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What Makes Leadership Necessary, Possible and Effective: The Psychological Dimensions

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9. What makes leadership necessary, possible and effective: the psychological dimensions

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In 1914 British explorer Ernest Shackleton, along with 27 other men, embarked on an expedition to cross the continent of Antarctica. They would go by dog sled from one side to the other, passing through the South Pole. In early December, as the southern summer solstice drew near, the expedition left a whaling station on tiny South Georgia Island on the ship *Endurance*. *Endurance* was to sail through ice floes to the Antarctic, disembark a small party to cross the continent, and return to South Georgia, and then to England. Another ship would meet the crossing party on the other side of the continent, and bring it home to England.

Things didn't go as planned. The ice floes were unusually thick that summer, and in mid-January, they trapped *Endurance*. She was stuck fast. Shackleton ordered the crew to make winter quarters in the ship, and on the ice. Crossing the Antarctic was now out of the question. Survival would have to do. Shackleton hoped that in the spring, roughly the next November, the floe would break up enough to set *Endurance* free. However, when the ice eventually began to move, it simply crushed the *Endurance*. All 28 men barely managed to get into three small lifeboats, escape the floe before they were also trapped and crushed, and row and sail through wind and waves for days to Elephant Island, a small speck of land at the end of a peninsula stretching into the South Atlantic. They were fortunate to locate Elephant Island. They could easily have missed it, and been blown into the fiercely stormy South Atlantic and certain death.

Shackleton decided that the only hope of rescue was to sail before winter set in again with five other men in the largest of the lifeboats, 800 miles across the South Atlantic to the whaling station they had left more than a year before. Then he would hire a ship to return to rescue the other 22 men. Sailing through icy hurricanes in April, the six miraculously found South Georgia. Shackleton and two others immediately set out on a dangerous march across the island to the whaling station. Once there, Shackleton sailed a ship back to rescue the

three others at the landing site. Finally, after several frustrated attempts, Shackleton sailed another ship from Chile that rescued all 22 men on Elephant Island just before that vessel too was trapped in the ice.

Leadership was necessary to survive the first winter on the ice, to guide three small boats to Elephant Island, to cross the South Atlantic in one of them, and eventually to rescue the remaining crew at the end of the second winter. While few groups face the challenges that the crew of *Endurance* overcame, most require leadership to coordinate action and address the interpersonal needs and emotions that arise whenever people work together. Very often, leadership is necessary. Shackleton provided it magnificently. None of the expedition would have survived if he hadn't. We will describe Shackleton's leadership later. For now, his story simply underlines the fact that human achievement, even survival, generally requires leadership.

In 1918, when she was 34 years old, Eleanor Roosevelt, mother of five, and wife of Franklin Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, discovered that her husband had been having an affair with another woman. She decided that she would not divorce Franklin, but that she would lead an independent life, concerning herself with the social issues that had engaged her for many years. Then in 1921, Franklin contracted polio. He never fully regained use of his legs. Eleanor pushed Franklin to continue with his political career, despite his severe disability, and committed herself to helping him. Both the affair and the polio had steeled Eleanor, and she became both an aid to her husband and an independent political and social agent for the causes she believed in.

Thanks to Eleanor's backing, Franklin recovered enough to return to public life. He became Governor of New York, and then in 1932 was elected, for the first of four times, President of the United States. He served until he died in 1945.

Eleanor was a leader for her causes both before and after Franklin died. Before, she pushed for equal rights for women, blacks and the poor, famously resigning from the Daughters of the American Revolution, the DAR, when they refused to let the African-American Marian Anderson sing at Constitution Hall in 1939. After Franklin's death she was a force for human rights during the early days of the United Nations, and she was an influential figure in the Democratic Party until her own death in 1962.

The leadership Eleanor Roosevelt exerted was not necessary in the same way that Shackleton's leadership was so obviously necessary to the survival of the men of the *Endurance*. The people Eleanor led and fought for had been ignored, or worse, for decades. But she showed that leading them, and leading others on their behalf, was possible. Human beings are prepared by both their evolution and their experience to respond to leadership. In this chapter we will explore just what it is about the human condition that makes leadership possible.

