ruler, a Philosopher King. According to Plato, in order for wisdom and political greatness to exist, either philosophers should be leaders or the leaders should embody the power and spirit of philosophers. Anyone who is not in either of these categories should stand aside if a sustainable community is ever to see the day of light.

The Philosopher King in Plato's view is distinguished by his prudence and virtue, in addition to his love for learning and understanding the eternal essence of his world. Among the traits he displays are his willingness to admit wrongdoing in any form and his passion for the truth. To these Plato would add decency, magnificence, bravery, moderation, grace and friendship. Above all, though, in order for an ideal state to exist, a sense of justice is the cornerstone principle of a virtuous leader. It is worth mentioning here that, according to Plato, educating potential leaders includes among other things military training, theoretical and practical knowledge, ethical principles and living a virtuous lifestyle. It is the responsibility of the state to select the appropriate individual as leader based on their education, intellect and character. We see here the democratic principle at work, in that leaders are elected and are not appointed in any other way.

These leadership traits reflect the philosopher in an ideal society who, as a balanced and virtuous individual, advances through education his physical and intellectual strength that nature gave him. This allows him to become a moral leader and to return to the society what the city did for him. In this way, the leaders surpass the commoners (non-philosophers) and naturally emerge as head of the society. An interesting point to note here is that leadership is legitimized not only by expert knowledge but also by impartiality and fairness.

Plato also provides some insights for the followers, who are expected to go about their business and behave according to their natural strengths and abilities. This practice is reflected in the definition of justice as possessing and acting according to what one owns. The leader's trait of fairness contributes by acting as an integrator for the different members of society; in this way, understanding and cooperation among them enables the harmonious and sustainable development of the state.

It is evident that the two great thinkers Confucius and Plato shared many of the dogmas of a good leader, although they diverged in terms of the way they approached the subject. Confucius was more focused on how someone *becomes* good, while Plato seemed to be concerned more with what *is* good. Conceptually it is also worth mentioning that the focus of Greek thinking on truth suggests a more dialectic debate and engagement of opinions for the truth to emerge, while the Chinese thinking sees truth as more subjective and limited to the thinker's capability, so one should focus on being in touch with the whole that transcends human materialism. Apart from the differences between the two schools of thinking, it is evident that both believed that leadership needs to be based on morality and the innate nature of the individual. These characteristics form the main requirement for leadership in the pre-Christianity era.

### **1.3.3 Rule of St. Benedict**

In the fifth century AD, Benedict of Nursia developed a monastic guide (*Regula Benedicti*) aimed at organizing the life of the main religious organizations of his time: the monasteries. The book became quite popular as one of the first attempts to establish order while balancing the individuality of the zealot with the formality of an institution. The persistence of the book as a textbook for monastic life all the way up to modern times is a testament to its success in terms of establishing and leading monastic communities. In that respect, it is one of the first successful social models.

At the core of the Rule is the leader, whose primary virtue is humility. His vision, above all personal rewards and ambitions, is the vitality and health of his organization. Competence and ambition are complementary traits in support of his primary vision. The leader should also display grace, but should be quite firm and unbiased when it comes to disciplining and even expelling

followers if this would preserve the health of the organization. The Rule also suggests more specific principles, such as leading by example, using actions instead of words and observing followers to resolve any arguments as soon as possible, as well as recruiting committed and dedicated individuals who would value stability and enrich the fraternity spirit of the communities.

As would be expected, ethics play a central role in leading the monastic communities. However, it was understood that the enforcement of ethical behaviour was not an effective way to enforce its practice and so it was up to the leader to support a culture where ethical decision making would be considered the norm. In addition to the expected focus on the Christian archetypes of ethics, the Rule covers organizational behaviour and structure with clarity. A flat hierarchy was the preferred operational structure to avoid centralization and bureaucracy. When the number of people was too high for an efficient flat structure to operate, it was suggested that offshoot groups should form independent and economically autonomous organizations with strong ties to the original communities.

An important aspect for the communities was their sustainability. It would be the leader's responsibility to ensure succession plans were in place to ensure a smooth transition to another competent leader. Even to this day, modern organizations struggle in this respect. According to the Rule, the process of selecting leaders should be democratic and based on merit alone, and not on seniority, despite its importance in relation to continuity and the maintenance of knowledge. Another element that would ensure sustainability was risk taking and challenging the status quo as a way to innovate. In that respect, it was considered appropriate for the front line (the lower levels in the community) to challenge and innovate within the existing paradigm, leaving it to the higher levels in the community to challenge the paradigm. Even innovations that would lead to paradigm shifts would be allowed as long as the stimulus came from the outside environment.

#### **1.3.4 The Prince**

In the midst of the turbulent politics of the early stages of the Renaissance (16<sup>th</sup> century), *The Prince* was written by Niccolò Machiavelli in an attempt to lay down the principle and practices that political leaders of his time should follow. The text aimed to be a guide for new rulers and is known for its controversial position that rulers must be willing to act immorally at times to maintain their position of power. To that end, deceit and the extermination of political opponents were not unusual practices. Despite this radical stance, the text can be seen as a realistic reflection of the brutal reality of Machiavelli's time and of past centuries.

Regarding the qualities of the leader himself, while virtue is admirable for its own sake, acting on it alone could be detrimental to the state. In that respect, vicious actions can be justified if they benefit the state. Ensuring the benefit of the many at all costs is, according to this view, the best way to maintain power. When it comes to choosing between two extremes (like being cruel or merciful), Machiavelli always suggests the most despised option as the appropriate one. Self-interest is of primary importance for a prince and is a requirement for his survival as a leader.

The leader in Machiavelli's opinion is an efficient problem solver who acts before problems fully manifest themselves. This might result in an authoritarian ruler that crushes opposition in its infancy before it can develop into a sizeable threat. Seeking more is a natural state for a leader, but only when their current state is not at risk. Understanding the way in which the state functions and how wars are conducted is necessary in order to be a successful leader. To assist him in his rule, the prince appoints administrators who are dependent on him so as to reduce the risk of them forming alliances against him. For conquests that remained accustomed to their



own laws Machiavelli suggests destroying them to eliminate potential revolts unless the leader is willing to live there or let them retain their laws with a government that is friendly to him. While this was a reflection to the Medici rulers of the time, today we might see similarities of such practices in the mergers and acquisitions of modern corporations.

