The Scarlet Cap

About The Scarlet Cap

The essays presented were originally presented as a part of the capstone experience in the Organizational Leadership Program. These writings represent the student’s perspectives on contemporary topics in the field of Organizational Leadership. In this, our 8th volume, we feature x works which are reflective of the range of contemporary leadership issues which students in our program examine critically.

We are pleased to present these 3 essays which demonstrate the thoughtful insights of our students regarding the application of leadership in various organizational settings.

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Creating Positive Organizational Citizenship Behavior Through Authentic Leadership by Rachael Carrion ‘23

Abstract
The following paper outlines the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and authentic leadership. It connects the four components of authentic leadership known as internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, self-awareness, and relational transparency to the five elements of organizational citizenship behavior: altruism, civic virtue, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and courtesy. The paper also will explain the importance of organizational citizenship behavior and authentic leadership in the wake of the growing millennial workforce and their high concern for morality.

Defining Organizational Citizenship Behavior
Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to behaviors that extend beyond one’s basic job responsibilities. Employees can exhibit organizational citizenship behavior in a multitude of ways. The essential idea is that one freely gives their time and energy beyond what is formally asked of them. Organizations are more successful when their employees engage in OCB. The behavior helps to create the smooth functioning of an organization as it can boost morale and it positively affects productivity and performance. In fact, many go as far to say that “organizations could not survive or prosper without their members behaving as good citizens by engaging in all sorts of positive behaviors” (Smith).

These positive behaviors can be characterized by five core elements. The first element is that of altruism. This can consist of helping new colleagues get acclimated to the company, the team, or their role. As shown by this example, altruism “...is typically directed toward other individuals but contributes to group efficiency by enhancing individuals’ performance” (Smith). The second is conscientiousness, which means using time efficiently and going further than what is minimally expected in a project or in a role overall. This increases efficiency of the organization by starting at the individual. The third element is sportsmanship, which involves the fair and ethical treatment of others. By respecting one another in the organization, the amount of time spent on constructive work and behaviors can be increased. The fourth is courtesy, which is as simple as exemplifying politeness. Some examples of showing courtesy include providing “...advance notices, reminders, and communicating appropriate information” (Smith). This helps to prevent problems and miscommunication between individuals and groups. The last element is that of civic virtue. This is characterized by behaviors that promote the interests of the entire organization, which can include volunteering or serving on committees. Often, employees engage in OCB when they feel confident about their organization and its leadership.
Defining Authentic Leadership

A leadership theory that directly correlates to organizational citizenship behavior is Authentic Leadership. Authentic leadership is portrayed by leaders who are aware of how their thoughts and actions are perceived by others, know their values and morals as well as their strengths and weaknesses, and demonstrate a persona that is “...confident, hopeful, resilient, and of high moral character” (Farid). The theory comprises four components known as self-awareness, balanced processing, internalized moral perspective, and relational transparency. To be self-aware means to be “...aware of, and trusting in personal motives, desires, feelings and self-concept” (Johnson 135). Balanced processing refers to the ability for leaders to be unbiased and to gather accurate information before coming to any conclusion or decision. The leader must refrain from denying or destroying any evidence or feedback. They must also abstain from pushing their own point of view, and instead, be able to listen to perspectives that they may disagree with. Internalized moral perspective is the capability of a leader to act upon a moral dilemma according to their own values. They do not succumb to outside pressures or change their behavior in order to earn rewards or avoid negative consequences. Instead, they “act in harmony with what they believe” (Johnson 135). Lastly, relational transparency refers to when leaders present their true and authentic selves to their followers in terms of thoughts, feelings, and motives. This helps to create trust and foster a culture of cooperation and teamwork (Iqbal).

