LEADERSHIP VALUES AND VALUES BASED LEADERSHIP: WHAT IS THE MAIN FOCUS?

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Abstract

The article is based on descriptive theoretical research and focused on two notions such as 'leadership values' and 'values based leadership'. These two concepts are not compared, but every of them is described separately by highlighting general characteristics and showing their broad complexity. Both notions are not related to ethics and / or morality, as the aim the literature review was to provide insights on leadership values and values based leadership. The research question was the following: What aspects include two concepts such as 'leadership values' and 'values based leadership'? Fourteen leadership values are provided and in the summary the three unifying aspects are presented and discussed – personality, interaction(s) and relationship(s), and action(s) / work. The common and flexible leadership values are presented. Values based leadership is discussed generally and four principles of this leadership are distinguished – self-reflection, balance, true self-confidence, and genuine humility. Also positive and limiting values based leadership shortly is discussed. The conclusion is focused on the idea that the leader needs to regain and maintain trust. Positive values based leadership goes beyond leveraging strengths and making meaning. Values based leaders who engage their employees and help them flourish in life. And for their organisations they boost productivity, creativity and financial returns. Leading and evaluating success based on values is the best way to build a high-performance culture in organisation.

Keywords: Core leadership values; Flexible leadership values; Limiting leadership values; Positive leadership values; Values based leader; Values based leadership.

Background

'Leadership chaos' might be used to describe the political, social, economic, religious, and environmental conditions for much of the first decade of the 21st Century. The difficulties faced in all of these various domains are so drastic that it is difficult to refrain from being sarcastic about the effectiveness and utility of what is referred to as "leadership development." In the continuing, increasingly complex, and changing challenges, many of which have potentially disastrous implications, the need for effective leadership is greater now than perhaps at any

time in recorded history. And at the same time, what is being called for in terms of leadership sounds as confusing as the issues and conditions facing us. We often hear of the need for strong leaders, results driven leaders, servant leaders, charismatic leaders, heroic leaders, collaborative leaders, innovative leaders, tribal leaders, and more. But what we observe in those calls for leadership is that each arises out of an ideologically driven world, and implies that every other type of leader, except the type it is calling for, is ineffective, inappropriate, or just outright wrong (Hyatt & de Ciantis, 2012). Here values play the important role.

Values are a shorthand method of describing what is important to us individually or collectively (as an organisation, community or nation) (Turkkahraman, 2014). They are "shorthand" because the concepts that values represent can usually be captured in one word or a short phrase. For example, honesty, openness, compassion, long-term perspective and human rights can all be considered as values. Behaviours, which are the outward manifestation of our values, are context dependent (Cubukcu, 2014). Values can be positive or potentially limiting. Positive values such as friendship, trust and creativity, help us to connect with others and make a positive contribution to society (James, 2014). Potentially limiting values such as blame, bureaucracy and status-seeking, do just the opposite. They may enable us to meet our immediate needs, but in the long-term they are counterproductive, often divisive, and frequently result in a breakdown of connection, thereby affecting our relationships and undermining any positive contributions we may have been able to make. The frequent utilisation of potentially limiting values as a basis for conscious or subconscious decision-making leads to isolation, separation and failure. Potentially limiting values are sourced from the fears of the ego and support the ego's self-interest (Barrett, 2013).

The role of leadership is to add value to other people and the true measure of leadership is influence, thus a great leader must have the ability to change the attitude or behavior of others (Reese, 2017). In organizations where leaders lead, the leadership values must be communicated by actions, mostly in the ways in which activities / actions are conducted on a day-to-day basis, and not so much in words directly spoken or written. Actions speak louder, but written values that reinforce and support specific actions, and specific actions that reinforce and support written values, make a powerful combination (Healthfield, 2018).

Values based leadership evolved as a bi-product of the time and culture. The emergence of the twenty-first century was plagued with extensive, evasive and disheartening ethical leadership

failures. Neither the public nor private sectors was immune as many leaders were exposed for immoral or unethical behaviors (Copeland, 2014).

Values based leaders are people who have clear principles, they are honest and congruent in their deeds, they truly inspire those around them, and they feel a greater sense of gratitude towards others than they expect to receive in return. Values based leadership can fall short of expectations, whether shortcomings are perceived or genuine (Clarke, 2018).

The research question, which is the main focus of the manuscript is the following: what aspects include two concepts such as 'leadership values' and 'values based leadership'?

The aim of the theoretical description-based literature review is to provide insights on leadership values and values based leadership.

