COMPARISON OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT: *Through a literature review, this study examines the statements of John P. Kotter, Peter F. Drucker, and Warren Bennis regarding leadership and management. The literature reviewed suggests that Kotter's statement that the leadership and management are "complementary, but different," is reasonable and applicable in the presence of current leadership trends. Drucker's claim that "management is doing things right – leadership is doing the right things," is demonstrably more practical and valid when combined with the context Bennis and the related literature provides. Because Bennis' statement that a "new generation of leaders – leaders not managers," is necessary for twenty-first century survival provides a context the literature agrees is requisite when comparing leadership and management, it offers the most practical guidance to leaders nowadays. Such context offers strength to Kotter's claims, while underscoring the situation-dependent nature of leadership evident in those of Drucker.*

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1.   Introduction

Two of the most interrelated fields applying to organizations today are those of leadership and management. Though the two terms are often used interchangeably, their meanings may differ considerably in practice.   Three researchers at the forefront of examining such differences are John Kotter, Peter F. Drucker, and Warren Bennis, who each offer a slightly different comparison of leadership and management.

Kotter's research, for instance, revolves around his statement that "leadership and management are different, but they are complementary." Drucker's opinion is slightly more entrenched, as seen in his assertion that "management is doing things right – leadership is doing the right things." Finally, Bennis takes a definitively more conclusive stance in his evaluation that "to survive in the 21st century we are going to need a new generation of leaders – leaders not managers." Kotter and Drucker obviously share more agreement on the commonality of leadership and management than Bennis implies. However, Bennis places urgency on comparisons between the fields in question, given the necessity of leadership in facing the dynamic new challenges this century offers.

Considering the various current trends in leadership and management, each of these statements offers guidance on leadership, but the practicality of it differs for each statement and is highly context dependent. This study uses a review of relevant literature to assess the validity of the statements in question and evaluate the levels of practical leadership guidance they proved in a current context.

2.   John P. Kotter – Complementary, but Different

Kotter's statement that leadership and management "are different, but they are complementary," is possibly the most reasonable of the three in that it offers an incredibly high magnitude of interpretational flexibility. Kotter's work throughout the years provides more detail to clarify this statement and justify its applicability to various organizations. In comparing leadership and management, Kotter (2001, 1990) delineates their differences and the requirements those differences necessitate from leaders and managers.

Kotter (2001, p. 4) identifies the function of management as "coping with complexity." He argues that the emergence of increasingly larger organizations throughout the twentieth century necessitates good management as a response to the complexity in such organizations (Kotter, 2001, 1990). Kotter (2001) argues that companies manage such complexity through the functions of planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing, and controlling and problem solving. Through these activities, respectively, organizations are able to establish targets and goals, increase the capacity to achieve those goals, and ensuring their accomplishment (Kotter, 2001). Comparatively, while management deals with complexity, leadership faces the task of dealing with change (Kotter, 2001; 1990). To do so, Kotter (2001, 1990) says leaders must (1) set a direction by developing a vision and the strategies to achieve it, (2) align people by communicating a vision, and (3) motivate and inspire followers to maintain focus. Therefore, Kotter labels leadership and management as complementary since they each involve a level of decision-making and are both necessary to organizational success (Kotter, 2001).

A vast amount of relevant literature agrees with Kotter's notion of different but complementary leadership and management. Specifically, Lunenburg (2011) develops Kotter's (2001, 1990) ideas on the function of each activity in his description of leaders as advocates of change concerned with gaining their followers' commitment, while managers maintain the status quo to achieve stability. Further, Lunenburg (2011) agrees with Kotter's (1987) findings that leadership and management complement each other by creating a dynamic equilibrium through their differences. While leadership may increase uncertainty by implementing change, effective management processes achieve stability by reducing such uncertainty (Lunenburg, 2011; Kotter, 2001).

Ricketts (2009) also delineates a clear difference between leadership and management, but proposes that an individual can successfully practice both simultaneously if he possesses the right knowledge. However, while Kotter considers leadership and management to be complementary because they are equally necessary to achieve organizational aims, Ricketts (2009) focuses on the overlap of the traits that form each one. Because leadership is a group process that utilizes influence to attain goals, and management is an administrative means of supervising and directing, the two are likely to coexist (Ricketts, 2009). Concordantly, leaders often find themselves managing and managers are often compelled to lead, but success at one activity does not guarantee success at the other (Lunenburg, 2011; Booth,

Segon, and O'Shannassy, 2010; Ricketts, 2009). Booth, Segon, and O'Shannassy (2010) expand on Kotter (2001) and Ricketts' (2011) ideas with a caveat that although leadership and management are complementary, managers may not be capable of leading, nor leaders capable of management. Booth, Segon, and O'Shannassy (2010) also cite a study by Bass and another by Zaleznik to propose that even when leadership and management functions are similar, the people performing remain differentiated by their motivations and behaviors for doing so.