The first tasks of a new prince are the stabilization and enforcement of his power by shaping the political structure to his needs. Corruption can be used as a means to achieve the social benefits of stability and security. Unlike past accounts, which presumed that the role of leaders was to strive for an idealistic society, *The Prince* presents a realistic account of what can be achieved based on the subjective notion of what is right and wrong in the pursuit of universal stability. In a sense, the text seems to complement Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*, which in a series of lessons discusses the creation and structure of a new republic. Machiavelli is like a political scientist of his time who develops best practices for political regimes, leaving it up to the individual to make the choice of what they will pursue.

## **1.4 Modern approaches**

In modern times, we see a more systematic effort to analyse the phenomenon of leadership and then formulate it in a theoretical framework. The select theories that will be presented here refer to the successful (at times) and most popular attempts at explaining and providing guidelines for leadership. The aim of presenting these leadership theories with their key characteristics is to allow for a comparative appreciation of their core principles and focus, as well as their strength and weaknesses in describing the phenomenon and practice of leadership.

### **1.4.1 Trait theory**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the turbulent political times and the Industrial Revolution brought about the need in leadership studies to define and explain leadership. One of the first systematic attempts, which was inspired by past perceptions of leaders as great men, focused on the traits that great leaders displayed. By identifying the innate characteristics of great politicians, military leaders and influential social and religious figures, one could seek to identify them in individuals who could be potential leaders. At the time and according to the theory, people were born with certain traits that predisposed them towards natural leadership actions. Based on this hypothesis, organizations needed to establish screening and evaluation processes to ensure that the individuals who possessed leadership traits were selected and advanced. The situation/environment and the followers are considered of secondary importance and good leaders are expected to perform well no-matter what they face.

The challenge of such a position was the identification of a universally acceptable set of traits that are distinctly associated with leadership. Some of the traits associated with charismatic leaders that help them attain self-actualization and social power include intelligence, persistence, insight, alertness, self-monitoring and self-motivation. As the thinking of the theory progressed and in an attempt to explain the rarity of great leaders, an association was made with the environment where leadership was to appear. The situation the leader faces became in this way an important factor in the expression of leadership. In this respect, successful leaders in one situation were not necessary successful in a different situation. In addition, the effect of followers also became apparent and traits that supported a more engaging working relationship with their group members became the focus of studies.

Developments of the traits approach began to be more specific and included drive, persistence, risk taking, self-confidence, accountability, tolerance of ambiguity and frustration, and the ability to influence others and formalize social structures. Later on, traits perceived by followers as important included masculinity, adjustability, power, intelligence, conservatism and extraversion. The dominance of male role models in those times greatly influenced the perception of leadership and continued to do so subsequently.

The trait approach was revived in the twenty-first century under the label of charismatic leadership, with Barack Obama as one of its modern representatives. The traits of charismatic leaders, according to the modern perspective, includes self-monitoring, engaging, and motivation. Social intelligence became another popular trait identified in research studies, along with the verbal and perceptual abilities of the leader.

While the traits approach seems intuitively appealing, provides benchmarks for evaluation and is supported by a century's worth of research, it has been criticized for its reliance on a diverse set of traits that subjectively have been adopted by different researchers. In addition, this approach focuses exclusively on the leader and completely ignores the followers or the context in a direct way. It makes no suggestion as to the type of leader who would be appropriate for a particular situation, instead insinuating that a great leader would do well in any situation.

In organizations, the traits approach suggests having people in managerial positions who fit designated leadership profiles. This makes professional development and training efforts in organizations difficult to identify and implement as the particulars of the organization and the environment always seem to crop up as influential factors. According to this view, someone is born a leader and there is very little that society and organizations can do other than recognizing these individuals through screening and promoting them to leadership positions.

### **1.4.2 The skills approach**

While the traits approach is based on the inherent characteristics (mainly personality traits) of leaders it became apparent that certain skills and abilities that people develop over time greatly contribute to leadership effectiveness. The skills approach originally considered technical, human and conceptual skills that leaders can master contrary to traits that show what leader are. Skills in this respect represent abilities to accomplish goals and objectives using knowledge and expertise.

While the need for technical skill might be easily understood as it provides leaders with competencies relating to the domain of their group's activities, human skills were meant to address the ability to collaborate with others across the organizational hierarchy. The modern expression of such skills (people's skills as they are frequently called nowadays) includes being aware of their own perspective as well as that of others, being adaptable and sensitive to the needs and motivations of others, and being capable of engaging and inspiring others to accomplish a common goal. The third category of skills includes conceptual skills like analytic capabilities, reasoning and the ability to process abstractions (ideas and concepts). More specifically, such skills, when complemented by an understanding of economic and political situations, help to effectively articulate a vision and devise a strategy to achieve goals and objectives.

Based on the premise that learning from experience can help in the acquisition of leadership, major organizations like the US Army and the Department of Defense built on the skills approach and created development programmes to suits their needs. In addition to the individual attributes and competencies, such programs took into consideration the performance of individuals in problem solving, their career experiences and the influences of their environments. Career

experiences are regarded in the skills approach as contributing to competencies and to an extent to attributes (at least with respect to their expression) while the influences of the environment are affecting every aspect of leadership.

A critical set of skills identified in the skills approach is social judgment skills, which include the capacity to understand individuals and groups. These were further delineated into social perceptiveness (understanding how others will respond to a proposal), perspective taking (understanding the attitude of others towards an issue), social performance (communication and persuasion) and behavioural flexibility (adapting one's behaviour). Another important factor is knowledge in the form of the organization of data and information into an effective mental structure, which is also something that can be acquired and is part of the skills approach. When knowledge is expanded to efficiently cover more complex structures and the realities they represent, it ascends to the level of expertise. Knowledge is seen here as complementing the inherent and acquired cognitive abilities of the individual.

Coupling the aforementioned skillsets with motivation as an attribute, we end up with individuals who are capable and willing to tackle organizational issues for the benefit of the organization. Overall the skills approach emphasizes the leader's capabilities and suggests that leaders perform and grow by gaining skills and an understanding of their operational environment and context. This thinking allows organizations to place the emphasis in leadership training on categories of skills and abilities that can be learned and developed like technical, social, and organizational. Compared to trait theory, we need to be aware that while traits are indications of what leaders are, skills show what leaders can accomplish.

The skills approach allows for a consideration of leadership as a process that can be structured and controlled while still intuitively attractive and potentially available to everyone. However, the abundance of skills that might be considered necessary for leaders to possess makes the approach problematic at times. In addition, its resemblance to trait theory cannot be overlooked, as many of the individual attributes closely resemble traits, while the development of the remaining attributes cannot be effectively used to predict a leader's success.

