

PHILOSOPHY OF VALUES IN LEADERSHIP COACHING: LEADER IN SELECTED TYPES OF LEADERSHIP

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Purpose: The focus of this article is on the axiology of leadership, which is a description of the guiding values and characteristics of a leader, including innovation, growth, skilful direction-setting, listening and attentiveness, proactive empowerment, accountability, judgment, and persuasion.

Design/methodology/approach: The article uses the method of comparative-descriptive analysis. In this article, I characterize the different types of leadership including its strategic, activating, operational and forcing form.

Findings: I refer to the scientific theory of authorities in the field of organizational management and leadership coaching by Owen, Krupp, Schoemaker, as well as Kaplan and Kaiser; for comparison, I also include Sierackiewicz's leadership typology. Unconsciously, however, the leader's qualities/attributes, when abused, can become the greatest obstacle and disadvantage, which not only thwarts all the efforts of the team, but also makes the leader-head of that team ineffective.

Research limitations/implications: The text takes up issues related to the problem of development and self-development in the field of business.

Practical implications: The paper concerns the development of an individual, leader and his team in the professional and private sphere. Text will be interest broadly understood business.

Social implications: Unconsciously, however, the leader's qualities/attributes, when abused, can become the greatest obstacle and disadvantage, which not only thwarts all the efforts of the team, but also makes the leader-head of that team ineffective.

Originality/value: Originality of the article is confirmed by the description of basic features/values that every contemporary leader should cultivate. Characteristic feature of the contemporary leader is his versatility and the related axiological pluralism.

Keywords: philosophy of values, axiology, leadership, leadership coaching, Kaplan – Kaiser – Sierackiewicz.

Category of the paper: review and conceptual paper.

1. Introduction

In this article, using the method of comparative-descriptive analysis, I characterize selected contemporary types of leadership. Basing my analysis on the theories and assumptions of the leading authorities in the field of management and research on leadership issues, I consider, among others, its strategic, activating, operational and forcing form. Each of the distinguished types of leadership is associated with the dominance/reign of a specific system of values, the implementation of which allows to accurately indicate the advantages and disadvantages of a particular style of management, and thus also leading a team in modern times; also in the context of the challenges of industry 4.0. (Kreyenberg, 2010, pp. 28-29, 54-55; Michna, and Kaźmierczak, 2020; Schwab, 2017)¹.

The aim of the paper is to show that among the leading characteristics of business leaders include the ability to manage without violence, the ability to create and integrate a team, the charisma of the leader and their respect for people. A leader's attitudes and reactions are also determined by his or her preferred value system: every leader is characterized by a specific set of values – that is, a specific axiology. In this paper, I define axiology in a non-traditional way, as a leader's value system/network, or, in other words, as a leader's philosophy of values: the preferred and pursued (by a leader) subjective order of values that manifests itself in the techniques and patterns of business and professional action.

2. Axiology as a philosophy of values

In the traditional sense, axiology is, of course, the science of values². Values are most closely associated with a particular person and his or her subjective experiences (Borowski, 1992, p. 5). That is why axiology as an objective science of values should be distinguished from subjective axiology (of a subject)³. At the same time, it should be noted that „the basis of objective axiology must be subjective axiology. This is because subjective axiology is closely

¹ The extensive scope of topics related to the characteristics of a leader and leadership coaching does not allow for a detailed analysis of the problem in the context of industry 4.0.

² According to Bohdan Dziemidok, axiology „as a general theory of values and valuing belongs to the youngest philosophical disciplines. It began to emerge at the end of the 19th century in Austria (Franz Brentano and his disciples: Alexius Meinong and Christian Freiherr von Ehrenfels) and Germany (especially in the Baden school: Wilhelm Windelband, Heinrich Rickert and Hugo Muensterberg), and took shape in earnest in the early 20th century” (Dziemidok, 2014, p. 17).

³ That is, relating to man as an individual. Representatives of equal disciplines have tried to answer the question of who is man? Philosophers, anthropologists, sociologists, as well as economists have tried to consider this indagation. As a rule, a person is perceived as an exceptional being: independent, individual, rational, unique, constituting an autotelic value. The uniqueness of man is evidenced by his achievements. „We can enumerate them by pointing, for example, to the field of architecture, to the products of intellectual and artistic culture, to social and economic solutions” (Dymarski, 2011, p. 277; Skarga, 2007, p. 28).

related to the specific experience of goodness, beauty, freedom, justice, and to the direct experience of utilitarian values, which are the subject of research in political, economic, pedagogical, and other sciences” (Borowski, 1992, p. 5; Kuzior, 2007).

Value defines that which is valuable and worthy of desire. It is not uncommon for value to be „what people aspire to, what they would like to have and experience. Of course, in addition to positive values, there are also negative qualities or, as some claim, negative values, which are the opposite of the positive ones” (Borowski 1992, p. 7). For this reason, when describing the different types of leadership, it is worthwhile to analyze not only the positive values of the leader/head, but it is also important to pay attention to the negative/less flattering qualities. By examining the negative values, it will be possible to see the shortcomings and deficiencies in the leader’s leadership style and then, as a result of seeing the specific values and deficiencies that hinder management, it will be possible to make necessary or appropriate changes to the leader’s preferred style.