Leadership values

Leaders should influence the values of organization (Barnard, 1938). Organizations can be mature only when leaders infuse them with values (Selznick, 1957). He promoted the concept "responsible leadership" which is described as "a blend of commitment, understanding, and determination".

Values are the guiding principles in our lives. Leaders guide and facilitate others to make a positive difference in their own lives and to contribute to a larger good (Sen et al., 2013). Values inform the application of leadership qualities as the competencies of leadership are activated – learned, developed, and practiced – within the set of core values (Keyser, 2011). By focusing on what people believe and value, and then positively building on this understanding, we have the potential for impact far more wide reaching than if we approached leadership development as a problem-solving activity.

The leader must choose the values that are most important to her / him, the values that s/he believes in and that define her / his character. Then must live them visibly every day at work. Living her / his values is one of the most powerful tools available to the leader to help her / him lead and influence others (Heathfield, 2018).

Leadership values are related to *personal* and *organizational* purpose(s) and it is important to understand how these two aspects of purpose fit together for each person. It's about hiring people that demonstrate care for the purpose the organization is pursuing (Clarke, 2011). Organizations that are effective, customer-centric, and employee-oriented, develop a clear,

concise and shared meaning of values / beliefs, priorities, and direction within their organization. They want every employee to understand the values, contribute to the values, and live the values. Once defined, the values should impact every aspect of the organization. The leader must support and nurture this impact (Heathfield, 2018).

Leadership values are discussed by authors, who make research studies, discuss, train, coach (see Table 1).

Table 1

Leadership values

Name of a leadership value	Description
Respect	Self-respect and respecting others regardless of differences; treating others with dignity, empathy and compassion; and the ability to earn the respect of others. Three differing types of respect are appraisal, recognition and identification (Clarke, 2011).
Making difference	Making a positive impact on individuals, systems, and/or organizations or positively affecting outcomes (Kase, 2010).
Integrity	Moral courage, ethical strength, and trustworthiness; keeping promises and fulfilling expectations (Bauman, 2013; Williams, 2018).
Authenticity	Consistency, congruency, and transparency in values, beliefs, and actions; integrating values and principles to create a purposeful life and to contribute to the growth of others (Bishop, 2013).
Courage	Possessing a strength of self to act with intention on behalf of the common good; taking a stand in the face of adversity; acting boldly in the service of inclusion and justice (Sen et al., 2013).
Service	Commitment that extends beyond one's own self-interest; personal humility for the sake of a greater cause (Bourne, 2016).
Humility	A sense of humbleness, dignity and an awareness of one's own limitations; open to perspectives differ-rent from one's own (Cable, 2018; Higginbottom, 2018).
Wisdom	A broad understanding of human dynamics and an ability to balance the interests of multiple stakeholders when making decisions; can take a long term perspective in decision-making (Yang, 2011; Clayton, 2013).

Self-discipline	Focusing your attention consistently on your most important goals re-quires self-discipline (Jabbour, 2017; Gulledge, 2018).
Personal development	An increase in quantity, quality, and / or development over time. We can grow individually, increasing our skills, understanding, etc., as well as grow as a team and an organization, increasing our ambition, our sites, ability to serve clients, etc. Growth can be characterized by a breakthrough change, a transformation as a significant development, which is great. More often, though, growth takes the form of incremental improvements over time. Self-awareness and self-reflection help enable us to know our areas of potential growth. (Keyser, 2011)
Respect of teamwork	Respect is at the core of high functioning teams – and the lack of respect between team members is often times the cause of poorly performing teams. It's about respecting the person, their abilities, their ideas, and their contributions to the team. Self-respect and respect for others is learnable. It is not learnt or encouraged by putting a group of "values" on a wall plaque or on a sheet of paper. It is learnt and encouraged by the team getting to know each other and themselves well. Self-respect is also encouraged by managers who mentor and coach. Respecting others is implemented through showing support, encouraging participation, giving positive feedback, being honest, listening before speaking (Arnold, 2018).
Belief in human potential	The possibilities human beings are capable of accomplishing. The idea that with hard work, every person — regardless of age, background or religion — has the opportunity to succeed and achieve. Fundamental to this dream is that leader(s) remains small and limited, giving maximum freedom to the individual. The great potential of leadership lies in people (Millar, 2012; Browback, 2016).
The power of positive psychology	*Strengths* are underlying personal qualities that energise us, contribute to our growth and lead to peak performance. When we tap into these sources of energy, we can reach full immersion in our task at hand. *Meaning* is what gives purpose to our existence and to what we do. We gain happiness from our actions when they are based on choices that make sense to us. Many definitions of employee engagement include energy and meaning. Accordingly, employees are engaged when they are energised by work and show a genuine willingness to go the extra mile. What does this mean for leadership? To boost their employees' engagement, leaders have to help