When Abraham Lincoln became President in 1861, seven southern states had already seceded from the Union, and four more would quickly follow. Lincoln was committed publicly and privately to preserving the Union. But he faced immense obstacles. The states had divided over slavery, the South's "peculiar institution". Lincoln personally opposed slavery, but he did not set out at first to abolish it. If he had, crucial border states like Maryland and Kentucky would have seceded, and the Union could never have survived. It is said that when an abolitionist told Lincoln that he would have God on his side if he emancipated the slaves, he replied, "It would be good to have God on my side, but I must have Kentucky." Lincoln knew that he had to worry about the hard realities of politics in his government and in the country as a whole if he were to save the Union.

After more than a year of war Lincoln understood that the country needed a more powerful moral purpose to continue the fight. Emancipation would provide that moral purpose. But he must tread carefully in order to keep on his side those who wanted to save the Union but not disturb slavery. Lincoln's skill in navigating the dangerous waters of the Emancipation Proclamation is a marvelous case study in effective leadership. He held enough of the country together to make the decree stick, and ultimately won the war and abolished slavery. Using Lincoln as one powerful example, we will consider how men and women exercise effective leadership, even in the most challenging times.

In this chapter we explore leadership from a psychological perspective. We consider the three questions raised by the examples discussed above. What about the human condition makes leadership necessary, what makes leadership possible, and what makes leadership effective? Considering leadership from these vantage points will allow us to organize a wealth of psychological knowledge about leading and following, and about doing them both well or not well.

WHAT MAKES LEADERSHIP NECESSARY

The case of the *Endurance* underlines the necessity of leadership. The lesson *Endurance* teaches us is best captured by the inroads that evolutionary psychology has made in integrating our understanding of leadership. Van Vugt (2006) argues that in both human and animal groups, decisions need to be made about "what to do and when and where to do it" (p. 355). Someone needs to decide on the timing and type of activity. Where should the group look for food, water and protection from other groups or from predators. The group is best served if some kind of leader/follower structure evolves. Using a game theory analysis, Van Vugt shows that if a group has either too many leaders or

not enough, it will not fare well. The groups that find the right mix will be selected for over time. In short, leadership is necessary, and groups that evolve to produce optimal proportions of leaders and followers will succeed.

The *Endurance* expedition had, fortunately, the right mix of leaders and followers. Shackleton himself was at the top of a leadership hierarchy. He made tough decisions about where and when to move, what provisions would be needed at various times and places, and how the larger group should be divided for sleeping in tents, for manning the three lifeboats, and, finally, for the dangerous journey sailing the lifeboat *James Caird* from Elephant Island to South Georgia. In each subgroup there was another leader, one whom Shackleton could absolutely depend on. Most important was Frank Wild, who stayed on Elephant Island with the 21 others left to wait for, and hope for, ultimate rescue. Wild needed to lead that large group, which had to survive for over four winter months on a small beach, converting the remaining two lifeboats into a shelter. He was remarkably successful. In short, as evolutionary theory has emphasized, leadership is often necessary. Consequently, we have evolved so that leadership is also possible.

WHAT MAKES LEADERSHIP POSSIBLE

Evolutionary Theory

Human beings are social animals. As discussed above, that fundamental feature of the human condition makes leadership necessary. Human evolution, in turn, has made us fit for leadership. It has made leadership possible. The universal patterns of leadership and followership that are evidenced across both human and non-human social groups (ranging from honey bees and migratory birds to chimpanzees) support the contention that both leadership and followership are evolved psychological mechanisms. They have persisted through the process of natural selection precisely because they allowed our ancestors to successfully navigate environmental problems (Van Vugt, 2006; De Waal, 1996). According to evolutionary psychologists, the processes of both leadership and followership emerged together over years of human evolution in order to deal effectively with coordination problems associated with group life, such as problems of group movement, and conflict and competition both within and between groups (Tooby and Cosmides, 1992; Van Vugt, 2006; Van Vugt et al., 2008a, 2008b).

As noted above, the social coordination approach to understanding the evolution of both leadership and followership can be nicely illustrated using evolutionary game theory (Van Vugt, 2006). In an example of a simple two-person game, the players find themselves thirsty and looking for a watering

hole. For mutual protection, they must travel together. To do so, they must decide whether to lead or follow. If both choose to follow, nothing happens, and they don't achieve their goal. If they both choose to lead, they risk separation and death. Thus the best outcome occurs when one chooses to lead and the other to follow. The leader may get better outcomes than the follower, but even the follower is better off than he or she would be if both tried to lead or both waited to follow. Everyone in the group benefits from coordinating so that there is a leader and a follower, though the leader benefits more. How does evolution help produce the outcome where one person leads and one person follows? Some selection theories suggest that most people are flexible enough to be either a leader or follower, and they make their choices based on the situation. Others suggest that evolution produces an optimal and stable ratio of leaders and followers in a population (Maynard Smith, 1982; West-Eberhard, 2003; Wilson et al., 1996).

