Mindful Leadership

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In 1939, a group of researchers led by psychologist Kurt Lewin set out to identify different styles of leadership. While further research has identified more distinct types of leadership, this early study was very influential and established three major leadership styles that have provided a springboard for more defined leadership theories.
In 1969, Hersey and Blanchard published their situational leadership theory. The Situational Leadership Theory is based around variable leadership, depending on a variety of circumstances. The four leadership styles that are presented in this theory are Telling, Selling, Participating, and Delegating.
9 Most Common Leadership Styles

01. Transformational Leadership
   Typically inspire staff by creating an environment of intellectual stimulation.

02. Transactional Leadership
   Establishes a clear chain of command utilising a carrot & stick approach to management activities.

03. Servant Leadership
   Prefers power-sharing models of authority & encourages collective decision making.
9 Most Common Leadership Styles

**04** Autocratic Leadership
Have significant control over staff, rarely considers worker suggestions or share of power.

**05** Laissez-faire Leadership
Characterised by their hands off approach, allowing employees to get on with tasks as they see fit.

**06** Democratic Leadership
Participative leadership, leaders often ask for input from team members before making a final decision.
9 Most Common Leadership Styles

07. Bureaucratic Leadership
Implemented in highly regulated environments, with strict adherence to the rules are important.

08. Charismatic Leadership
Relies heavily on the positive charm & personality of the leader in question.

09. Situational Leadership
A theory that the best leaders utilise a range of different styles depending on the environment.
The DISC is a personal assessment tool used to improve work productivity, teamwork, leadership, sales, and communication. DISC measures your personality and behavioral style. It does not measure intelligence, aptitude, mental health or values. DISC profiles describe human behavior in various situations, for example how you respond to challenges, how you influence others, your preferred pace and how you respond to rules and procedures.
The purpose of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality inventory is to make the theory of psychological types described by C. G. Jung understandable and useful in people's lives. The essence of the theory is that much seemingly random variation in the behavior is actually quite orderly and consistent, being due to basic differences in the ways individuals prefer to use their perception and judgment.

The Myers-Briggs assessment helps identify preferred way of doing things in four key areas:
1 – DIRECTING AND RECEIVING ENERGY
2 – TAKING IN INFORMATION
3 – MAKING DECISIONS
4 – APPROACHING THE OUTSIDE WORLD
Leadership Assessment Tools

The CliftonStrengths assessment identifies a person's unique sequence of 34 themes of talent and shows people how to succeed by developing them into CliftonStrengths. The assessment measures your natural patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving.
Defining Mindfulness

▪ “The awareness that arises from paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally”
  • - Jon Kabat-Zinn

▪ Bare Attention – “Pay precise attention, moment by moment, to exactly what you are experiencing, right now, separating out your reactions from the raw sensory events.”
  • - Mark Epstein
Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

- Jon Kabat-Zinn
  - Full Catastrophe Living
  - Wherever You Go, There You Are
- UMASS – Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society
Mindfulness Attitudes

- Beginner’s Mind
- Non-Judgement
- Acknowledgment
- Impermanence
- Letting Be
- Equanimity
Beginner’s Mind

- Seeing things as new and fresh, as if for the first time, with a sense of curiosity.
Cultivating impartial observation to any experience—not labeling thoughts, feelings or sensations as good or bad, but simply taking note of them in each moment.

“Once in a golden hour, I cast to earth a seed, And up there grew a flower, That others called a weed.” — Alfred Tennyson
Validating and acknowledging things as they are
Impermanence

- Everything in a constant state of flux with no intrinsic permanence or fixed nature.
Simply letting things be as they are, with no need to try and let go of whatever is present
Equanimity

- Balance and wisdom. Fostering a deep understanding of the nature of change with greater insight and compassion.
Mindfulness and Leadership

- Emotional Intelligence
  - Mindfulness-based EI training
- Resilience
- Decision-making
Mindful Leadership: What does it look like?
Mindful Leadership

Effects of mindfulness training on leader capabilities:

- Decision making
- Relationship quality
- Communication
- Adapting to organizational change
- Creating change in culture
Mindfulness in the Workplace

Benefits of mindfulness in the workplace

Research shows mindfulness:

- Reduces
  - stress
  - anxiety
  - distress
  - burnout

- Improves
  - job performance
  - positive well-being
  - overall health
Mindfulness practice associated with changes in the brain!