### **1.4.3 Style approach**

Focusing on leaders' actions and reactions became the basis of the style approach to interpreting leadership. In this way, the interaction of leaders with their followers and their surroundings becomes critical. This activity can be subdivided into behaviours relating to the task and facilitating the accomplishment of a goal and those that concern relationships like ensuring commitment and engagement amongst followers. By adopting the appropriate behaviours, leaders ensure that followers are committed and participate willingly in the accomplishment of the set goals.

Examples of task behaviours include establishing a command and control hierarchy with clear role assignments, planning and scheduling, and organizing task and work activities. Relationship behaviours include activities for building team cohesiveness, collaboration, trust and team identity. In essence, leaders need to create a structure that allows the build-up of a culture of constructive engagement and participation for the achievement of a commonly accepted goal. While a leader can apply both types of behaviour to achieve the set goals, an emphasis on either task or relationship will depend on the circumstances and the environment in which a team is operating.

Based on the findings supporting the style approach, a behavioural grid was developed in the 1960s (and revised afterwards) to explain how organizational leaders practise their styles. This was nothing more than a pictorial representation of the two types of behaviour identified previously (Figure 4.3) graded from low (1) to high (9). According to the grid, a (1,9) style (high emphasis on relationships and low emphasis on task) is a case such as a club, where building strong relationships among the members is a priority for a leader, while a (9,1) style (low emphasis on relationship and high emphasis on task) could be managing a task force with strict deadlines.

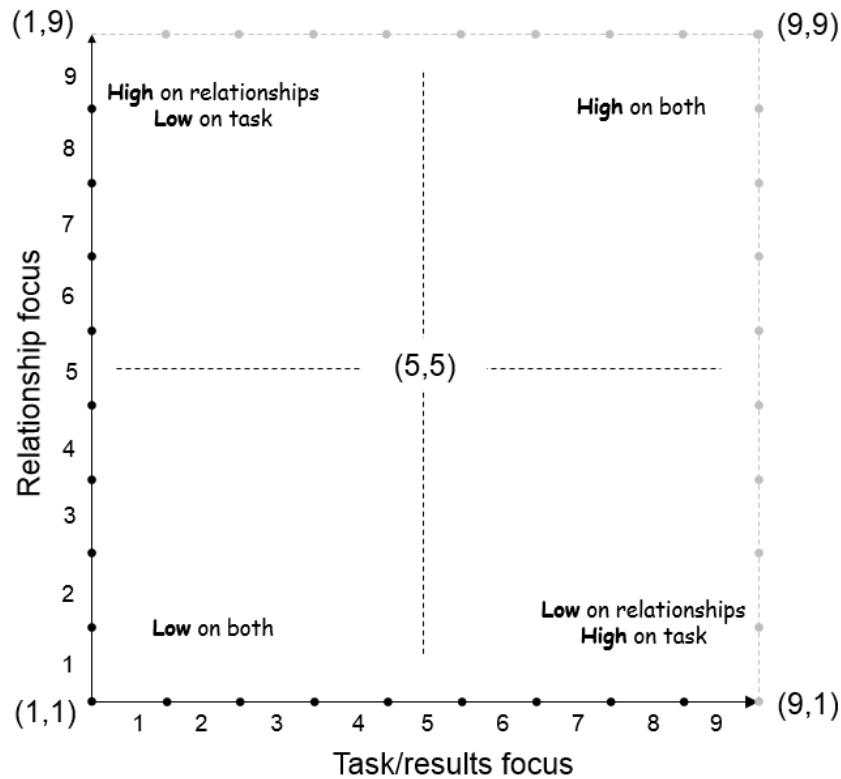


Figure 4.3 Leadership emphasis

Effective leadership is the culmination of personal style and the individual’s behaviour. The focus of this approach is exclusively on leaders’ behaviour and reactions. A more flexible form of leadership is considered here based on how a leader perceives a situation and the decisions they make. In that respect, leadership behaviours can focus on organizing followers in terms of the accomplishment of a task or in the building of an environment of trust and cooperation that in itself will address what needs to be done.

The broadened scope of this approach allowed leadership to be viewed as a balance between task and behaviour relations. However, this relationship hasn’t still produced a universal leadership style that can be successfully applied to any situation. In addition, while the style approach provides a heuristic framework for studying and understanding leadership, there are situations where the theory’s suggestions for high task and relationship focus cannot address the complexity of the situations that leaders face, for which a more adaptable leadership style should have been considered. In that respect, the behaviour and style approach overlaps with the situational approach that we will examine next.

### 1.4.4 Situational approach

The impact of the situation on the expression of leadership became the focus of the situational approach. According to this approach, leaders need to take into consideration the capabilities of their team and the environmental factors that will affect the situation. The theoretical foundations of the approach are the directive and supportive dimensions (Figure 4.4) that define the leader's intervention in their teams. In order to be effective, a leader needs to adapt their style to meet the commitment and competence of their teams with the demands of the situation they face. In terms of leadership style we consider here directive and supportive behavioural patterns to reflect the followers' motivation and skills as they change over time.