Impact of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The four components of authentic leadership directly impact the engagement of organizational citizenship behavior. As mentioned, the type of leadership that leaders in an organization adopts plays a large role in the level of commitment of followers or employees. Authentic leadership is known to increase job performance by generating positive psychological capital. This idea consists of “…feelings of self-efficacy (competence), hope, optimism and resilience in subordinates” (Johnson 135). It can also be described as a hope, grit, and growth mindset that serves as a predictor of success (Lee). This is because when followers believe in themselves and their abilities, they are more likely to be satisfied and to demonstrate higher commitment, effort and initiative (Johnson 136). All of these factors are directly related to OCB.

The first component of authentic leadership that influences OCB is that of internalized moral perspective. This leadership behavior impacts follower behavior in terms of altruism and civic virtue. When a leader is confident in their values and acts morally despite the perspectives of others, followers are likely to do the same. They will act selflessly and help one another for the simple concern they have for the well-being of others. Therefore, a follower’s altruistic behaviors and willingness to volunteer can often be attributed to the role modeling of their leader. The second component of authentic leadership that influences OCB is self-awareness. This correlates with the follower behavior of conscientiousness. This is because being aware of one's strengths, weaknesses, desires, and values allows for them to recognize priorities and how to be the most efficient with their time. The third component of balanced processing directly correlates (see page 4)
to the behavior of sportsmanship. The promotion of fairness from a leader better predicts the same stature of value that the follower places on being fair. The fourth and final component of relational transparency relates to the behavior of courtesy. As relational transparency reflects the ideals of being honest, followers engaging in courteous behaviors mirror the actions presented by the leader. All four components of authentic leadership and its matching five elements of organizational citizenship behavior are outlined in the table below. Once more “…leadership is considered as the basic factor that molds organizational culture and work environment” (Iqbal). An article exploring the relationship between OCB, authentic leadership, and corporate social responsibility in the banking sector of Pakistan notes that followers are likely to perform in a way that a leader stresses through their own

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The Impact of Organizational Citizenship Behavior on Organizational Effectiveness

The value of the implementation of authentic leadership is due to the previously impact that organizational citizenship behavior has on organizational effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness is enhanced by task satisfaction and organizational commitment (Iqbal). In a study on medical and biotechnology companies, it has been found that authentic leadership has a positive effect on organizational effectiveness by increasing the psychological capital and self-directed learning ability of the employees, and it can be theorized that it is due to the impact authenticity has on OCB (Lee). Organizational citizenship behavior affects many factors related to organizational effectiveness. OCB has been shown to affect employee loyalty and identification. It boosts employee morale, creates community and better social interaction between employees, and “…assists organizational functioning and goal achievements” (Iqbal). However, OCB not only affects organizational culture, but also profits. As organizational citizenship behavior positively influences employee performance, it also increases productivity (Verlinden). When an organization is running smoothly and performance is improved, it is able to see better outputs and returns on its investments. However, a strong leadership theory needs to be applied for OCB to present itself and to contribute to organizational effectiveness. So, as “past evidence reveals that when a leader acts in accordance with his/her values and beliefs, he/she are more likely to accomplish high levels of performance and help others to achieve the same” (Iqbal).
The Importance of Authentic Leadership in the Growing Millennial Workforce

It is apparent that authentic leadership plays a large role in employee engagement in organizational citizenship behavior. Further research indicates that authentic leadership theory “...is also attractive because it highlights the fact that outstanding leaders are moral leaders” (Johnson 136). Leaders that exhibit high morals in the workplace have become increasingly important with the growing millennial workforce. “Millennials will soon make up 50% of the workforce and companies will have to radically evolve their value proposition to attract and retain this socially conscious group” as noted by Alison DaSilva, Executive Vice President of CSR Research & Insights at Cone Communications. The millennial generation is more concerned with organizations acting morally than any generation before. In a study done by the Stanford Graduate School of Business, it was “…revealed that 90 percent of MBAs from business schools in Europe and North America prefer working for organizations committed to Corporate Social Responsibility” (Satell Institute). Engaging in corporate social responsibility is just one way that organizations can display a moral standing and employ authentic leadership. Companies and organizations should continue looking at ways to undertake authentic leadership in order to increase the organizational citizenship behavior of the growing millennial workforce and, in turn, continue to improve organizational effectiveness.