While the validity of Kotter's original statement is not in question, its practicality is. As stated, Lunenburg (2011), Booth, Segon, and O'Shannassy (2010), and Ricketts (2009) agree with Kotter's idea that leadership and management are different, yet they place far more emphasis on the degree to which they are complementary. Such a focus suggests these studies believe leadership and management are much more interrelated and codependent than Kotter (2001, 1990) implies. Several studies additionally question the practicality of Kotter's statements based on the lack of context provided for them. For instance, Porter and McLaughlin (2006) insist operating in the 21st Century requires a stronger focus on the dynamic relationships within organizational context, rather than the static observations underlying Kotter's statement. Unlike Kotter (2001), Porter and McLaughlin (2006) state not only that organizations provide the context for leadership, but also that leadership impacts that organizational context.

3. Peter F. Drucker – The Right Things

Drucker offers an opinion on leadership and management that is the most ambiguous and of the three examined in this study, in his proclamation that "management is doing things right – leadership is doing the right things." Though such a statement is amusing, it yields far more questions than answers and fails to align with much of the relevant literature regarding leadership. For example, DeGrosky (2006) highlights the statement in question as a useless cliché that creates a rift between leadership and management because of the implicit value judgments it incites. DeGrosky (2006, p. 2) muses at the implications of Drucker's statement (which he also attributes to Bennis and Nanus) by asking whether it implies that it is acceptable for a manager to do the "wrong thing," or that a leader "does not need to do things right."

Consequently, DeGrosky's questions require a return to Porter and McLaughlin's (2006) evaluation of context since the context in which an organization operates necessarily determines what "doing things right," entails and what the "right things" are. Zaccaro and Horn (2003) contend with the approach of defining leadership as a process shaped by contextual forces rather than situational events. For a leader, doing the "right things" depends heavily on what context in which leadership is inserted (Zaccaro and Horn, 2003). Operating in the contexts of Stability, Crisis, Dynamic Equilibrium, or Systemic Chaos requires different leadership responses that are not always universally applicable or "right" (Osborn, Hunt, and Jauch cited by Zaccaro and Horn, 2003).

Alternatively, Pless, Maak, and Waldman (2012) consider doing the right thing to be framed by overall Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), rather than only organizational context. Pless, Maak, and Waldman (2012) appropriately underscore a current leadership trend that Drucker's statement and Zacarro and Horn (2003) fail to consider: leaders are operating in a context that increasingly demands consideration of an organization's responsibility to overall social welfare through CSR, instead of only fighting for its own economic benefit. Furthermore, regarding leadership, Drucker's statement makes no adequate differentiation between the process of leadership and the outcomes. Chiefly, a myriad of historical figures have exemplified the leadership characteristics enumerated in the literature reviewed herein, yet they have not "done the right things." The literature generally describes the traits of leaders in lists that include courage (Sen, Kabak, and Yanginlar, 2013), emotional intelligence (Cavazotte, Moreno, and Hickman, 2012; Alon and Higgins, 2005), and decision-making (Westaby, Probst, and Lee, 2010). Accordingly, Sen, Kabak, and Yanginlar (2013) include Vladimir Lenin, Fidel Castro, and Mao Zedong in their list of great political leaders from the twentieth century, as they both excelled in the process of leadership. While these leaders did lead effectively and ultimately change history, the outcomes of their leadership are widely believed to include the killings of tens of millions of people. As Sen, Kabak, and Yanginlar (2013) inadvertently show, one can be a truly great leader without doing "the right things."

Returning to Drucker's statement, the literature is clearly more agreeable with the idea that managers "do the right things." As Ricketts (2009) explains, managers are responsible for the functions like planning, budgeting, and resource allocation that ensure organizations remain operable. The crucial importance of such managerial duties certainly makes them

"the right things." In agreement with Ricketts, Kotter (2001) explains that good management yields order and consistency, and without managers to "do the right things," organizations become chaotic and find their existence threatened.

In essence, Drucker's take on management is both relevant and valid, but ultimately fosters a polarizing view of management that neglects its interconnectedness with leadership (Yuan and Lee, 2011; Friedrich et al., 2009; DeGrosky, 2006). Primarily, Yuan and Lee (2011) insist leadership is actually a function of management and view leading managers as the drivers of organizational focus. Friedrich et al. (2009) further include the actions of organization, maintenance, and distribution of resources as parts of the leadership process.

Despite the agreement between Ricketts' (2009) depiction of management functions and Drucker's position that managers "do the right things," Ricketts' focus on the overlap of leadership and management spotlights the paradoxical nature of Drucker's statements. Because managers often lead by using influence to meet goals, and leaders involve themselves in management functions like organizing and controlling, the two areas are not as distinguished as Drucker suggests (Ricketts, 2009). Indeed, the things being done must be the right things, and the right things must be done right. Though the literature does not entirely agree with Drucker's statement, its applicability to current circumstances remains high, as Section 3 explains.