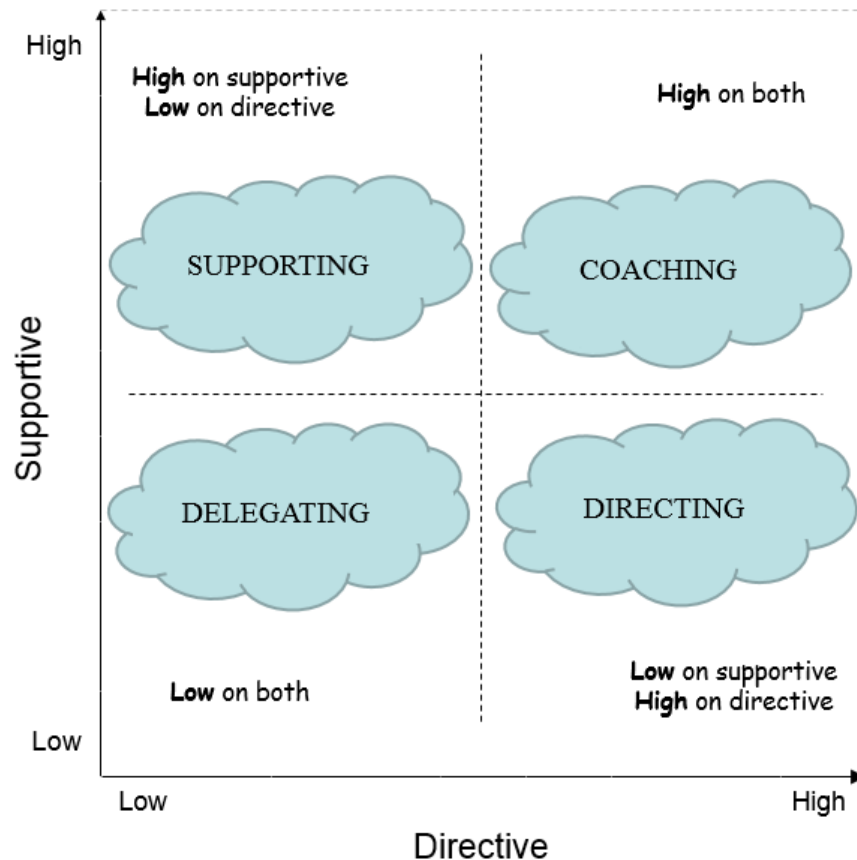


Figure 4.4 Supportive and directive leadership dimensions

Directive or task-oriented behaviours include planning, establishing goals and procedures, assigning roles and responsibilities, and providing guidance and anything in the form of a one-way communication from the leader to the followers. Supportive or relationship-oriented behaviours instil a feeling of comfort in the team members during the execution of a task and include two-way communication, where the followers can provide feedback and share information, and the leader praises and invites participation in problem solving from the followers. The combinations of the emphasis placed on the two behaviour dimensions result in the four leadership style categories in Figure 4.4.

The directive style is dominated by a focus on goal achievement with minimum attention to supportive behaviours, while the opposite is true of the supportive style. In the directive style, leaders spend a lot of time providing instructions and supervision, while in the supportive style, leaders transfer control to their subordinates and provide social support and recognition. When a leader is heavily involved in directing and supporting, we have the coaching style. The focus of this style is both on providing support and also on controlling the decision-making process by having the leader provide guidance on how things are going to be done. On the diametrical opposite quadrant of Figure 4.4, we have the more democratic delegating style, where the subordinates act as a group and collectively decide on and take responsibility for how to proceed to accomplish a task.

In addition to the behavioural dimensions of the leader's intervention, the situational approach also addresses the development needs of subordinates in terms of the competencies and commitment required to accomplish a task. At a high development level, we find team members who are developed professionally and are confident and motivated in engaging in the team's task. On the other end of the spectrum, we have employees who lack the appropriate skills for the task, but have the motivation and will to acquire it. These developmental aspects made the situational approach very popular in the marketplace. The approach was appealing in terms of being practical, easy to understand, diverse and prescriptive enough to be used to train leaders. It stresses the importance of understanding subordinates and treating each one differently based on their capabilities and the task at hand.

Some of the challenges that the situational approach faces include the assumptions regarding the categorization of subordinates in terms of their development needs. It is not clear how commitment and level of competencies interrelate in defining the development level of a subordinate for each task – in other words, to what extent the lack of skill can be compensated by motivation and vice versa. The approach is in practice unable to consider group leadership as nothing other than the dominant subordinate level. In addition, the approach does not consider other demographic variables like education and experience that might impact a leader's style and the disposition of a subordinate towards a given task. Among the potential issues not addressed by the approach is whether leaders should adjust their style to the group average or focus on one-to-one interaction with their followers.

### **1.4.5 Fiedler's contingency theory**

Contingency theory sees leadership as a match between a leader and a situation. The introduction of context becomes a defining characteristic of the leadership style that needs to be adopted. Similar to other theories, the leader's style is defined by the dimensions of task and relationship with the additions or the leader's position of power that is introduced here (Figure 4.5). The relationship dimension reflects the leader's ability to establish a positive and supportive working environment, while the task dimension reflects the level of formalization of the task. Tasks that are highly structured are more accepting of the leader's control, while tasks that are vague and unclear might lead to role confusion, which diminishes the leader's control.

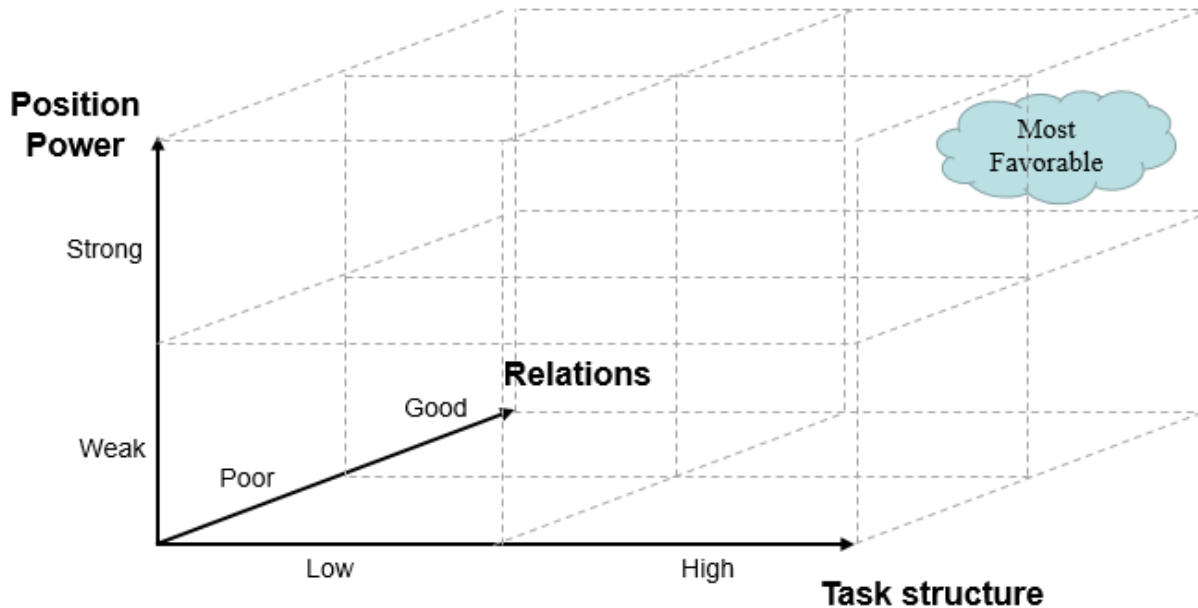


Figure 4.5 Contingency theory dimensions

The third dimension of the model concerns the amount of control leaders have in terms of exercising their power. More specifically, the position power expresses the freedom leaders are allowed by organizations in terms of making reward or punishment decisions for subordinates. A CEO, for example, could easily be perceived as the ultimate power when it comes to making such decisions, while a lower-level project manager might be in the weakest possible position to do so. Taking into consideration all three dimensions, we can predict the outcome of situations. Obviously when relations between the leader and followers are good, the task is clearly defined and the leader is in a strong power position, we would expect a favourable outcome, while the opposite will be true in the reverse situation.