Conclusion

The implementation of authentic leadership is important for organizational effectiveness, organizational citizenship behavior, and the changing workforce. The four components of authentic leadership known as internalized moral perspective, self-awareness, balanced processing, and relational transparency directly correlate with the five elements of organizational citizenship behavior referred to as altruism and civic virtue, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, and courtesy. This creates an easy guideline for leaders to understand which behavior is necessary for them to demonstrate according to the behavior that they desire from their subordinates. For leaders working with the millennial generation, it is increasingly imperative to understand employees’ wants and needs, so that organizations can effective manage and guide this group. Authentic leadership provides the blueprint for creating a culture of engaged millennials that are willing to go above and beyond, contributing to organizational citizenship behavior and subsequently, organizational effectiveness.
References


The Role of Interpersonal Relationships in Follower/Work Productivity: Using the Traits Theory Approach to Leadership and LMX Theory by Anastasia Barney

Abstract

Growing interpersonal relationships with followers within an organization can provide a variety of benefits not only for the followers, but their leaders as well. This paper will probe how interpersonal relationships positively affect followers and work productivity within an organization and/or group. A strong interpersonal relationship between leaders and followers can directly, and indirectly, positively influence an organization’s growth and productivity. Leadership theories such as the Trait Theory Approach to Leadership and the Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX) further support and expand on the idea that effective leadership relies on the interpersonal relationship between leader and follower. With that in mind, it is imperative to gain insight into how effective leadership is greatly impacted through the development of interpersonal relationships between leaders and their followers. The ultimate goal of this paper is to explore, influence, encourage, and persuade the readers that leaders who are capable of building strong, meaningful relationships with their followers will be a more effective leader and will result in higher follower and work productivity.

Traits Theory Approach to Leadership

First introduced by Ralph Stogdill in 1948, the Trait Theory Approach to Leadership challenged the belief in the early part of the twentieth century, “that leaders must have possessed unique physical and psychological characteristics that predisposed them to positions of influence. Researchers were not completely sure which characteristics were most important, but they assumed an individual’s physical and psychological features were the best indicators of leadership potential” (Johnson & Hackman pg 75). In 1948, Stogdill decided to take a new approach at understanding how individuals rise to leadership by publishing a review of one hundred twenty-four studies that focused on personal factors and traits. He strongly believed that leaders emerged from the combination of personal characteristics and the relationship built between leaders and followers. Stogdill thought that distinct social (interpersonal) relationships play a large role in effective leadership. Stogdill, as well as many other leadership specialists, were exploring the idea of being a natural born leader versus developing into a leader. In his review, Stogdill noted established leaders were found to be on a broad spectrum of physical, and psychological features; young and old, tall and short, thin and heavy, introvert and extrovert. In 1974, Stogill, published additional studies were he concluded, “A person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits, but the pattern of personal characteristics of the leader must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics, activities, and goals of the followers” (Johnson & Hackman pg 76). Due to the
influence of Stogdill, later scholars were able to reanalyze previous studies, as well as conduct new research on the personal characteristics one must hold to be a successful leader within any organization, group, or team; evolving into the Traits Theory.