4.   Warren Bennis – Twenty-first Century Leadership

In suggesting 21st Century survival requires a new generation of leaders, not managers, Bennis provides a context that is absent from Kotter and Druckers' comparisons of leadership and management. Importantly, Bennis offers a means of judging the practicality of all three of the stances explored in this paper. Bennis' stance not only offers the more practical guidance than Kotter's and Drucker's, but also a framework for exploring the current leadership trends they lack.

An adequate inspection of Bennis' view that surviving in this century requires new leaders demands a brief summary of the conditions 21st Century leaders must lead in surviving, as the relevant literature describes. So far, the 21st Century environment has been highly influenced by major business events like the wave of corporate scandals beginning in 2001 (Stenmark and Mumford, 2011) and a financial crisis that generated international social, political, and

financial turmoil (Allison, 2012; Boddy, 2011). Stenmark and Mumford (2011) describe the consequences of unethical leadership as seen in the collapses of Enron, Tyco, and WorldComm; wherein leadership decisions were both unethical and illegal. Nikoi (2008, p. 183) characterizes the business and social consequences of these multi-billion dollar failures as "insurmountable." When previously reputable organizations commit illegal acts due to consciously unethical leadership decisions, Nikoi (2008) says society in general suffers. Furthermore, Boddy (2011) theorizes that a major cause of the financial crisis was the leadership of financial organizations by psychopaths who pursued their own aims without conscience.

The environment created by such profound events highlights a trend that ethical leadership is now demanded by society as a whole above only corporate shareholders. Because leadership is a situation-dependent activity, leaders must respond to current situational trends (Vroom and Jago, 2007). Moving away from strict shareholder value models and into more socially responsible arenas places even more pressure on leaders to make ethical decisions while maintaining performance and navigating conflict (Eisenbeiss, 2012; Stenmark and Mumford, 2011). In light of the current ethical focus, Eisenbeiss (2012) considers high ethical standards to be of paramount importance, especially for transformational leaders. Nonetheless, leaders face a significant challenge in adopting a definition of ethics that conforms to evolving social trends (Eisenbeiss, 2012).

Aside from increased ethical pressures, Bedrule-Grigoruta (2012) concurs with Bennis by insisting the next generation of leaders need to display dynamism, efficiency, and flexibility. Because markets are now developing continuously, with demand, consumption, and innovation more responsive than ever, leadership processes need to respond accordingly (Bedrule-Grigoruta, 2012). Bedrule-Grigoruta lends credence to Bennis' statement through her hypothesis that the ability to build teams allows a leader's organization to compete in a global market, and that the management of teams must be imposed by leadership. The intertwining of leadership and management functions Bedrule-Grigoruta (2012) describes shares much more commonality with Kotter's views than with Drucker's.

A final trend to note is an increase in the degree to which leadership and management are complementary, as Kotter (2001) originally described. First, Lunenberg (2011) cites the genesis of leadership and management connection to the fact that organizations provide

managers the authority to lead. Second, the inherent link between Kotter's and Bennis' statements is the action of decision-making, which Westaby, Probst, and Lee (2010) list as a critical leadership action while Vroom and Jago (1974) list as a duty of management. Finally, interconnectedness is of future importance as managers begin to work for the transformational leadership that Cavazotte, Moreno, and Hickman (2012) argue will be necessary to navigate the sea of social and organizational changes of the 21st Century. The challenge now is developing an ethical leadership that amalgamates authenticity, spirituality, and transformational characteristics that conform to ethical principles (Brown and Trevino, 2006). In short, twenty-first century leadership requires not only ethics, but also the transparency to make ethics to be observed.

5.   Conclusion

Kotter, Drucker, and Bennis' comparisons of leadership and management offer varying degrees of practical guidance regarding leadership today. Kotter's statement is a practical one, but it becomes more powerful when augmented by that of Bennis. Building on Kotter's ideas, Bennis' 21st Century contextualization ultimately makes his statement the most practical of the three, as it offers an idea of the environment in which leaders and managers operate. Meanwhile, Drucker's statement is practical, yet also provides more guidance to leaders nowadays when current trends invoked by Bennis are considered simultaneously. However, Drucker's claims remain negated by leaders throughout history who were incredibly effective, yet committed horrendous atrocities. The literature reviewed in this study demonstrates Bennis' position is the most tenable and practical considering new leadership and management trends, given its context what it means for leaders. Literature on leadership agrees one of its main tenets is vision, and the vision needed to survive in rapidly changing environments requires a new generation of leaders to generate it. The codependence of leadership and management in effective decision-making and organizational stability must be placed in context to offer practical guidance, and in Bennis' statement, they are.

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