In order to make the contingency theory more practical in its application the Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) scale was developed to categorize leaders as relationship- or task-focused. The scale is meant to indicate the appropriateness of a leadership style for a particular situation. Leaders with high LPC scores are considered as relationship-motivated and are expected to be effective in situations with moderate uncertainty where they exert some degree of control while those with low LPC scores are expected to be more effective in situations with a low or high degree of uncertainty.

The rationale behind these conclusions is based on the assumption that in a mismatch between leader and situation, the leader could be overwhelmed by stress and anxiety, which could result in unpredictable behaviour and poor decision making. Ideally an organization should consider LPC scores with the three dimensions of figure x.x as predictors of a leader's success in a particular situation. An obvious conclusion of the theory is that not all leaders are suited to all situations.

While contingency theory has received a great deal of support from empirical research, it fails to explain why a leadership style matches a specific situation better than others. For example, it is not clear why task-motivated leadership seems to be more effective than relationship-focused in extreme settings. This limited understanding also becomes problematic when considering training and professional development in organizations, as the uncertainty of situations suggests that leaders will be more prone to influence and change the situation in order to fit their style.

Despite this limitation, the predictive nature of the theory and the ability of organizations to change leaders according to the situation at hand make it extremely popular.

#### **1.4.6 Path-goal theory**

The way in which leaders motivate followers to enhance their performance became the focus of the path-goal theory. This is based on the premise that followers will be motivated if they believe they can manage the task and will benefit from its accomplishment. According to the theory, the leader's primary responsibility is to motivate their followers in accomplishing the task. They achieve this by adapting their style and behaviour to provide guidelines, information and any type of support that will ensure follower commitment and dedication in overcoming obstacles and reaching goals.

According to the path-goal theory, leaders are more like coaches who train and guide their teams to accomplish their goals, while also working towards removing any obstacles on the road to success. To ensure motivation is successful, leaders adopt styles like supportive, participative, directive and achievement-oriented behaviours to match the characteristics of their subordinates and their task.

A supportive leadership style is completely focused on the needs of the followers. The leader is open to subordinate requests, shows respect and consideration for what the followers are going through, and makes sure their needs are considered. Followers with strong needs for affiliation prefer this style as a source of satisfaction for them. When the leader considers subordinate feedback and invites them into the decision-making process, we have a participative leadership style. This is considered ideal for subordinates with an internal locus of control (when they feel in control of their fate) as their participation in the decision-making process enforces their feeling of being in control.

When the leader wants to be in control and is more instructive on how things are going to be done, we have the directive leadership style. In order to be effective, this leadership style requires that leaders are clear about their expectations for their teams and the rules and regulations that will guide behaviour. This style is suggested as being suitable for uncertain situations or when subordinates are strong minded and authoritarian. Also, it is appropriate for subordinates with an external locus of control, as it parallels their belief of being controlled by external forces. Finally, the achievement-oriented leadership style focuses on trusting and challenging followers to continually improve themselves and reach the high standards that the leader sets in the accomplishment of their goals. This style is considered ideal for ambiguous tasks where the subordinates believe that their efforts will have great results.

While the path-goal theory is practical and provides a clear explanation for the role of motivation and the impact that the leader's behaviour has on subordinate performance and satisfaction, it has been criticized for its complexity and partial support from empirical research. In addition, while it provides some "recipes" for leaders' behaviour, it doesn't go far enough to explain why the "recipes" work and how leadership styles like directive and supportive styles help in motivating subordinates during ambiguous and tedious tasks, respectively.

#### **1.4.7 Transactional leadership**

Many of the theories discussed here consider leadership as some form of transaction between the leader and the followers. In its pure form, transactional leadership is a rewards-based approach



that to a great extent is closer to management than leadership. The practice mainly refers to setting expectations and goals for task completion that are associated with rewards and recognition. It is a form of dependency building that ensures that the success of a task is directly related to the success of the individuals who are involved in its completion. During the process of monitoring and controlling subordinates, rational means (economic and other) along with disciplinary threats and punishments are employed to ensure performance and accomplishments of goals.

The focus of this theory is explicitly on the exchange between the leader and the follower. The leader is indifferent to the needs and development of subordinates unless they are part of the exchange. Leadership works like a contractual agreement where the leader exchanges value (monetary or other) for expertise and work from the followers in accomplishing a task. The power and effectiveness of this theory comes from the fact that the interests of both parties are considered. It also reflects the realities of many work situations, where individuals are involved either as freelancers or are diverted to a task only for the duration of that task.

The leader's role according to transactional theory is to ensure that proper individuals agree to participate in the completion of the task and what their rewards will be. In cases where the subordinates do not perform to the agreed expectations, the leader is expected to take corrective action either by providing negative reinforcement and feedback or even by releasing subordinates from the agreement. This is a management-by-exception practice and the leader can act either proactively when performance deteriorates (active form) or when results deviate from what is expected (passive form). At the extreme end of transactional theory, we find what is usually called *laissez-faire leadership*. This is the case where, after the initial assigning of roles, responsibilities, rewards and penalties, the leader disappears from the scene. As the translation of the French term suggests, it is a 'let do' attitude where the leader 'lets' followers 'do' as they please. In order to be effective, such a practice needs to rely on strong, competent and independent followers who can take over and follow up with what is needed to accomplish the goal at hand.

While the great advantage of the transactional approach is its clarity and simplicity, its motivational philosophy is quite simplistic, as the leader can view job performance as an exchange of effort and excellence, with rewards limiting in this way the need for praise and recognition. The rigidity of the approach and the transfer of responsibility for the success of a task to the subordinates further restrict the applicability of the approach when high levels of participation and commitment are required for a project.

#### **1.4.8 Transformational leadership**

One of the most popular theories of modern times is transformational (also called developmental) leadership. The theory was developed to an extent to contrast previous theories that viewed the leader-follower relationship as a form of transaction between leaders and followers. The emphasis of this theory is on follower transformation through motivation and development (similar in many respects to the path-goal theory). Leaders are expected to be exceptional in terms of their influence over their followers to the level of pushing them to excel. Influence in this case should not be confused with power, because the needs of followers are inseparable from those of leaders and the two grow together towards the accomplishment of their commonly accepted goal. The theory is often considered a form of *charismatic leadership* and covers a wide spectrum of influences ranging from the individual to the organization and even to the society as a whole.