**Traits Theory Applied to Follower and Work Productivity**

This Traits Theory is broken down into five components, including cognitive abilities, locus of control, personality, motivation, and social appraisal. Each of these components are identified as valuable leader traits. Leadership researchers have recognized that cognitive ability, along with several other personal characteristics, play a crucial role in emerging as a leader. According to the article, ‘Four Theories of Leadership’, “The search for the characteristics or traits of effective leaders has been central to the study of leadership. Underlying this research is the assumption that leadership capabilities are rooted in characteristics possessed by individuals” (Boundless). Through years extensive research has showcased that intelligence will produce proficient performing leaders. While having a high IQ score may indicate one is a good test taker, it also implies that an individual is capable of making necessary decisions, applying knowledge, critical thinking, problem-solving, etc. Of course, depending on the circumstances, followers will require different needs from their leaders for which these skill sets are necessary. For instance, a regional management position within a large corporation will expect very opposing leadership traits and skills than a general manager at one's local town pet shop. For instance, a corporate leadership position might require someone who leads by example and does not get caught up in the emotional needs of their workers. However, in a local town store, management may need a leader who is emotionally intelligent, available, and able. Cognitive abilities tie directly in with the remaining important components under Traits Theory. The APA Dictionary of Psychology defines Locus of control as, “a construct that is used to categorize people’s basic motivational orientations and perceptions of how much control they have over the conditions of their lives”. Psychologist Julian B. Rotter developed the concept of internal and external locus of control in 1954. People with an internal locus of control have the tendencies to recognize outcomes and rewards as an effect of their own personal behaviors, attitudes, efforts, and exercise of their abilities. On the other hand, persons with an external locus of control perceive their rewards and outcomes are in response to foreign forces such as fate, influence of powerful people (i.e. judges, police officers, professors, doctors, etc.), chance, and luck. One’s locus of control can highly affect the chances of emerging as a leader even with the belief that follower productivity and performance demand different control dependent on the organization, group, and/or team. With that being said, persons with an internal locus of control tend to carry higher cognitive abilities than persons with an external locus of control. Take for example, two high school students, one internal and the other external, who failed a couple exams in their Algebra class. Internals will assume their poor exam grades are due to their lack of time, effort,
lack of time, effort, and preparation. However, externals may automatically presume the teacher graded unfairly or harshly, the topics covered were not listed on the study guide, or simply the test was too difficult. The student who recognizes the outcomes of the Algebra exam as a result of their own abilities and intentions, will presumably respond in a way that achieves a higher scoring grade on their upcoming exam; while the student who believes the grade was due to external factors will fail to implement new ways to excel on further exams. This is on the grounds that, as the reason stated prior, people with an external locus of control do not accept. Thus, the student with an external locus of control will not spend any additional time studying or preparation. However, externals may automatically presume the teacher graded unfairly or harshly, the topics covered were not listed on the study guide, or simply the test was too difficult. The student who recognizes the outcomes of the Algebra exam as a result of their own abilities and intentions, will presumably respond in a way that achieves a higher scoring grade on their upcoming exam; while the student who believes the grade was due to external factors will fail to implement new ways to excel on further exams. Thus, the student with an external locus of control may not spend any additional time studying or make any greater effort when preparing for and taking upcoming exams and will not prove to have as much cognitive ability as the student with an internal locus of control. Internals are more likely to be successful at emerging as a leader than externals because they are more likely “to rely more on persuasion than coercion; to pursue more innovation, risk-taking corporate strategies; and to engage in outstanding leader behavior that promote higher organizational performance” (Johnson & Hackman pg 77). Furthermore, this provides significant potential for inspiring interpersonal relationships. Leaders with an internal locus of control can explore deeper relationships with their followers because of the skills they possess and how they respond to situations. Someone who believes that a relationship falls in the hands of fate will not put in the required energy, time, and efforts in building lasting interpersonal relationships in real life and/or in an organization.