	their people play to their strengths and find purpose at work. Positive leaders drill for strengths and make meaning (Cameron, 2008).
Acceptance of complexity	Leadership as a complex interactive dynamic from which adaptive outcomes (*e.g.*, learning, innovation, and adaptability) emerge. A leadership paradigm that focuses on enabling the learning, creative, and adaptive capacity of complex adaptive systems (CAS) within a context of knowledge-producing organizations. This conceptual framework includes three entangled leadership roles (*i.e.*, adaptive leadership, administrative leadership, and enabling leadership) that reflect a dynamic relationship between the bureaucratic, administrative functions of the organization and the emergent, informal dynamics of complex adaptive systems (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007).

All of these descriptions in Table 1 are united by three concepts – *personality, interaction(s)* and *relationship(s)*, and *action(s) / work*:

- *Personality of a leader and employees as personalities*. The organization's culture is the result of the purpose it aspires to, the values it's guided by, and the habits that bring its purpose and values to life in a tangible way, every day (Yang, 2011). These all depend leaders to make them happen. That's why it's important that leaders know how the organization's purpose aligns with that of its people. Leaders need to know what drives their people (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Leaders care about more than skills, knowledge and professional experience (Bishop, 2013). They are curious about the people they work with. They want to understand what makes their followers tick (Browback, 2016). Where employees have a passion is where they have the largest potential to perform, learn and grow (Clarke, 2011). Workplaces that subtly require employees to compromise their basic moral standards destroy their identification with work and employer (Clayton, 2013). Such organisations have a dysfunctional culture that can open the door to misconduct. Leaders who evince clear values in their words and actions help employees connect with their work and experience a sense of purpose (Higginbottom, 2018). Leaders remember that at work, people want to uphold their values (Millar, 2012).

- *Interaction(s)* and *relationship(s)*. Leaders do not merely fill "gaps" revealed by a competency model and help their followers maximise the advantages of their strengths

(Sen et al., 2013). They challenge employees in two ways: first, to use their strengths to tackle problems they have not tackled before; and second, to achieve true mastery in their areas of strengths (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Being part of a group makes sense. Leaders emphasize the team over individuals, reducing internal competition for the benefit of mutual support and collaboration (Clayton, 2013). Leaders recognize that beyond leveraging individuals' strengths, they need to leverage team strengths. Team strengths depend on how each team member's strengths interact with other team members' strengths (Millar, 2012). This interaction influences how well the team performs as a group. Leaders leverage the full diversity in their teams (Kase, 2010). The members of a cohesive community have each other's backs; they are there when an individual needs help. The good of the group takes priority over selfish motives because it promises future benefits to the individual (Cameron, 2008). For employees, workplace relationships - and especially relationships with managers and leaders - are a significant motivating factor in how they feel about the work they do, and the organizations where they do that work (Clayton, 2013). If leaders underestimate the importance of these relationships as a leadership value, they often do not succeed in their growth as leaders (Kase, 2010). Only through open communication can both sides come to understand the position of the other, which may initially be quite the challenge to undertake, but inevitably it will prove to the betterment of the well-being of all concerned, as well as the overall performance of the organization (Clarke, 2018).

- *Action(s) / work.* Employees may perceive their work as "meaningless". Opaque decision making, political agendas, a fragmented value chain, bureaucracy – all these devalue what employees perceive as the actual, often-invigorating purpose of work (Bishop, 2013). Leaders need to offer meaning to their followers. Leaders work with this powerful source of meaning (Bourne, 2016). They enable their followers to feel helpful to others, be it clients, colleagues or the general public (Browback, 2016). Meaningful acting or working is about having an impact on the world that transcends the individual's existence. Leaders want to be part of something that still influences the world when they are no longer here (Bauman, 2013). Leaders help their followers to feel significant. They stress the importance of the shared mission and the criticality of every team members' or employee's contribution (Arnold, 2018). Leaders must take a more hands-on approach to developing their people and helping them find meaning in the

work they do. All people want to feel valued - not just for their work, but as individuals. The presence or absence of that feeling of being valued impacts how they feel about the organization, and their role in it (Sen et al., 2013). On the part of the employee, it is perhaps wise to consider that leadership is a complex matter and, like all humans, leaders don't always get it right, and sometimes need time to figure out the right course of action and support in implementing that action (Clarke, 2018).