According to the transformational theory, leaders focus on raising the level of morality of their followers. To distinguish between the abusive and unethical forms of follower transformation

(Adolf Hitler is a case in point) that self-absorbed and power-hungry leaders pursue, the term pseudo-transformational or personalized leadership was developed. Such leaders are interested in themselves and show little concern for their followers. At the opposite end of the spectrum, we have authentic and socialized transformational leaders who place the collective good above everything else.

Another term that is sometimes used in relation to transformational leadership is charismatic leadership. This is meant to mainly reflect exceptional leaders (like Alexander the Great or Gandhi, for example) who are gifted and strong personalities and inspire followers to excel even by their mere presence. These types of leaders appear competent and confident, have excellent communication skills, serve as strong role models and elevate the followers' sense of achievement toward specific goals. In its ideal form, this type of leadership gets followers to put aside their own needs and self-interests in favour of the movement's/task's.

In practice, the transformational leadership style is suggested for situations where a radical change in direction is required (especially when things go wrong) and collective effort and enthusiasm is necessary to provide that direction. The focus of leaders is then on motivating and helping followers to develop their full potential. One of the ways leaders can ensure the trust and respect of their followers is by role modelling high ethical and moral values. By displaying strong ideals and values, leaders can provide the sense of vision and mission necessary to engage their followers in the achievement of their goals.

Another approach that transformational leaders follow, especially in those cases involving highly qualified teams, is to use intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. The former includes suggesting that followers challenge their assumptions and values, and even those of their leader and the organization, with the aim of inducing creativity and innovation that will overcome obstacles and achieve the desired outcome. The latter involves the development of a supportive environment where followers feel comfortable sharing their concerns and needs. In these situations, leaders act more as coaches and mentors who help followers to grow through their personal challenges to reach their highest potential.

Support from case studies of prominent leaders and academic research enhanced the intuitive appeal of the theory as a description of the interaction between leaders and followers. It provides an expanded view of leadership that supplements and augments other leadership models. Despite its popularity, transformational leadership has been criticized for lacking conceptual clarity and being too broad. The theory fails to be specific enough in its application to stand on its own and provide measurable outcomes. In addition, it treats the 'transformational' capabilities of individuals as a form of a personality trait rather than as a behaviour that can be developed through training and practice. The potential connotation of the term 'transformative' as a leader's inherent ability that either exists or cannot be developed also worked towards an elitist view and a bias towards heroism for the theory.

#### **1.4.9 Servant leadership**

With an exclusive focus on followers, servant leadership is a counterintuitive approach to leading followers. The impression of many of today's leaders contradicts the concept of them being willing to be servants. This theory focuses on the behaviour of leaders in addressing the concerns of their subordinates and supporting them by empathizing with and nurturing them.

Followers and their needs become the primary goal of leaders and, in addition to empathy, leaders' characteristics include the ability to listen, heal, persuade, provide a clear sense of

direction and take responsibility for the role that is entrusted to them. This role includes as a primary duty the development of the team identity as a community of individuals who are bonded together by shared interests and pursuits, and something that they perceive as greater than themselves. Only by helping subordinates develop their full potential can leaders achieve their goals.

Servant leadership has strong ethical preconceptions and leaders are seen as working towards the common/organizational good. At the conscious level, it is assumed that leaders' inclinations and intentions to serve drive them to seek leadership positions that allow such individuals to accomplish their mission to help others to meet their needs and grow to their full potential. A basic assumption here is that the good of the organization or the group that the leader 'serves' takes precedence over the leader's self-interest and any other issue for that matter. Leaders in this respect are dedicated to the success of their followers in accomplishing the commonly accepted mission.

Given the nature of the endeavour and that 'serving' comes naturally to some rather than others, servant leadership has been viewed by many as a trait than an individual either possesses or doesn't. There are, though, a great number of researchers and practitioners who view it as a form of behaviour and in this way it is something that can be learned through training and awareness. To that end, clear and honest communication can greatly help a leader establish consensus and the alignment of group interests with task and organizational interests. This communication is viewed in servant leadership as an interactive process and the leader first learns to listen and consider the perspectives and viewpoints of their followers. This listening takes the form of empathy for what the followers believe and feel and, in this way, leaders validate the existence and importance of their followers. Eventually, leaders use persuasion to communicate their views persistently and convince followers to actively engage in the accomplishment of their goals.

In engaging with their followers, servant leaders show interest in them and assist them even in their personal issues, helping them to develop and mature as individuals. To be able to show such understanding, leaders need to be well aware of all aspects of their environment (social, political or physical), display foresight and stewardship (remaining accountable for their actions), provide a sense of belonging to the community of the group, and show commitment and dedication to the development of their subordinates.

However, a criticism of servant leadership is that the promotion of altruism as its central theme is considered counterintuitive to the traditional preconception of power. While the notion of sharing control and influence suggested by the theory as an alternative way of achieving control might seem revealing, it is nevertheless paradoxical and it suggests reliance on a multitude of traits and behaviours. In addition, while the theory itself suggests that it is context-appropriate and might not be suitable when subordinates are not susceptible to guidance and empowerment, it is unclear why some of its conceptualizations can be regarded as cognitive abilities or behaviours.

#### **1.4.10 Leadership theories continued**

In addition to the theories we have presented here, there are many more attempts to explain leadership and guide its practice. One such theory is *authentic leadership*, where the convictions and originality of the leader in the application of leadership is of primary importance in the perception of leadership as genuine and 'real'. Important elements of the theory are the intrapersonal, interpersonal and developmental perspectives that are built and nurtured by leaders

and followers (in the case of the interpersonal). The theory sprang from the social need for trustworthy leaders and, as such, it remains current, while providing guidelines for people who want to be labelled as authentic and as possessing a strong moral dimension. The distinction from other theories that authentic leadership seems to seek often led to the consideration of aspects like positive psychological capacities that have been challenged in research, as well as the lack of strong support from positive organizational outcomes, which remain as challenges that the theory needs to overcome.

A similar theory in nature but with a focus on creating value and interest in followers in *stewardship leadership*. The premise of the theory is that beyond profits and wealth, people seek something more from their participation. This includes the drive to excel, intellectual stimulation and achievement in the face of hardships, among others. By effectively communicating shared values and principles, leaders can advance their groups beyond the mere accomplishment of their goals towards a sustainable satisfaction and sense of accomplishment that positively impacts both their professional and personal lives. This approach is mission-focused and the leader in essence acts as a steward who helps subordinates grow in all aspects of their lives. A clear and mutually accepted vision and values along with shared decision making and commonly accepted ethical practices lead to follower commitment and enthusiasm. To reciprocate, followers take ownership of their responsibilities and accept accountability for the results of their actions. In essence, leaders and followers commit to a mental contract by agreeing to task competencies, performance expectations and acting in the organization's or the community's best interests to ensure the achievement of their set goals with short- and long-term benefits.