The Big Five Model

The Big Five Model is important in further exploring how the Traits Theory applies to follower and work productivity. Studies on personality have heavily focused on this model, which categorizes effective personality traits into five dimensions, and its relationship with effective leadership. The dimensions of the Big Five Model include; neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. In layman's terms, this model identifies how much a person is an introvert or an extrovert. Those who score higher in each of these five realms will experience opposing follower and/or productivity to those who score lower. Particularly, extraversion has proven to have the strongest positive relationship with leadership. The ability to enjoy company and engage in meaningful conversations will provide followers with the sense they are being heard, respected, and appreciated. The fourth component of the Traits Theory Approach to Leadership is motivation. When studying this theory, experts discovered three main motives; power, achievement, and affiliation. Typically, the most effective leaders are high in power motive, moderate to high in achievement motive, and lower in affiliation.
Leaders with a strong need to affiliate with others may lack the skills to make tough decisions in critical situations and think strategically. The strong cognitive effective leader, may score lower in the need to affiliate with others. Leadership and trait researchers believe that each of these motivations lead to different motivations to lead (MTL). MTL is made up of three factors; affective-identity leadership motivation, social-normative leadership motivation, and lastly, non-calculative leadership motivation; which determines how much a person will chase a leadership position as well as the amount of effort put forth to succeed after acquiring a leadership role. Leaders with a strong need to affiliate motivations to lead (MTL). MTL is made up of three factors; affective-identity leadership motivation, social-normative leadership motivation, and lastly, non-calculative leadership motivation; which determines how much a person will chase a leadership position as well as the amount of effort put forth to succeed after acquiring a leadership role. According to Theory X, individuals do not like to work and only do so to obtain income and wealth. In addition, other leadership theories suggest that building interpersonal relationships with followers and/or leaders will not produce the most productivity within any group. However, the Traits Theory showcases that there are many motives when it comes to taking on a leader or follower role and that meaningful conversations and relationships in the workplace, on a team, or in a group of friends is critical. By building stronger connections with followers, a leader can get a closer look at the ideas, thoughts, and opinions they value and discover new strategies to motivate and benefit them; which in turn, leads to higher productivity rates. In this case, followers have divulged leverage that leaders can use and respond to, that leaders who do not take the time to engage meaningfully with their followers will miss.

George Bradt, Senior Contributor for Forbes.com, stated, “While the most effective strategic leaders think outside-in, the best interpersonal leaders take an inside-out approach to people. They enable others by giving them a structure or framework to guide their own thinking and action. They give or get them leverage to accelerate progress. And they give them confidence in their own motivation and strengths to fuel the spark of inspiration that’s already inside of them”. (Bradt, Forbes.com). The last component of the Traits Theory, social appraisal is the largest role of the five applied to followers and work productivity for numerous reasons. Building interpersonal relationships requires all of these components discussed, however leaders who are capable of understanding, identifying, and managing their emotions will excel dramatically. An awareness of one’s and that of others (Emotional Intelligence) is essential for leaders desiring to develop interpersonal relationships so as to inspire and enable followers to work at the highest levels, as quickly as possible to produce best greatest outcome possible. Leaders that possess these five personal characteristics can successful and engage in building meaningful interpersonal relationships resulting competent productive followers.
The Leader-Member Exchange Theory shifts the focus from the characteristics of leaders and followers, and leadership behaviors to the quality of relationships among leaders and followers. Before George Graen and his associates developed The Vertical Dyad Linkage Model, leadership researchers assumed that all leaders typically engaged in the same styles as their followers. Graen’s findings and model reported two opposing viewpoints that followers have about leaders; some indicating that they felt a sense of duty to their leader and organization because there was high mutual respect, trust, and positivity. On the other hand, others indicated a negative and strained relationship with their leaders due to lack of trust and respect that is built within interpersonal relationships. The variations in Graen’s Vertical Dyad Linkage Model resulted in the development of in-group and out-group as the two types of relationships. These types of relationships are seen within classrooms, organizations, and even in friendships or romantic relationships. In a corporation, the in-group might be considered the assistants or team leaders and the out-group being every other follower. This model was the first stage of what was to become the LMX Theory. Under this theory, the quality of the leader-member impersonal relationship is not categorized into an in-group or an out-group and can range from low LMX to high LMX. Leadership and LMX experts have reported that there is an obvious link between relational quality and personal, group, and organizational effectiveness. Followers who have high LMX relationships with their leaders are; more productive, more satisfied with their jobs thus less likely to quit and are more committed to the organization’s shared purpose, highly motivated, have better mental and physical health, and the list goes on. “While Graen and his colleagues initially believed that leaders could only maintain a few high-quality relationships with trusted assistants due to limited time and resources, they later became convinced that leaders should attempt to build high-quality partnerships with all their followers, not just a chosen few. This marked a shift to the third stage of the LMX theory- leadership making. Leadership making focuses on how leaders can establish partnerships with their followers. Not all relationships will become partnerships, but leaders have a duty to make the offer of partnership to all their followers. Doing so will increase the number of high-quality relationships, bond the organizational unit (build social capital), and improve performance” (Johnson & Hackman, page 98). This theory is another prime example of how the development of interpersonal relationships, and partnerships, produce followers and work productivity. Followers are in need of communication with their leaders not only to have a high LMX relationship but to have a framework of their needs and shared goals.
Conclusion

