

THE IMPACT OF LEADERS AMONG OTHERS

Anca VĂCAR ¹

Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu, Romania

Abstract

The article above tries to identify the importance of using leadership in order to maximize project management performance according to interviewed respondents from Romanian organizations. This specific objective is derived from the main objective namely, the identification of knowing and using of leadership in project management through its specific methods and instruments among Romanian managers and employees for organizational performances.

Key words: leadership, leaders, followers, impact, team.

JEL classification: M21

Often it is found that, when people face uncertainty, regardless of the field, others are turning to for advice on how to respond, while demonstrating a tendency to imitate the behavior of their superiors.

As J. Kotter stated, organizations should not wait for leaders to appear overnight but must identify people with skills and qualities of a leader and expose them to realities in order to develop that potential (Kotter, 2009). Through a careful selection, development and encouragement many of such people could occupy management positions in organizations later. The real challenge for organizations is to combine a strong leadership with a strong management, so that these two to balance each other, specifically by putting together these two categories (strong leaders and strong managers) forming strong teams to initiate and lead successful projects .

Leaders are charismatic people with high availability for communication and also a greater capacity for understanding the economic and social problems. A good leader must be a good communicator who cares about its employees and an expert in his field, a good strategist who thinks

¹ Faculty of Economics, anca.vacar@ulbsibiu.ro

ahead and a promoter of change, because change is vital for future success. By continually adapting to market changes, a leader helps his organization to continue to grow and thus become competitive by employees whom he has available. He must encourage employees to come up with new ideas, to involve them in planning and implementing changes, such change will be not only accepted but also implemented by the team.

Today, companies manage projects in a more informal manner than before. Informal project management is based more on project management guidelines and with minimum bureaucracy than on policies and procedures that form the basis of formal project management. As H. Kerzner notice, informal project management requires four elements absolutely essential, namely: effective communication; effective cooperation; effective teamwork; trust (Kerzner, 2010).

Confidence is one of those things that is earned, not received for free. To win someone's trust is something that comes in time and with a proven loyalty. To earn trust, a leader must prove honesty. Respect goes hand in hand with confidence. Without it, there can not be trust.

The first task of every leader is to inspire confidence, said S. Covey, recognized by Time magazine as one of 25 most influential Americans, an authority on leadership internationally respected, family expert, teacher, organizational consultant and author whose advice has come to the attention of millions of people. "Trust is confidence born of two dimensions: character and competence. Character includes your integrity, your reasons and intention about people. Competence includes capabilities, skills, results and record paths. Both dimensions are vital," said S. Covey.

From the research conducted we can state that it was observed the indirect necessity of using leadership in project management. Both managers and employees consider communication as the main factor that generates a positive relation between leaders and followers (over 67%). According to managers point of view the next factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and followers is trust, followed by financial incentives. According to employees point of view, these two factors are reverse, considering more important the financial incentives and then trust (Figure 1).

Which is the main factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and followers, and generates organizational performance?

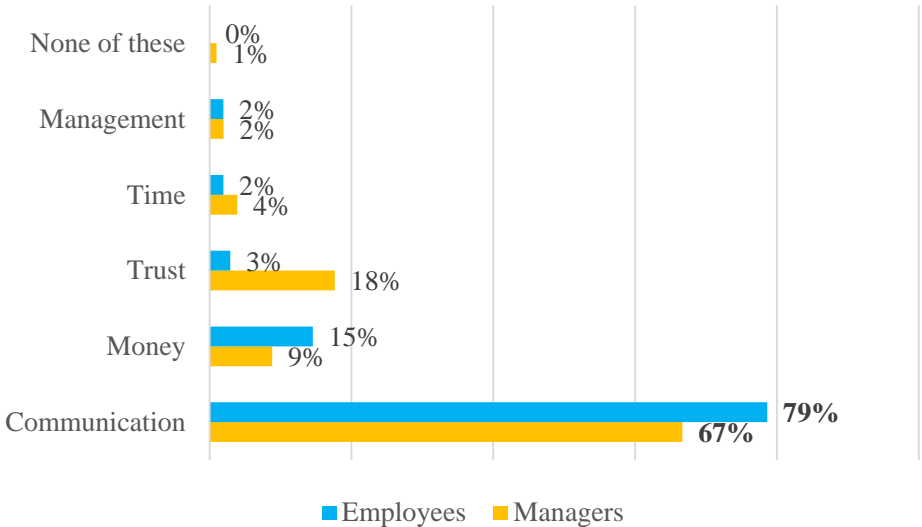


Figure 1. Factors that generates a positive relationship between leaders and followers, according to respondents (managers and employees) perspective

From the perspective of managers, the most commonly used tools and techniques to influence the team are: persuasion (29%) and consultation of employees (29%) with very high frequency; then legitimate authority (35%) with a high frequency; entrance to followers favors (42%), appealing to feelings (40%) and coalitions (40%) at an average frequency; the other having a low or very low frequency of manifestation, namely pressure, the exchange of favors and personal requests.