While most of the theories discussed here focus on the leader or the followers, the *leader-member exchange* (LMX) theory (also called the vertical dyad linkage theory) views leadership as a process of interaction between leaders and followers. The theory highlighted the individualities of followers and the need for leaders to vary their leadership style according to the individual instead of applying a style that targets the average of the group. In this way, leaders form an individualized (dyadic) relationship with each of their followers. These relationships can either be in the form of a contract that formally defines the role of both the leader and the follower (out-group) or could be based on a negotiation of expanded responsibilities (in-group). Followers become part of the in-group or out-group according to how well their cooperation with the leader is and their intention to offer more (in-group) in exchange for something the leader can offer. The in-group in essence affords privileges like information sharing in exchange for benefits beyond their contractual rewards. In some ways, this is considered a form of empowerment that moderates the interaction between leaders and followers in an effort to increase job performance and satisfaction.

The importance of teams in organizations in improving productivity, quality, innovation and effectiveness among others led to the development of the *team leadership* model. Teams are more organized than groups in that they are driven by a common goal. This creates an interdependency between their members, who need to coordinate their activities in order to accomplish their goal. This institutes in the team capabilities and cultural characteristics. While here we consider the classic model where the leader is appointed, we need to remember that there are other forms of leadership in teams, like *shared* or *distributed leadership*.

Team leaders start by conducting a formal evaluation of the internal (team members and the organizational processes and culture) and external (task and stakeholder-specific) operational environments, then move on to build a mental model of how the roles in the team will be distributed

and then proceed to communicate the plan of action. During the execution of the plan, the leader monitors and controls team performance to respond to issues and adjust the plan of action.

The interaction of leaders and teams can be either immediate, as in the case of small teams, or through a proxy, especially in large organizations, where it is physically impossible for leaders to engage with followers on a one-to-one basis. This reality led to the development of the *indirect leadership* model. According to this model, leaders use influence to communicate their intentions and implement the plans they have formulated. This influence is exerted in their immediate circle, who has direct contact with followers. They serve as the 'link' (individually or as a group) and their role is to act as the leader's proxy and to pass the leader's communication (formally or informally) on to their subordinates or peers. This process of message propagation is complemented by the demonstration of favourable or unfavourable behaviour by leaders and their proxies. This type of role modelling aims to visually project the intentions of the leader. The extent of the information that is intentionally communicated or miscommunicated is left to the leaders. A precondition for the success of such a process is the existence of trust between followers and leaders.

Another group of theories that made a significant contribution to the understanding of leadership followed a *psychodynamic approach*, where the emphasis is on the personality and the thoughts and feelings that drive the actions of individuals. The approach takes the position that certain personality types are better suited for leadership positions or situations than others. In order for leaders to be effective, they need to be aware of their personality characteristics and those of their followers. Given that personality is formed during the early stages of development in individuals, where it is greatly affected by the family environment, the approach posits that changes are thus impossible, so the best that can be done is to be aware of its effect on the perceptions and decisions of individuals. In addition, it is necessary to pay attention to the feelings and drives that are hidden within the subconscious and have been influenced by past experience. The state of maturity of an individual will be reflected in the way in which they lead or interact with others.

A final theory that will be briefly mentioned here is *followership theory*. This theory investigates the nature and impact of followers on the leadership process. This can be viewed from a positional (role) point of view or as a process point of view. The former sees individuals as adopting the role of the follower and through their influence affecting leaders' behaviour, attitudes and outcomes. In essence, the followers cause leadership to exist. The latter sees leadership through a constructivist lens where leadership is co-created as a result of the interplay of the following and leading actions. In this respect, leaders are granted the right to lead by the followers. Although the differences might sound semantic, what the theory tries to do is eliminate the negative connotation of the word 'follower'. It attempts to bring power and control to the followers who, through obedience, subordination, resistance, influence and proactive behaviour, define and influence the leader's behaviour.

Combinations of approaches (*blended*) have also been considered in the application of leadership. These have aimed at taking advantage of the strengths of a particular approach in eliminating the weaknesses of another. One such popular combination suggests the application of transformational and transactional leadership for alternating between empowerment and control (Figure 4.6). Using praise and recognition behaviours also reflects a blend of both styles. These behaviours can be categorized as a personal interaction (transformational) because it involves individual attention and as an impersonal interaction (transactional) because it can be based solely

on employee performance. One recommended practice is to use transactional behavioural as a foundation and display transformational behaviour for motivation and support.

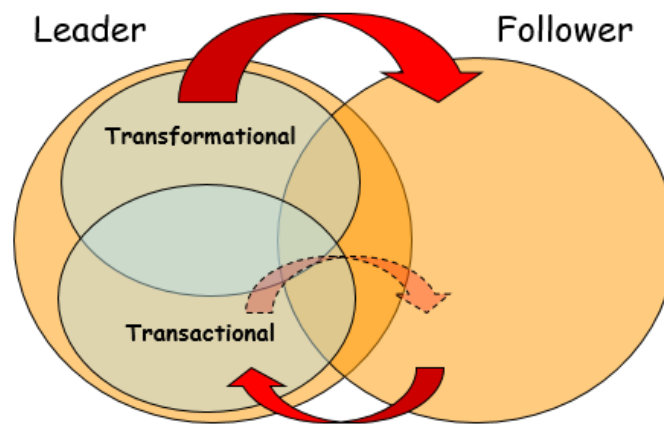


Figure 4.6 Combining transactional and transformational styles

The benefits of blending the two approaches is that leaders can easier adapt to different situations and can be more flexible in the execution of their command as it allows personal interactions and exercise of authority as necessary. The blend can also prove effective at communicating information and vision at the organizational level, and can convey high expectations while appealing to the core values and creative nature of employees. One of the challenges with the blended approach, if the leader is not experienced enough, is that one style might be applied to situations that are in fact suited to the other. Also, it might be conceived as an attempt to deceive and leaders might look unstable when they switch abruptly between styles.

Other combinations, like combining transformational, authentic and indirect leadership, have also been proposed, but it is beyond the scope of this book to exhaustively cover them all. In addition, many blends appear under a different name, while in reality they are amalgamations of existing theories. An example of such a case is the *full range leadership model*, where transactional leadership behaviours like contingent rewards and management-by-exception are combined with transformational characteristics like idealized influence, inspirational stimulation and the individualized non-leadership consideration of *laissez-faire* leadership.