Building interpersonal relationships between leaders and followers through expression of respect, trust, kindness, concern, etc., positively affects the productivity and performance of followers. Imagine in your own daily life, the longing to have a romantic relationship. While it may appear that the needs for a romantic relationship would differ from a working relationship with a superior or coworker, the feelings one achieves from quite similar. People partners have a strong desire for emotional connection, to be needed and/or wanted, shared in success and so forth. When looking at these needs alone, it can be challenging to differentiate between a romantic or leader-member relationship because interpersonal relationships are pivotal for enhanced followership and greater work productivity. As the Covid-19 Pandemic became situated in America, schools as well as organizations moved predominantly online. The use of video conferencing, such as Zoom, has proven to be more challenging for individuals and groups to feel interpersonally connected with others. In the wake of rapid, nonstop technological advancements, and maybe even more importantly, changes in leadership; maintaining and sustaining interpersonal relationships between leaders and members is extremely important. The growth and development of interpersonal relationships, as demonstrated through discussing the Traits Theory Approach to Leadership and the Leader-Member Exchange Theory, is a vital role in high follower and work productivity.
References


Developmental Process of Emergent Leadership: What it takes to be a leader worth following by Craig Haddock ’21

Abstract

Emergent leadership is the most natural process for determining leadership within groups. In the absence of a formal appointment of a leader, the group’s members are able to ultimately decide who is best fit to lead them. Emergent leaders ultimately occupy the position through their displays of skills, knowledge and commitment to the group. This process, which works well in small groups, as its dangers and benefits. It is also illustrative of the qualities a person should display to be an effective leader.

Defining Emergent Leadership

Within the leadership stratosphere, individuals holding positions of power, influence, and or authority in their respective groups find themselves occupying their position through different ways. Typically, leaders are appointed, securing there roles through formal designation with or without having previous interaction with other members of the group. In contrast, the absence of an appointed leader can allow for a different process to occur: Emergent Leadership. The happens when a leader is not officially chosen by a higher power within the organization, instead the individual’s position as a leader naturally unfolds over time through interaction and actions among the group itself. Expectations of a leader emerging for within the group can be markedly distinct for the appointed leader. There are often higher expectations required of emergent leaders as well as less tolerance for failure than those that have been appointed. Additionally, in emergent leadership, through the process of natural development, group members give emergent leaders more room to operate. Emergent leaders possess greater freedom as well as flexibility on how they make decisions on behalf of the group as a whole (Stogdill 1950). Given the increased freedom in decision-making, as well as heightened expectations, emergent leaders are analyzed by their organizations in a more subjective manner than those appointed.