This evolutionary framework has important implications for a psychological understanding of leadership. First, it maintains that both leadership and followership emerged together and are complementary strategies. Thus any psychological examination of leadership must consider followership. Also, Van Vugt and colleagues offer a 'mismatch' hypothesis such that processes that were adaptive in ancestral times may no longer work so well in contemporary society. For example, in hunter-gatherer times leadership 'roles', per se, did not exist. Consequently, when a person led, his or her behavior was attributed, appropriately, to their personality. However, in modern society when people lead because of their specific roles, evolutionary adaptation may lead people to be too quick to attribute their behaviors to their personality as opposed to their role, making the fundamental attribution error (Tetlock, 1985).

Terror Management Theory

Another theoretical approach to understanding what makes leadership possible maintains that our need to identify with and follow leaders stems from our attempts to cope with our unique existential dilemma. According to Terror Management Theory (TMT), humans are predisposed to face an existential dilemma because (1) we, like other animals, have an inborn desire for self-preservation, and (2) we, unlike other animals, have an advanced cognitive capacity for abstract thinking and self-reflection which renders us aware of our ultimate mortality (Greenberg et al., 1986; Solomon et al., 1991). This awareness of our impending death is potentially terrifying. Consequently, humans have developed ways of coping with this prospective terror. We have developed cultural worldviews that give us shared conceptions of reality that offer structure, permanence and meaning to life. These worldviews not only can

provide us with symbolic and literal immortality (for example, fame or a promised afterlife), but also confer self-esteem, which buffers us from death-related anxiety. If we live up to the standards of our worldview, we can feel good about being a positive member of our group (Pyszczynski et al., 2005).

One way humans manage their fear of death is to identify and support leaders who confirm their worldview and make them feel they are a part of something larger than themselves (Pyszczynski et al., 2003). When faced with near certain death, the men in Shackleton's crew surrendered even more fully to his leadership in order to cope with their death-related anxiety. Shackleton made them feel a worthy part of a meaningful and important venture. Research has demonstrated that this desire to identify with and support a leader is not indiscriminate. Cohen et al. (2004) found that mortality salience led to more positive evaluations of charismatic gubernatorial candidates and less positive evaluations of relationship-oriented candidates. In addition to showing a preference for charismatic leaders under mortality salience, people also evidence increased support for leaders with masculine rather than feminine qualities (Hoyt et al., 2009). In sum, terror management theory provides a motivational account of what makes leadership possible. It helps us cope with the potentially terrifying thoughts of our own mortality.

Obedience to Authority

The evolutionary approach and the terror management perspective on leadership both contend that seeking a leader and the need to follow that leader are more or less hard-wired in humans. This argument is bolstered by a long line of research in social psychology demonstrating a startling human propensity to obey authority figures. This proclivity was clearly demonstrated by the men on the *Endurance* who readily obeyed the directives of "the boss". It was observed more dramatically in Stanley Milgram's well-known learning and shock studies (1973). Participants were brought to a laboratory under the guise of participating in an experiment examining the impact of punishment on learning. The participants were assigned the role of "teacher", and their job was to administer increasingly strong and painful shocks to the "learner", an experimental confederate, when he incorrectly identified previously learned word pairs. In the initial experiments, "stark authority was pitted against the subjects' strongest moral imperatives against hurting others, and, with the subjects' ears ringing with the screams of the victims, authority won more often than not" (Milgram, 1973). In the best-known version of Milgram's studies, nearly two-thirds of participants obeyed the authority figure to the end. These studies and others reveal the powerful situational influence of authority figures and the robust tendency of humans to obey – even when there is no pre-existing relationship between the follower and leader and even if the leader has

questionable authority. Importantly, Milgram's initial findings have been replicated using a range of different paradigms (Blass, 2000; Burger, 2009). According to Milgram, this inclination for obedience "flows from the logical necessities of social organization ... if we are to have society – then we must have members of society amenable to organizational imperatives" (Blass, 2002: 74). We can see then that both evolution and social necessity have made leadership possible.

