

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP

Leadership is an important aspect of management and the ability to lead is one of the keys to being an effective manager. The difference between success and failure whether in war, business, a protest movement or a soccer game can be attributed largely to leadership.

A large number of definitions can be found in the literature e.g.

- Leadership is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward achievement of group goals.
- Leadership is the ability of management to induce subordinates to work towards group goals with confidence and keenness.
- Leadership is the ability of a person to influence the thoughts and behaviour of others towards the accomplishment of some goals or goal.
- **In summary, leadership is:**
 - The activity of influencing people to strive willingly towards group objectives.
 - The process of influencing the activities of an individual or group towards goal achievement in a given situation.
 - A process of giving purpose (meaningful directions) to collective effort and causing willing effort to be expended to achieve such a purpose.
 - Getting people to move in certain directions, make decisions and support paths they would typically not have selected.
 - The process of making sense of what people are doing together, so that they will understand and be committed to the goal.
 - The process of articulating visions, embodying values

From the above definitions, we can say that managers lead by giving orders, handling disputes, supervising, disciplining and taking steps to improve employee performance. In so doing they use **influence, power, authority, delegation of responsibility** and be **accountable**. It is these components of leadership that managers use to direct the actions of their subordinates.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are closely related activities but distinguishable. Leaders and managers are not different people, but can be the same individual performing both roles. In recent years, theorists and practitioners in management have noted that, *"to survive in the 21st century, organizations need a new generation of leaders, not managers"*.

The fundamental difference between leaders and managers is that a manager focuses on the implementation of company policy while the leader tries to lead and inspire people to do their best for the company. A leader tries to cultivate a sense of commitment to the vision and mission of the company by inspiring the subordinates to willingly strive for the achievement of organizational objectives. A manager on the other hand manages employees by the power and authority delegated to him by his superiors. While leaders strive to conquer the volatile, turbulent and ambiguous surroundings that seem to conspire against business organizations, managers tend to surrender to them. In other words while managers administer, control, and accept the status quo, leaders innovate, inspire and change the status quo.

<u>Management characteristics</u>	<u>Leadership Characteristics</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Administers and problem-solves. ❖ Works within a system. ❖ Focuses on control. ❖ Short range view. ❖ Accepts the status quo. ❖ Sets things in motion by means of methods and techniques. ❖ Attitude of doing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Innovates- means alertness to opportunities, uses imagination and vision to capitalize on them. ❖ Works on the system ❖ focuses on people. ❖ Inspires trust. ❖ Long range view. ❖ Challenges the status quo. ❖ Is a natural unforced ability to inspire people. ❖ Attitude of serving

Effective Leadership.

To be effective, a leader must win the hearts and minds of the followers. This requires a guiding vision and clear idea of what is to be accomplished. Effective leaders must be able to communicate their vision. Knowing what to do, but not being able to communicate this to others can be a major drawback to effective leadership.

- Communication means understanding each other as individuals and as members of larger groups.
- Often communication is not effective because of barriers such as poor communication skills, distortion or omission of information, wrong interpretation and lack of trust between the sender and the recipient.
- Successful organizations are associated with leaders who are able to communicate effectively their vision and strategy.