The Developmental Process of Emergent Leadership

In the process of emergent leadership, a leader emerges through elimination instead of initial appointment, progressively removing individuals from contention until only one is left. This is where the findings of Ernest Bormann, emergent leadership researcher and professor at the University of Minnesota, becomes a focal point. Generally, the elimination of potential leaders occurs in two phases. In phase one, those who are deemed unfit to lead are quickly removed from contention. Valid and common reasons for removal from contention include shyness, quietness, aggressiveness, or a lack of flexibility (Bormann 1975). Expectedly, those who fail to connect with others for
any of the reasons previously mentioned will undoubtedly experience communication troubles
towards their respective followers, not to mention the inability for followers to place legitimate
belief in their leaders. Additionally, candidates who most likely could put themselves in conten-
tion to emerge as a leader, often fail to do so as a result of their inadvertent and careless dis-
plays of a lack of emotional intelligence, as well as, a lack of concern.

In phase two, social tensions are high amongst those remaining candidates, especially in situa-
tions where multiple individuals really see themselves as the right fit to lead the group. Strong
contenders recruit allies within the group to enable their path to lead. The support generated
from relationships formed with allies within the group allows for them to overcome their competitors in the
pursuit of the emergent leadership position. Those who
garner more support within the group usually gain the
larger consensus in regard to who should lead the group
moving forward. Although the emergent leadership pro-
cess can turn out to be somewhat lengthy, it’s some-
times cut short and decided through crisis. The success-
ful leader in a crisis is the person who helps the group handle such traumatic events such as
acting out of unruly members or the loss of important materials (Johnson 2013). In the case of
crisis, the ultimate emergent leader is the one who displays the ability to step up at a moment’s
notice, guiding the group to a more comfortable position. Although not always perceived in a
positive manner, a stagnant group is sometimes ultimately saved by the crisis thrusted upon
them. A major downfall of emergent leadership is that it’s not always guaranteed that an indi-
vidual actually emerges as the true leader of the group, becoming the driving force of intense
frustration amongst members.

**Essential Behaviors of Emergent Leaders**

The successful establishment of an emergent leader as well as the determinant of a potential emergent
leader’s overall success is directly connected with their actions related to the group and its members. An
emergent leader must continuously display their commitment and intention to lead the group, properly
doing so by engaging in the appropriate behavior from an early in group interactions. Impressions that di-
rectly influence group members personal perceptions regarding who they see fit to lead begin to develop
almost immediately upon initial formulation of the group (Riggio 2003). Individuals with intentions to
emerge as the group leader should start with frequent participation, consistently communicating with the
group while providing valuable contributions to the task at hand. Frequency or quality alone simply just
suffice, instead there must be a healthy proportion of both (Schultz 1979). Furthermore, research suggests
that aspects of communication such as goal setting, providing meaningful direction, and conflict manage-
ment all maintain a positive relationship with past effective emergent leaders. Implementing these fea-
tures in communication with group members allows for demonstration of competence while conveying
what you personally represent, your character. Character is a vital part of emergent leadership and is
strongly reflective in one’s ability to gain as well as maintain follower support. It enables follower to have
sense of trust. Without the presence of trust, it makes legitimate teamwork arduous to say the least.
Behavior Leading to Failed Emergence
Those in pursuit of an emergent leadership role should attempt to implement the essential behaviors while straying far from certain actions that will virtually guarantee failure towards their leadership aspirations. Behavior that ensures one’s position as a general group member instead of the leader includes failure to participate, absenteeism, brashness, a lack of seriousness, and a lack of willingness to take on impactful responsibility (Fisher 1994). Participating in these behaviors clearly demonstrates one’s desire to occupy a position of less responsibility, with a larger emphasis on roles of subservience and direction-taking.