Leaders must know what they value and exhibit their core values in their leadership style(s) and actions. Leadership values practiced by the leader should be visible because s/he lives them in her / his actions. If leaders never identified their values in their workplaces, the mistrust is understandable. People don't know what they can expect. If leaders have identified and shared their values, living the values every day visibly will create trust (Healthfield, 2018).

Leaders come from all eras, all levels of society, and all cultures; but there are certain beliefs leaders share. These core beliefs are the foundation of the particular leader's leadership, the things that will help her / him become successful (Daskal, 2016). Values as a basic for leadership could be divided into types. For example, Reese (2017) divides leadership values into common and flexible (see Table 2).

Table 2

Common and flexible leadership values

Name of common leadership values	Description of common leadership values	Description of flexible leadership values	Name of flexible leadership values
Leadership	People want to be led, not managed. Instead, leaders must manage their actions and possess the ability to lead by example.	To oversee the progress of a project or assignment when necessary. Provide specific instructions and closely supervise specific situations.	*Controlling*
Vision	People want to know how and why their efforts matter. A leader must actively provide this vision to his/her people to maintain purpose in their work.	To demonstrate to your team the desire and capacity that you have to share information or knowledge in the workplace.	*Teaching*

Pride	People want the leader to feel that they count for something. A leader should give appropriate praise often. Using a good positive measurement system will also help individuals know how they are contributing.	This is ideal for when there is some disagreement about the ultimate target or intent of the action.	*Guiding and mediating*
Congruence	People feel secure when they see the leader doing the right things. Once again, a leader must lead by example, walk the walk. Talking alone won't' help.	When there is agreement about the desired outcome and when the leader's experience and knowledge base is relatively strong.	*Collaborating*
Trust	People need to trust their leadership if they are to remain dedicated to the organization. Leaders must be fair, consistent with all employees.	Most beneficial when the team needs positive reinforcement for their success. Key point – frequent reinforcement of positive behaviors and achievements will result in greater, long-term success.	*Reinforcing*
Character	People ultimately find out what kind of person their leader is and will be influenced to behave in the same manner. Leaders must consistently demonstrate good work ethics.		
Integrity	People need to trust and respect their leaders. A leader must be accountable for his/her decisions and		

	actions within every responsibility.		
Responsibility	People feel gratified when commitments to them are kept. Leaders, who keep commitments, will have employees, who are accountable for their commitments.		
Wisdom	People learn most from their leaders by example and coaching. Leaders need to temper their knowledge with good judgement and concern for others.		
Communication	People perform better when they understand the issues. A leader who is open and listens to concerns and ideas will gain more support from his/her employees. This communication can be verbal, non-verbal and even a simple visual measurement system.		

Flexible leadership is not something you do to people, but something you do with people. Following personal leadership beliefs and core leadership values through thinking, reflecting, communicating, learning, and implementation of flexible leadership values through teaching, coaching, mentoring, acting, communicating helps leaders to become successful.

Leaders driven by their core values inspire loyalty and commitment in their followers because they help them to find purpose and meaning in what they do, and they bring out the best in the people who work alongside them (Clarke, 2018).

Once an organization's values are clearly defined, they should also be the guiding light for how performance is evaluated - at the team and individual level. This is especially true when

organizations are facing change. And values based performance evaluation systems need to be put in place Gleeson, 2017).

Values based leadership

People become effective leaders when they are rooted in who they are and what matters most to them (Clarke, 2018). Becoming the best kind of leader isn't about emulating a role model or a historic figure. Rather, the leadership must be rooted in who the leader is and what matters most to her / him. When the leader truly knows her / himself and what s/he stands for, it is much easier to know what to do in any situation. It always comes down to doing the right thing and doing the best s/he can (Jansen Kraemer, 2011).

Values based leadership has received attention as many charismatic and seemingly transformational leaders had emerged that lacked a moral, authentic and ethical dimension (Copeland, 2014).

Values based leadership is the only true style of leadership that separates the great from the rest (Clarke, 2018). Leaders must lean on the values of the organization to drive performance, especially during times of change. An organization's values should be the bedrock of why the institution exists, how it makes decisions and its true purpose. They must be authentic and relatively specific so they actually resonate with the team (Gleeson, 2017).