## 1.5 Comparing and combining theoretical perspectives

The theories presented in this chapter are not meant to exhaustively present the plethora of leadership theories that academics and researchers have developed to explain leadership, but to display the diversity of what has been developed to address the complexity of leadership as a phenomenon and practice in organizational settings. Obviously there has been a tremendous amount of research in this field, but, as we will also see in the next chapter, there are still many challenges that must be faced in order to further advance our understanding of the phenomenon.

Distinguishing the alternative representations that each theory supports can be difficult as the overlaps amongst them are extensive, while the diversity of situations that need to be addressed is affected by multiple dimensions like the power position of the leader, the team size and structure, the maturity of the followers, the nature of the task, the dependencies of the leader with the stakeholders involved in the task, etc. Table 4.1 attempts to highlight some of the characteristics of the theories presented previously.

Table 4.1 Comparative leadership theory characteristics

<b>Theory/Approach</b>	<b>Theory's Emphasis</b>	<b>Leader's Primary Focus</b>	<b>Leadership Tool</b>
Trait theory	Leader's personality	Leader	Inherent traits
Skills approach	Leader's capabilities	Leader	Acquired skills
Style approach	Leader's behavior	Situation	Behavior adaptation
Situational approach	Situation	Situation	Style choice
Fiedler's Contingency Theory	Situation	Followers	Style, power position
Path-goal theory	Task	Followers, Task	Motivation, clear obstacles
Transactional leadership	Leader-follower transaction	Transaction	Agreement
Transformational/charismatic leadership	Leader	Followers	Influence
Servant leadership	Leader's behavior	Followers	Behavior adaptation
Authentic leadership	Leader	Leader	Convictions, originality
Stewardship leadership	Achievement	Followers	Communication
Leader-member exchange	Leader-follower interaction		
Team leadership	Followers	Followers	Monitor and control
Psychodynamic approach	Leader's personality	Leader, follower	Self-awareness
Followership theory	Followers	Followers	Follower

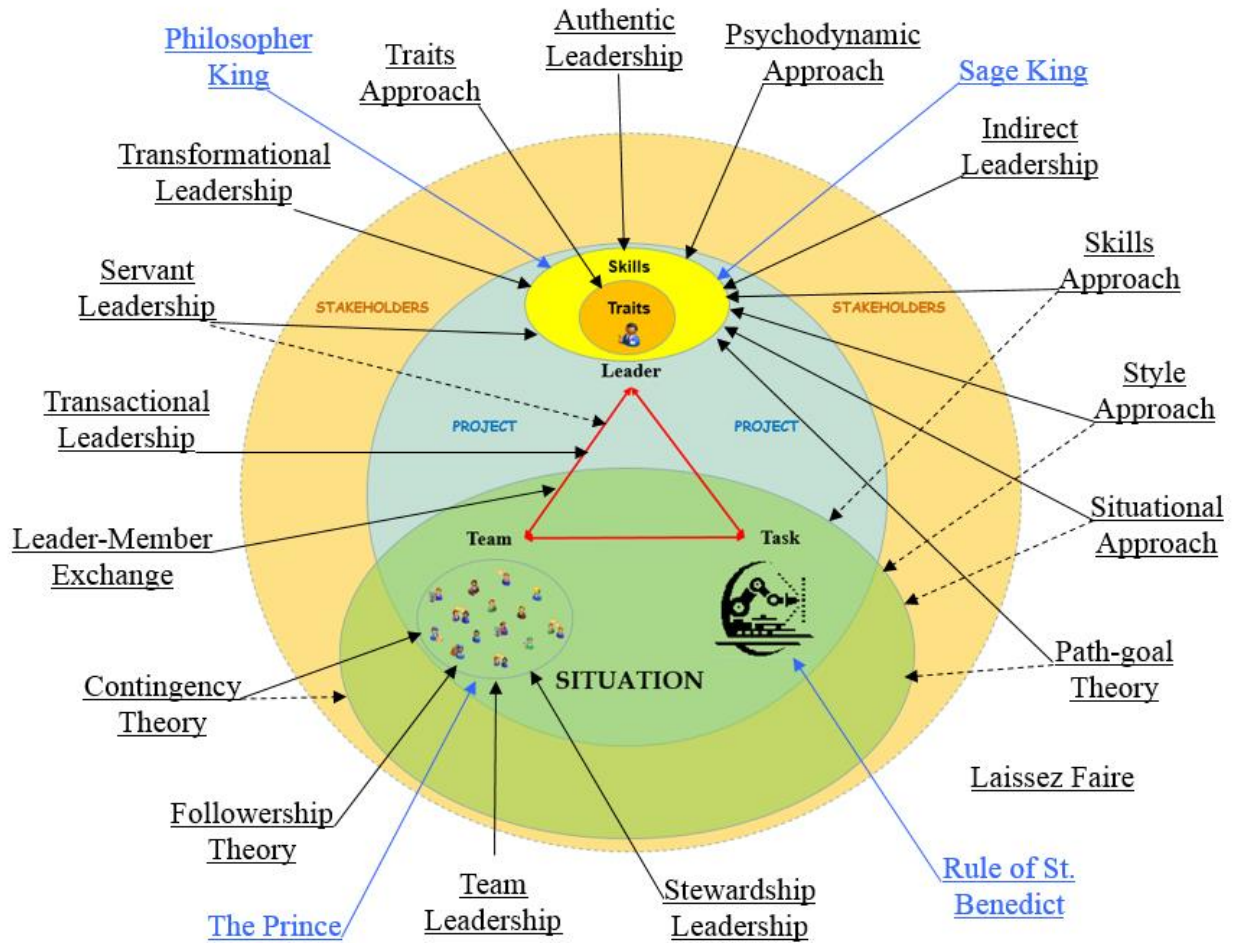


Figure 4.7 Comparative depiction of leadership theories

Considering the initial breakdown of the constituents and factors of leadership presented in Figure 4.1 and the focus and points of view of the various theories discussed in the previous sections, Figure 4.7 attempts to put everything together to comparatively depict their similarities and differences. The focus of each theory (solid arrows) is complemented with the point of view where action is taken (dashed arrows). As was expected, given the presentation in the previous sections, the main focus of most of the theories is the leader as the centre of the phenomenon. The leaders are viewed as possessing characteristics that when applied to the situation result in the accomplishment of a goal. Leaders develop their characteristics (traits and skill) and adapt their behaviour to influence their followers towards the direction they want to follow.