

Scholarly Article 1
Organizational Change: Goals and Visions

by
Bob Daumer
EDD 9100 (24800)
Leadership Seminar

Nova Southeastern University
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Introduction and Article Selection

In searching for an article on organizational change in terms of leadership goals and visions, I began by looking through the *Performance Improvement (PI)* journals I have received through my membership with the International Society of Performance Improvement (ISPI). This journal has been a relevant and appropriate source in the past as the majority of articles are written for a business or corporate leader, rather than an educational institution leader, although the root concepts may be applied in any setting. The article I have selected is *Remodeling Leadership: Developing Mature Leaders and Organizational Leadership Systems (an Introduction to the Leadership Maturity Model™)* and was published in the February 2006 issue of *PI*. This article discusses the nature of leadership which is often based on competency models; offers an objective analysis of the weaknesses of competency models; introduces a new model called the Leadership Maturity Model (LMM) and compares it to the Capability Maturity Model (CMM®); and highlights the components necessary for quality leadership improvement. The concepts presented have the potential to help leaders in an organization better define goals and set clear visions.

Leadership Competency Models in an Organization

This article (Armitage, Brooks, Carlen, & Schulz, 2006) begins with an objective analysis of modern leadership competency models and the activities that are often associated with them. Armitage et al. present the concern that current competency models have a narrow focus, which is on the leader, solely. Therefore, the activities that often occur include workshops and evaluations that focus on how to improve the leadership competencies of the individual. The recent incorporation of 360 degree evaluations is a step in the right direction, according to the authors; however, they suggest more can be done to improve leadership within an organization.

By expanding the evaluations beyond the individual to the entire organization, a more robust model for leadership and evaluation can be created.

Maturity: The Basis for a New Model

The combination of continuous experiences and ever-growing knowledge is often a good equation for the development of maturity. Assumed in this equation is that knowledge is constantly gained and improved upon through each experience; it is a continuum of development. Individually, leaders typically proceed down this continuum in a rather smooth fashion, so the goal is to have an organizational leadership system proceed smoothly also. The role of leadership is currently shifting from that of an individual to that of a group. For this group of leaders to effectively lead, they must do so harmoniously; thus, in a leadership system.

The Leadership Maturity Model (LMM)TM

When maturity and a system join together, a model is formed. The software industry experienced this when the products began to gain wide societal acceptance. Manufacturers were challenged to produce quality products with current methods. Therefore, the Software Engineering Institute (SEI) developed a model for analyzing an organization's capability of producing a quality product. Very similar to SEI's Capability Maturity Model (CMM) is the LMM. This model of maturity looks at both individual leaders and the leadership system of the organization. In essence, a 720 degree (or two 360 degree) evaluation is completed.

To fully understand the concept of the 720 degree evaluation, Armitage et al. discuss the concepts of ability and capability. Their intent is to provide a clear distinction between the two, as they claim they are not the same thing. An example of a ball rolling down the hill is used to illustrate the distinction. From physics, it is known that spherical objects will roll down a hill. This is the object's ability. Because the object is spherical, it has the ability to roll. Now if there

is some type of barrier in the object's path, the object will not be able to reach the bottom of the hill. Therefore, the environment the object is in defines the object's capability. With a barrier, the object is not capable of rolling completely down the hill.

By applying this same logic to leaders and the leadership system, an organization has the opportunity to harmoniously improve. If each individual leader is compared to the spherical object, then it can be inferred that an individual has the ability to lead. The individual's environment (organization) defines the leader's capability. Should there be barriers within the leadership system, then any single leader's capability to lead is impacted. Barriers may come in the form of friction between leaders, electronic systems, mechanical systems, logistical systems, physical constraints, and so forth. The distinction between a leader's ability and capability is clear.

The Leadership Maturity Model in Practice

The current paradigm shift in leadership from the idea that the boss knows best to the idea that those closest to the product or customer know best will require organizations to redefine leadership systems (Clawson, 2006). Using the LMM as the model has the potential to facilitate this task. As has been discussed, both the individual leaders and the leadership system of an organization should be evaluated to determine the capability of the leadership. Without a strong leadership base, organizational goals and visions may potentially be unachievable. Knowing the capability of the leadership will help set achievable goals and visions, plus identify areas where the leadership system can benefit from improvements.

Reference

- Armitage, J., Brooks, N., Carlen, M., & Schulz, S. (2006). Remodeling leadership: developing mature leaders and organizational leadership systems (an introduction to the Leadership Maturity Model™). *Performance Improvement*, 45(2). pp. 40-47.
- Clawson, J. (2006). *Level three leadership: getting below the surface (3rd ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.