From perspective of perspective of employees, the results are a little different. The instruments and techniques that are most often used by a manager to influence the team are as follows: pressure (20%), persuasion (19%) and consultation of employees (14%) with very high frequency; then legitimated authority (35%), entrance into follower's favor (32%) and personal requests (30%) with a high frequency.

A notable fact is that, both managers and employees indicated as the most commonly used techniques in Romanian organizations in order to influence the team are persuasion and consultation. The use of techniques are presented below in Figure 2.

How often are these tactics used to influence the project team within your organization?

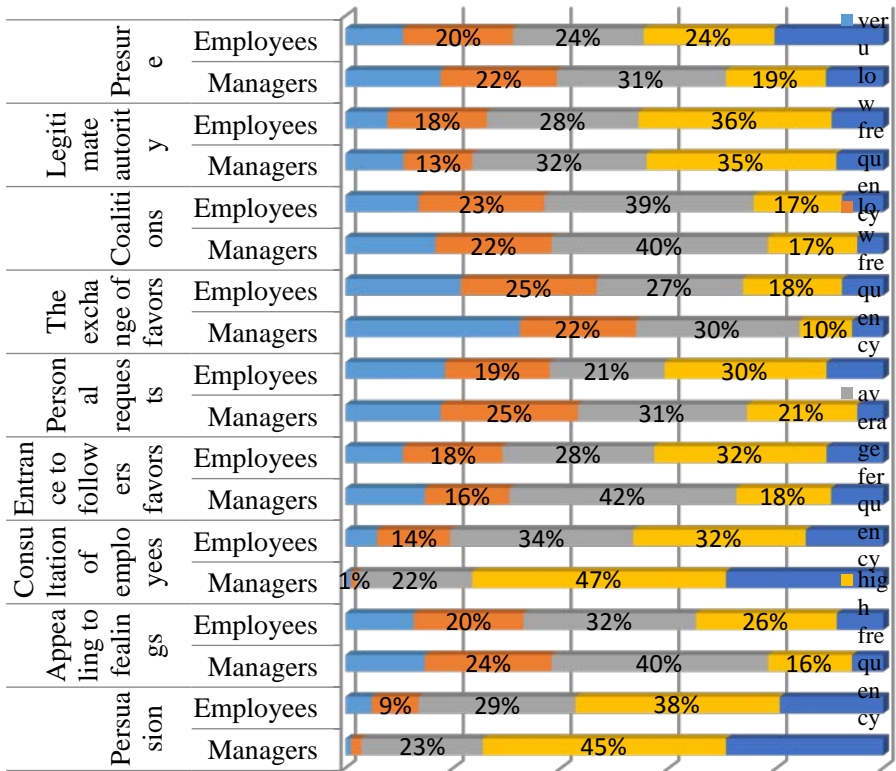
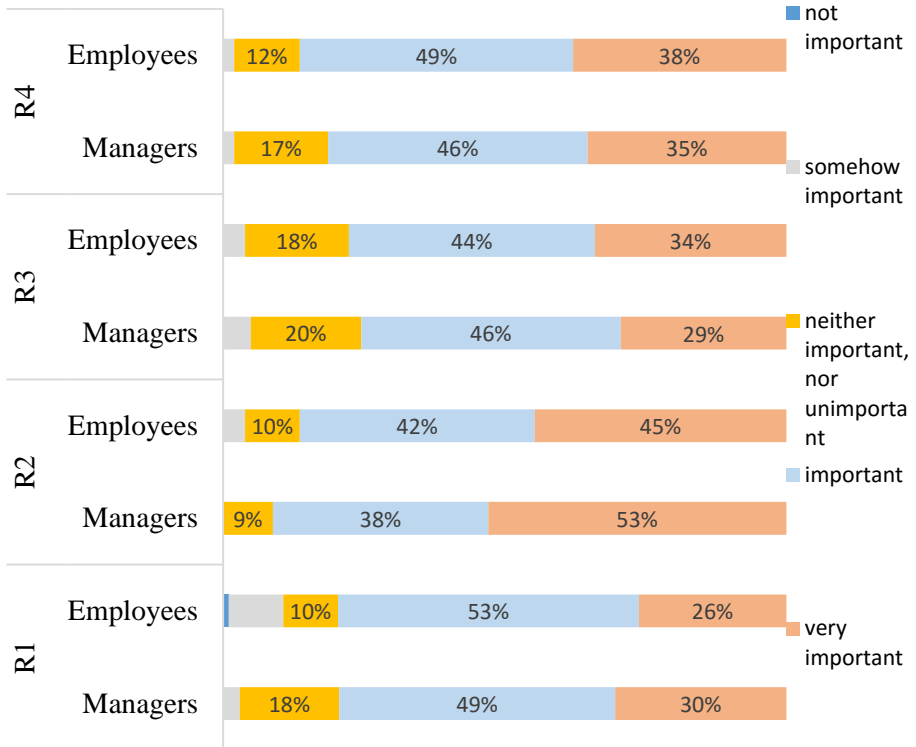