Social Perception

One result of having evolved from primates, according to Gardner (1995), is that we expect leadership. Our expectations regarding leadership are part of human beings' complex cognitive capacities. They are essential to understanding what makes leadership possible. A social cognitive approach to understanding leadership asserts that leadership emerges from various cognitive and attributional processes. Social cognitive perspectives range from acknowledging that followers' perceptual processes play an important role in leadership processes to an extreme social constructionist view in which leadership is construed as existing solely in the eye, or the mind, of the beholder (Forsyth and Nye, 2008). On the social constructionist end of the spectrum, Meindl's (1995) work on the "romance of leadership" suggests that leadership has extraordinary explanatory power for people, such that people tend to discount or underweight the causal impact of factors other than leadership on group processes and outcomes. They attribute the group's success or failure to the leader.

Besides believing that group outcomes are attributable to the leader, people have preconceptions regarding the traits, characteristics and behaviors that make for a good leader (Lord et al., 1984). These tacit beliefs, or implicit leadership theories, describe prototypical leadership focusing around both task and people skills and include qualities such as sensitivity, intelligence, dedication and dynamism (Eden and Leviatan, 1975; Epitropaki and Martin, 2004; Kenney et al., 1996; Offerman et al., 1994). According to the prototype matching hypothesis, followers categorize people as being a leader or not a leader to the extent that their traits and behaviors match these prototypical leadership characteristics (Lord, 2005; Lord and Maher, 1991). Once categorized as leaders, the leader schema is activated and leads people to perceive, encode and recall information about the leader and the leaders' effectiveness that fits the leader schema (Lord, 1985; Lord et al., 1982).

While these implicit leadership theories and leader schemas can facilitate information-processing, they can also result in biased perceptions and evaluations, thereby making leadership more or *less* possible for certain individuals. For example, rather unimportant traits, such as attractiveness, are often part of our implicit theories, thus rendering us vulnerable to the "Warren Harding

Effect", or perceiving an attractive, but incompetent individual as having leadership potential (Gladwell, 2005). Also, ratings of leaders often reflect people's leader schemas more so than the qualities of the particular leader they are evaluating (Foti and Lord, 1987). In addition, leader schemas are widely associated with certain social identities, such as being white and male. Thus people of color and women generally don't fit the schema, making it difficult for them to be seen as leaders. Role congruity theory explains that the traits embraced in most leader schemas are inconsistent with the stereotypic traits of women (for example, sensitivity, helpfulness) but are consistent with the stereotypic traits of men (for example, assertiveness, competitiveness; Eagly and Karau, 2002). This incongruity between our preconceptions of leaders and our preconceptions of women initially stood in the way of Eleanor Roosevelt being a successful leader. While she overcame these prejudices, they have made it difficult for many other women to attain top leadership positions and also to be perceived as effective in them.

Social Identity Theory of Leadership

Social identity theory provides a cognitive approach to understanding what makes leadership possible, viewing it as emerging from normal social-cognitive processes associated with group life (Hogg, 2001; 2008). The foundations of this approach lie in social identity theory's basic principles that people's self-concepts and self-esteem are strongly influenced by the groups to which they belong (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The part of an individual's self-concept that derives from membership in social groups is referred to as a social identity (Tajfel, 1981). These social identities consist of prototypes, or a general set of attributes that characterize a particular group one belongs to and distinguish it from other groups. According to social identity theory, individuals automatically place people, including themselves, into social categories, and derive a sense of self-esteem from their group memberships. Thus their self-concept is, in part, dependent on their evaluation of their own group (ingroup) in comparison to other groups (outgroups).

According to the social identity theory of leadership, as group members identity more strongly with their group, the perception, evaluation and effectiveness of the leader is increasingly based on the followers perceiving the leader to possess prototypical properties of the group (Fielding and Hogg, 1997; Hains et al., 1997; Hogg et al., 2006). This social identity approach acknowledges that leader schemas also play a role in the perception of leaders. However, they play a lesser role to the extent that group membership is valued and salient.