Hölzel et al. 2011
Mindful Leadership

How mindful are you?
Mindful Leadership Concepts

- **Describing**
  - Acknowledgment

- **Observing**
  - Beginner’s Mind

- **Non-Judgement**
  - Cultivating objectivity

- **Non-Reactivity**
  - Letting Be

- **Equanimity**
  - Resilience

- **Acting with Awareness**
  - EI/Impermenance
Observing

- Questions 1-3
- Low scores indicate opportunities for practice/leadership

- *When I’m walking, I deliberately notice the sensations of my body moving.*
- *I notice the smells and aromas of things.*
- *I pay attention to how my emotions affect my thoughts and behavior.*
Describing

- **Questions 4-6**
- **Low scores indicate opportunities for practice/leadership**
  - I’m good at finding words to describe my feelings.
  - I can easily put my beliefs, opinions, and expectations into words.
  - I can usually describe how I feel at the moment in considerable detail.
Acting with Awareness

- Questions 7-9
- High scores indicate opportunities for practice/leadership

  - *When I do things, my mind wanders off and I’m easily distracted.*
  - *I find it difficult to stay focused on what’s happening in the present.*
  - *I find myself doing things without paying attention.*
Equanimity

- Questions 10-12
- Low scores indicate opportunities for practice/leadership
  - I usually take things in stride.
  - I don’t dwell on things that I can’t do anything about.
  - I have a good sense of humor and can usually see the funny side of things.
Nonjudging

- Questions 13-15
- High scores indicate opportunities for practice/leadership
  - I criticize myself for having irrational or inappropriate emotions.
  - I make judgments about whether my thoughts are good or bad.
  - I disapprove of myself when I have irrational ideas.
Nonreactivity

- Questions 16-18
- Low scores indicate opportunities for practice/leadership

- I perceive my feelings and emotions without having to react to them.
- In difficult situations, I can pause without immediately reacting.
- When I have distressing thoughts or images, I am able just to notice them without reacting.
How to cultivate mindfulness into leadership practice
Mindful Leadership Practices

- Be aware. Take 15 minutes before the start of the work day to be aware of sensations of breath and body
- Take five. When stressed – STOP:
  - Stop what you are doing
  - Take five conscious breaths
  - Observe the sensation of your body and notice your thoughts
  - Proceed
- Do one thing at a time. Avoid multitasking, If you start daydreaming, notice and come back to here and now
- Take time outs. Short breaks every 90-120 minutes. Mindfully stretch, breathe, walk
- Eat lunch away from your computer. Eat mindfully, too!
- Listen. Be fully present and attentive to speaker
- Note accomplishments at the end of the day

(UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, 2014)
Mindful Leadership Practice

In meetings:

- Encourage employees to engage in self-check before meeting – what state of mind am I in?
- Facilitate group check-in for staff; facilitate active reflection on where staff’s attention is; encourage presence in meeting
- State intentions for meeting (formal and informal)
- Distinguish meeting parts (topics areas on agenda)
- Intentionally wrap up. Identify take-aways from meeting and create clear agreements about action plan moving forward

(UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, 2014)
Mindfulness and Supervision

- **Supervision Tasks**
  - Managing stress and burnout
  - Developing elaboration skills
  - Developing empathetic skills
  - Sharing feelings
  - Addressing transference/countertransference
  - Identifying parallel processing
Mindfulness and Supervision

- **Supervision Indications**
  - Develops a strong working alliance
  - Develops strong supervisory relationships
  - Increases employee self-efficacy
  - Decreased employee anxiety
  - Increases employee sustained attention
  - Increases empathy
Mindful Leadership - Resources

- Glading, R. (2013, May 22). This is your brain on meditation. Retrieved online from https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/use-your-mind-change-your-brain/201305/is-your-brain-meditation