Gaining Follower Support as an Emergent Leader
Emerging as the leader of the group is a challenging task in and of itself, however, what some leaders find to be even harder is gaining adequate follower support post-emergence. In general, leaders who find success in their respective roles tend to foster positive relationships with their followers. The strength of an emergent leader’s relationship with their followers has a major effect on the group’s ability to perform. A lacking leader-follower relationship often correlates to decreased productivity as well as disruption in unity, an important aspect of any sustained, effective group. A strong sense of unity will allow members to gain a stronger sense of commitment to the group. Unity can be built through collaboration and involvement of followers in leader decision making (King 2009). An increased state of unity in groups can also prevent followers from distancing themselves in the case of conflict arising. This sense of security in conflict stems from trust generated by the group’s cohesiveness. Evidently, many groups fail due to their lack of unity. At the first sight of conflict, relationships are badly strained, significantly damaging the group’s ability to function effectively. In addition to involvement of followers in decision making, emergent leaders can gain follower’s support through building a strong sense of comfort amongst the group. Not comfort in that followers should feel free to say and do whatever they please without repercussion, instead comfort that followers know they can come to the leader with any issue or obstacle they feel the leader may be able to aid in. Effective leaders are able to show empathy towards their followers (Mahsud 2010). The door is always open for their followers to meet with them, expressing concerns or requests for assistance at any point in time. As a result, knowing that their leader is available for them, group members tend to display a stronger sense of loyalty.

Maintaining Follower Support as an Emergent Leader
After emerging as the leader and gaining adequate follower support, it’s key that leaders are continuously able to maintain the support of their followers. It sounds somewhat simple but as history has shown, some leaders who were once well-liked have ultimately lost a majority or even all of the strong support they once had. This usually occurs as a result of changes in the leader’s character. Those who stay true to the character which helped them garner the initial support from followers experience a strong sense of loyalty from the group. Contrarily, those who display changes for the worse, moving away from their good character, will often find themselves quickly abandoned by followers, just as they abandoned the righteous character they once embodied. Ethical behavior
should remain at the forefront of every emergent leader’s mind. They should continually recall the standards they set for group members and hold the group and themselves to them. Emergent leaders should continue implementing the behaviors that propelled them to the position in the first place. The continuous display of such behaviors is key to maintaining follower support. Gaining the support of followers is usually a process that takes place over the course of time. However, the support of followers can be lost in an instant.

**Dangers of Emergent Leadership**

Although emergent leadership when unfolded properly provides a highly beneficial foundation for the production of the finest leader amongst the group, it too has its downfalls. Unfortunately, some research suggests that in a small group with a narcissist present, this individual can likely emerge as the leader. This is particularly true when others in the group are unafraid to speak up, the narcissist appears initially as bold and competent (Brunell 2008). Individuals who display narcissistic behavior, end to be proficient in forming new relationships, and only later to exhibit the negative aspects of narcissist behavior. Narcissists enjoy positions of power, therefore, it’s essential that groups refrain from making decisions on who the individual best fit to lead is based on their initial impressions. Only through multiple encounters can one accurately decipher the presence of narcissism in other group members. Another issue within emergent leadership is the imbalance of perceived gender capabilities and roles. This is specifically true in more masculine oriented cultures like Japan, Austria, Venezuela, and Italy. In these masculine cultures, females have a harder time emerging as leaders and are more likely to be segregated into a few specialized occupations (Johnson 2013). Finally, with higher levels of trust placed on the emergent leader, it’s only logical that failure result in slightly increased levels of disappointment or dismay from followers direct to the emergent leader. Therefore, it’s important for group members to recall they too had a role in determining who their leader is. They must accept some responsibility when the emergent leader doesn’t satisfy expectations or group goals are not met.

**Conclusions**

Emergent leadership is arguably the most natural process of leadership within groups, particularly small ones. Since there is no formal appointment of a leader, the group’s members are able to ultimately decide who is best fit. Unlike organizations or groups with appointed leaders, members in emergent leader-led groups place higher expectations on the leader and granting them more freedom and flexibility to make decisions. Contrarily, in a group with an appointed leader, since members have little to no say to begin with, they tend to try to influence decision-making more frequently, attempting to create some sense of involvement or collaboration with their leader. In emergent leadership, followers don’t necessarily feel the need to do this given the influence they had in leader select initially. Lastly, in emergent leadership there is never a question of whether or not the emergent leader themselves truly wanted the role. Emergent leadership often results in leaders that the best fit for the group.
References


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