According to the social identity perspective, highly prototypical group members are more influential than less prototypical members for a number of

reasons: they are consensually popular and liked, through their status they can gain compliance from other group members, and they are likely to behave in group-serving manners, thus cultivating trust from the other group members (Hogg, 2008). This social attraction and perceived legitimacy gives the prototypical members the latitude to be innovative and non-conformist (see idiosyncrasy credits below) and the sum of these attributions imbues prototypical members with perceived charismatic personalities. The role of social identity can be seen in responses to Lincoln's leadership. In 1860 Lincoln was a prototypical member of the Republican Party. This helped him win the party's presidential nomination. In office, Lincoln was well-liked and was perceived to be consistently acting in the best interest of the country. Through the trust those perceptions cultivated, he earned the latitude to announce his Emancipation Proclamation in 1862, and later endorse the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.

Legitimacy and Idiosyncrasy Credit

Both the research on perceptions of leaders and the social identity approach emphasize that leadership is both constrained by and made possible by followers. Leadership is a process in which followers are as integral as leaders. Followers' perceptions, expectations and attributions influence who is seen as appropriate for the leader role and how leaders are evaluated. One of the most important attribution followers make about any leader is his or her legitimacy. Hollander (1993) emphasizes that the leader's legitimacy is accorded or withdrawn by followers, and that legitimacy functions "as the latitude followers provide a leader to bring about change" (p. 33). By conferring legitimacy upon a leader, followers strongly impact the leader's behaviors, social influence and ultimately group performance (Hollander, 1993).

Attributions of legitimacy empower leaders to exercise both influence and power in large part through what Hollander (1958, 1993) called idiosyncrasy credits. According to the idiosyncrasy credit model, leaders earn "credits" from followers over time by demonstrating competence in achieving group goals and loyalty in conforming to the group. Followers allow leaders to spend down some of their accumulation of attributed credits by tolerating later innovation or non-conformity from the leader. Indeed, another term for idiosyncrasy credit is "the credit to deviate". The determination of competence and loyalty stems from many factors, some of which may or may not actually signal those attributes, such as seniority in a group or quantity of participation. Followers are particularly unlikely to give credits to people who are perceived to be different, that is, group members with low prototypicality, or who have characteristics that are not valued in society, such as those with lower socioeconomic status. In this way we see some of the common themes in the social

identity and idiosyncrasy credit approaches to leadership. Although the idiosyncrasy credit model suggests that leaders spend down credit when they deviate, leaders are expected to deviate to some degree and thus successful innovations can increase, as opposed to deplete, credit.

WHAT MAKES LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVE?

When we think about the leadership of Shackleton, Eleanor Roosevelt and Lincoln, we see two aspects of their effectiveness. First, they were successful in getting others to follow them. Second, they led their followers in ways that accomplished goals that were important for both themselves and their followers. In this section we focus on both these aspects of leader effectiveness.

How Leaders Induce Others to Follow

The initial success of inducing others to follow depends on both personal and situational qualities. As discussed above, crisis situations and threats, particularly those that remind us of our mortality, make people more likely to follow leaders. But the characteristics of leaders probably contribute more to the equation. Roughly coordinated to our schemas or implicit theories about the traits and behaviors of leaders, there are actual traits and behaviors associated with leading, and successfully inducing others to follow.

Emergent leaders typically have personal qualities that are captured by trait research that has identified the so-called Big Five (Hogan and Hogan, 2004, encyclopedia article). Factor analytic studies show that people differ on five major traits. These are Surgency (also called Extraversion); Stability (also called its opposite, Neuroticism); Agreeableness; Conscientiousness; and Openness (also called Intellectance). Surgency is best illustrated with Ernest Shackleton. He was outgoing and forceful, and could dominate when he had to. Eleanor Roosevelt may be the best example of Stability. Through many crises and challenges she kept her emotions in check. She knew how to steadily persist and maintain her self-control. Perhaps Lincoln is the best example of Agreeableness. He was certainly more agreeable that the brusque Shackleton. His sense of humor not only helped him, it engaged others and made them feel comfortable. Both Lincoln and Roosevelt were Conscientious. Perhaps Roosevelt was the better organized of the two, a hallmark of conscientiousness. All three were open and intellectually alive. Roosevelt may have been the most open, then Lincoln, and third, Shackleton. They were sensitive to others' thoughts and feelings, and to different ideas about how to achieve their goals. Importantly, their Openness did not mean that they were not decisive. All of them were unwavering in their principles and stood by their choices.

Another trait that is closely tied to getting others to follow is emotional intelligence (Lopes and Salovey, 2008). People who can perceive, understand, use and manage emotions – both their own and others' – have an advantage in leading. Lincoln had uncanny talent for these skills.