Figure 2. Influencing tactics used in organizations from the perspective of respondents (both managers and employees)

To improve and develop the characteristics and hence the behavior of leaders, respondents, both managers and employees, indicate the following as the most important recommendations: correct assessment of a situation, whether the problems are positive or negative, followed by developing the personality which combines enthusiasm, optimism and empathy, then developing human relations based on positive feelings and warm manifestations towards people and the last practice and self-discipline in training and development courses (Figure 3).

How important are the following recommendations regarding the improvement and development of characteristics and hence the behavior of leaders?



Legend:

R1	Practice and self-discipline in training and development courses
R2	Accurate assessment of a situation, whether positive or negative issues
R3	Developing human relations based on positive feelings and warm manifestations towards people
R4	Developing the leader`s personality which combines enthusiasm, optimism and empathy

Figure 3. Recommendations for improving and developing leader`s behavior in terms of respondents'

In conclusion, the majority of respondents, both managers and employees, considers communication as the main factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and supporters (over 66%). According to managers, the next factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and supporters is trust, followed by financial incentives. Instead, employees reverses the order of the two factors, more important considering providing financial incentives and then granting trust. Gaining organizational trust is a key competence of leadership, because trust is hard to build but easy to lose. Each leader must work hard to gain the confidence of his supporters and then to find ways to show people he trusts them to act effectively.

From the perspective of managers, the most commonly used tools and tactics in order to influence the team are persuasion and consultation, determined otherwise by a good communication within the organization. These two aspect are depending one to the other.

Certainly there is place for improvements of the way a leader influences the people he works with, so to improve and develop the characteristics and hence the behavior of leaders, respondents, both managers and employees, indicated the following recommendations as the most important: correct assessment of a situation, whether the problems are positive or negative, then developing the leader`s personality which combines enthusiasm, optimism and empathy, then developing human relations based on positive feelings and warm manifestations to people and finally practice and self-discipline in their training and development courses.

References

- Covey, R.S., *Etica liderului eficient sau conducerea bazata pe principii*, Editura ALLFA, 2006
- Kerzner, H., *Management de proiect: o abordare sistemică a planificării, programării și controlului activității de proiect*, vol. 1, Editura Codecs, București, 2010
- Kotter, J.P., 2009, *Forța schimbării: Cum diferă leadershipul de management*, trad. Gheorge, E., Editura Publica, București
- Văcar, A., Dumitrașcu, D.D., Leadership – a key factor to a successful organization–part I, *Studies in Business and Economics*, no.7.3, 2012
- Văcar, A., Miricescu, D., Leadership - a key factor to a successful organization - part II, *Procedia Economics and Finance*, volume 6, 2013, doi: 10.1016/S2212-5671(13)00159-7
- Văcar, A., Project management - a tool for implementing change in organizations, *Studies in Business and Economics*, no.8.2., 2013
- Văcar, A., Leadership – a necessity in projects, *Studies in Business and Economics*, no.9.2., 2014
- Văcar, A., The use of projects in generating change in organizations, *Bulletin Of Taras Shevchenko National University Of Kyiv – Economics*, no.9(174), 2015, doi: 10.17721/1728-2667.2015/174-9/12
- Yukl, G., (2002), *Leadership in organizations*, fifth edition, Prentice-Hall Inc., New Jersey