Values based leadership within the organization manifests the institutional ethos. Institutional ethos clearly articulates values and culture. Everything employers and employees do is guided by the institutional ethos. Because it means that leaders have come together to ensure alignment on what the organization stands for. What the long term vision is. It guides decision-making, recruiting and selection, how the organization trains its members and how the institution fights, and the overall expectations (*Barret Values Center*, 2018).

Values based leadership means communicating organisational values that tell members how to behave in order to fulfil the organisation's mission. They talk about these values in a way that connects with employees' personal values, so that employees come to identify strongly with both the organisation and its mission (Daskal, 2016). Such leaders focus on core values - the enduring guiding principles that capture the organisation's strengths and character. Because the core values represent the soul of the organisation, they are likely to remain steadfast in the face of changing market trends and fads (Clarke, 2011). In order for employees to believe in the sincerity and depth of the organisation's values, the leadership team must lead by example

and communicate the values on an ongoing basis to the entire workforce. The values' effectiveness lies in how well they are embodied by the organisation as a whole (Clayton, 2013).

The values based leadership is related to leading the team and evaluating performance - both leader's own and the team's - based more so on the organization's set of values rather than specific metrics and milestones. Leaders still have to oversee their team member's ability to execute and be accountable for their role in mission success, but values based evaluations can't be an afterthought (Gleeson, 2017).

Values based leadership describes behaviors that are rooted in ethical and moral foundations including spiritual, servant, authentic, ethical and transformational leadership (Copeland, 2014). The four principles of values based leadership are distinguished by Jansen Kraemer (2011):

- *The self-reflection*. The leader must have the ability to identify and reflect on what s/he stands for, what her / his values are, and what matters most to the leader. To be a values based leader, s/he must be willing to look within her / himself through regular self-reflection and strive for greater self-awareness.

- *The balance*. It means the ability to see situations from multiple perspectives and differing viewpoints to gain a much fuller understanding. Balance means that the leader considers all sides and opinions with an open mind.

- *The true self-confidence*. It means that the leader accepts her / himself as s/he is. The leader recognizes personal strengths and weaknesses, and strives for continuous improvement. With true self-confidence the leader knows that there will always be people who are more gifted, accomplished, successful and so on than s/he (the leader), but the leader accepts the self as s/he is.

- *The genuine humility*. The leader should not forget who s/he is or where s/he came from. Genuine humility keeps life in perspective, particularly as the leader experiences success in her / his career. In addition, it helps the leader value each person s/he encounters and treats everyone respectfully.

Prilleltensky's (2000) model for values based leadership focuses on individual, collective, and relationship wellness that together indicate that perceiving one's own values and values of the group (emloyees), and building relationships to bind the two are the foundations for operating through a values based framework in organisation. The researcher asserts that failure to address

these three areas of wellness leads those in an organisation to focus on individual gain, and the concept of doing what is best for the collective becomes lost.

Values based leaders are those with an underlying moral, ethical foundation (Copeland, 2014). Thus the successful values based leader will recognize personal and professional values; determine how much variance from established values will be tolerated, and understand the values of internal stakeholders. This model relies heavily on recognition of the individual's role in upholding personal and organisational values. After all, an organisation may have established values, but it is up to the individuals in that organisation to embody them (Graber & Kilpatrick, 2008).

The values based leadership is not about realizing leader's personal needs for status, fame, or ego satisfaction. Instead, her / his actions are based on helping their followers realize their *true* needs. Values based leaders consistently act on behalf of their followers, seeking to provide the conditions and resources those constituencies couldn't provide on their own. The importance of this servant leadership quality is identified, but what is most unusual about these leaders is the consistency of that behavior: unlike paternalistic leaders, they do not seek to impose their personal agendas on their followers; unlike situational leaders, there is a complete and predictable integrity to all their actions; unlike transformational leaders, they do not seek to change their opponents (their every action demonstrates respect for their followers and enemies alike). And they each display a high degree of selflessness. That does not mean they are without ambition, but rather their ambition is of an unusual sort: they find personal satisfaction and fulfillment by providing the opportunity for others to realize their goals and potential (O'Toole, 2008).

Conclusion

Today there is widespread lack of confidence in leadership, in business, government, education and elsewhere. Every leader needs to regain and maintain trust. Positive values based leadership goes beyond leveraging strengths and making meaning. Values based leaders who engage their employees and help them flourish in life. And for their institutions / organisations they boost productivity, creativity and financial returns. Values based leadership may not be a cure for everything that ails us, but it's definitely a good place to start. But leading and evaluating success based on values is the best way to build a high-performance culture in organisation.

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