In many situations, a personal quality that is important in attracting followers is charisma. As noted above, crisis is one circumstance where people are especially prone to look for charismatic leadership. Charisma has been defined in many ways, including Max Weber's idea of the individual who is perceived to have superhuman traits and Bass's (1997) idea of the person who is worthy of emulation or identification. Perhaps charisma is one of those qualities that is hard to define but easy to identify. President John F. Kennedy was widely perceived as having charisma. He was handsome, suave and articulate, and he moved with grace and self-assurance. Many people had a positive emotional reaction to seeing and hearing him. Whatever charisma is, he had it. Not surprisingly, charisma is associated with greatness ratings of US Presidents (Emrich et al., 2001) and inspiring leadership more generally (Riggio and Riggio, 2008). It's an important quality in inducing followers to go along with a leader.

While traits are important, and the pure personal qualities of a leader have much to do with liking and then following, behavior is equally important. Many years ago Stogdill (1974) identified two major categories of leader behavior, "initiating structure" and "showing consideration". Bales (1958; 1970) and others correspondingly discussed task-related vs. socioemotional behaviors and roles. More recently Bass has discussed intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration as behaviors that effective leaders perform in order to induce following. This pair of behaviors, whatever they are called, are central to people's implicit leadership theories and are most relevant to understanding leadership in small groups. Shackleton was most focused on tasks and structure in leading the men of *Endurance*, but he acted to address individual emotional challenges as well, notably by taking the men most likely to make trouble into his own tent to absorb their grievances and keep them from spreading their discontents.

Another set of behaviors that is relevant in both large and small groups is one comprising persuasion or, as Howard Gardner discusses it, storytelling or narrative. Leaders must provide a vision or narrative that frames past experience and points the way toward future behavior. They must provide rationales and arguments for group action. Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address provides a good example of such framing. He suggested that the Civil War was visited on both north and south as God's punishment for the "offense" of slavery: it was easy to believe, he argued, "that American Slavery was one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which ... He now wills to remove". Thus Lincoln initially provided an interpretive

framework for the past and present. In his conclusion Lincoln went beyond framing the past and pointed the way for the future: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right as God gives to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in". Leaders persuade using both reason and "peripheral cues", such as their own credibility, rhetorical flourishes, or a long list of arguments, that signal to an audience that the leader is to be believed (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986).

Related to persuasion is a behavioral aspect of charisma. Charismatic leaders not only persuade, they also provide a compelling vision, and followers increasingly define themselves in terms of the work they do toward making that vision a reality. This behavior is called "inspirational motivation" by Bass. It is well illustrated in memorable phrases from Kennedy's speeches such as:

> In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility – I welcome it.... The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it – and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

Part of charisma then is a certain kind of persuasion. Researchers have demonstrated the importance of both images and metaphors in charismatic persuasion (Emrich et al., 2001; Riggio and Riggio, 2008).

In addition to engaging in both task-related and socioemotionally-oriented behaviors, and in persuasion, leaders also employ various kinds of power. French and Raven (1959) distinguished reward and coercive power, by which leaders control followers' outcomes, and also legitimate, referent, expert, and informational power by which leaders use their position, their attractiveness or similarity to group members, and their knowledge to try to engage followers voluntarily. Eleanor Roosevelt had little or no reward or coercive power, so used her expertise and to some extent her referent power, as a woman, to move her followers. Shackleton used reward, coercive, legitimate and expert power. Lincoln used them all.

Another important element related to the exercise of power concerns how authorities use legitimate power. Leaders gain much more voluntary compliance with their decisions and their urgings if they seem to be based on fair decision-making procedures (Tyler and Lind, 1992; Tyler, 2005). Such compliance turns out to be based considerably more on whether the leader's decision uses fair procedures, or "procedural justice", than whether it gives followers what they want. Followers trust that they will get fair outcomes over time if the leader uses fair procedures. Thus it is important for leaders to employ unbiased, ethical and respectful procedures in making decisions.

In sum, leaders who are effective in mobilizing followers have certain personal characteristics and employ a certain set of behaviors. We should

remember, however, that leadership is only meaningful with respect to followers, and followers' traits and behaviors interact with those of leaders. This fact means that traits like openness and behaviors such as procedural justice occupy a special place in effective leadership.

What Helps Leaders Successfully Achieve their Goals?

Getting people to follow is one thing. Leading them toward successful goal achievement is another. Kaiser et al. (2008) point out that the qualities that allow leaders to emerge are not the same as those that make them effective. Effective leadership rests on a combination and interaction of personal and situational attributes.

Ronald Heifetz's (1994) approach to leadership emphasizes leaders helping followers do adaptive work, which in turn means facing reality and thinking about how group goals and values can best be advanced, given that reality. Shackleton worked hard to get his sometimes reluctant followers to face hard facts: crossing the Antarctic was out of the question; the only hope for survival was for a small group to manage an extremely dangerous crossing of 800 miles of the South Atlantic. The leader who can best help followers assess and adapt to reality is a leader with high degrees of intelligence, or, more elusively, judgment. Intellectual brilliance is a predictor of rated presidential greatness (Simonton, 1987) and brain power is acknowledged as an important component in leadership effectiveness by researchers (for example, Goleman, 1998) who focus on other qualities. Abraham Lincoln was clearly gifted intellectually, and his judgment in knowing just how far to push the Union toward emancipation at any given time was key to saving the Union. In addition to general intelligence, specific competencies are important for effective leadership. In line with Hollander's idiosyncrasy credit model whereby followers grant credits on the basis of competencies relevant to the group, Van Vugt notes that followers "process task relevant skills quickly" (2006: 362).

While leader attributes are important for group success, one of the most intriguing lines of psychological research on leadership effectiveness points to combinations of leadership style and situational condition as being determinative. This approach is captured in Fiedler's (1993) contingency model of leadership effectiveness. Fiedler's early research distinguished leaders who primarily value interpersonal relations from people who primarily value successful task completion. However, at first Fiedler was unable to correlate leadership style with group effectiveness. After puzzling over his data he discovered that each style is effective in different situations. Every situation has more or less situational control for the leader, and is therefore more or less favorable for leadership. Decades of research have basically supported a model in which the task-oriented leader is more effective in very favorable or

very unfavorable situations, while the more interpersonally-oriented leaders are more effective in moderately favorable situations. The demands of high, medium and low favorability or control situations seem to match the proclivities of either task- or relationship-oriented leaders, producing the main findings. Taken together, the research on what makes leadership effective shows that personal leader qualities are important, but that there has to be a match or mesh of the leader's qualities with what the situation demands.

Effective decision-making is critical to leadership success. There are a number of group processes that can undermine good decision-making such as biases in the way information is shared within the group (Stasser and Titus, 1985), the tendency toward making extreme decisions (Levine and Moreland, 1998), and extremely strong desires for group consensus. All of these tendencies can be seen in perhaps the best known example of flawed decision-making, *groupthink*, a distorted mode of information processing resulting in poor decisions (Janis, 1972). A number of causes of groupthink have been identified including extremely cohesive groups, being isolated from outside scrutiny, lacking procedures to evaluate alternatives, having a leader with a strong, directive leadership style, and high levels of stress or external threat. As a result, group members rationalize their group's actions and invoke stereotypes of opposing groups, maintain an illusion of invulnerability and an exaggerated belief in their group's morality, and feel extreme pressure to conform to the group and sustain group cohesiveness. Lincoln implicitly understood these factors associated with poor decision-making. His construction of a "team of rivals" by bringing together his defeated opponents for the presidential nomination (Kearns Goodwin, 2005) ensured that his cabinet would not be overly cohesive or isolated from outside scrutiny, and would include multiple viewpoints and adequate evaluation of alternatives.

CONCLUSION

The psychological perspective on leadership begins with recognizing that the human condition makes leadership and coordination necessary for group success, and that human evolution has responded to this reality by making us prepared for leadership. We are prepared, to different degrees, to lead or to follow, to both command and obey. We are also prepared to think about what it means to lead and follow. We have implicit theories, probably both learned and evolutionarily based, about what leaders do and what they are like. Sometimes the way we think about leaders or respond to them is not entirely rational or adaptive, as we see with some of the terror management research. For better or worse, we are leading and following as well as social animals.

Our schemas about what leaders are like fit quite well the characteristics of people who emerge as leaders. Those with traits such as charisma and extraversion get others to follow. We think that a somewhat different set of individual characteristics and group processes make for the most effective leadership, judged by whether groups achieve their goals. Overall the psychological approach to leadership alerts us to both learned and evolutionarily based influences on how people think and act in groups, and whether they lead, and are led, effectively.

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