A leader’s awareness of both his or her positive and negative values is an important and valuable experience because a leader’s value system determines his or her behavior (often unconsciously): it influences his or her actions/activities, attitudes, reactions, judgments, and choices. Therefore, certain values underlie all of a leader’s actions and choices. Some of them are the leader’s positive values, others are his negative values. And it is these negative values of the leader/head that constitute a specific axiological area worthy of transformation, reworking and change (Bielińska, and Jakubczyńska, 2016, pp. 247-258; Kuzior, 2017, pp. 77-81).

It is not uncommon that the reason for the development of certain values, and therefore also of established forms of behavior, is functioning in a specific culture, including organizational (corporate) culture. It is the values prevailing in a given organization that determine, among other things, the communication style of people/entities working in it - unique individuals who are often the foundation of effective teamwork.

In this way „what we call culture [also corporate culture – A.M.] and what we call value lies first of all in the subject” (Borowski, 1992, p. 7). Good management, including the management of a business organization, will therefore involve humanism in the broadest sense: the axiological sensitivity of the subject manifested in its axiological maturity as the ability to choose higher values and a holistic and comprehensive view of the environment in which the leader acts, functions and works.

3. Leadership as a form of management

Steven Krupp CEO of the consulting and training firm Decision Strategies International Inc. (DSI), a classic of strategic thinking, management and implementation of change, and Paul J.H. Schoemaker, founder and chairman of the aforementioned company, entrepreneur, scholar, and trainer, in their attempt to characterize the qualities of a leader, note that a leader/head is usually a visionary with extraordinary courage, willpower, resourcefulness, and the ability to challenge established patterns. It is also a person with the ability to manage through interpretation and to establish and build relationships (including through forgiveness; the ability to manage through forgiveness is one of the leading characteristics of the modern leader).

According to Krupp and Schoemaker, a leader is also a coordinator who is capable of learning, a person who is determined and aware of the value of unity and peace (Krupp, and Schoemaker, 2016, pp. 239-252). Both experts in the field of Leadership Development and recognized leader in future-focused consulting assume that such qualities (values) were exhibited by Nelson R. Mandela, among others. In the attitude of this South African politician, we can see a combination of key characteristics of a good leader.

The combination of qualities and values present in Mandela's character is the reason why Krupp and Schoemaker wrote the following about this black charismatic: „Nelson Mandela grew into one of the most influential strategic leaders of the 20th century. He possessed uniquely developed cognitive, emotional, and behavioral skills, as well as organizational and strategic competencies that would come in handy throughout his life. To achieve all that he became, he needed not only a great willingness to learn, but also the ability to predict outcomes and interpret even the most subtle reports and events” (Krupp, and Schoemaker, 2016, p. 237). Krupp and Schoemaker assume that the combination of cognitive-emotional and behavioral qualities made this man, politician and leader, a brilliant strategist.

Strategic leadership, however, is only one form/style of managing people and teams. Experts in the field of leadership coaching distinguish several leading types of leadership. The most commonly cited are strategic leadership, activating leadership, operational leadership, and forcing leadership. Each of these leadership types is defined by the leader's specific characteristics and values. For this reason, it is worthwhile to characterize these leadership types in detail, so that we can then discern the influence of the people representing them.

4. Characteristics of leadership types according to Bob Kaplan and Rob Kaiser

In the book *Uważaj na swoją siłę. Mocne strony lidera mogą być źródłem jego największych problemów*, which was created in scientific cooperation with Polish psychotherapist and entrepreneur Jacek Santorski, its authors Kaplan and Kaiser describe selected types of leadership (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 13.).

Among other things, the monograph considers strategic leadership. This type of leadership is associated with the ability to think strategically; it manifests itself in the predisposition to look ahead. A strategic leader's strengths include a drive for innovation, passion, curiosity and a desire to grow, and a knack for setting direction. The priority qualities/values of a strategic leader are:

- a) innovation,
- b) development, and
- c) direction setting.

Undisputedly, the main advantage of strategic leadership is skillful indication/determination of the direction, dynamizing and stimulating development processes, as well as discovering, precursorship and originality (innovativeness). On the other hand, the disadvantages of strategic leaders include difficulty in adapting the leader to the realities of everyday life (having head in the clouds); also greed as the use of predatory solutions and a tendency to „fix what works” (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 58.). For this reason, a leader with strategic traits is valued for visionary and warrior-like qualities, but at the same time is reproached for a lack of focus on reality (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 57.).

Another type of leadership is activation leadership. Activation leadership is associated with the value of empowering and engaging. Empowering and engaging involves delegating/ coordinating „to subordinates some of the authority and joint decision making for the team or organization” (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 47.). The characteristics of an activating leader revolve around the ability to provide support, as well as the ability to listen actively and to proxy, delegate, and empower (empowerment). Therefore, some of the priority characteristics and values of an activation leader include:

- a) supporting,
- b) listening, and
- c) empowering.

The advantages of activating leadership are skillful delegation of authority, listening, and systematic support of team activities. The disadvantages of this leadership style are overconfidence often combined with lack of verification, excessive openness, and immoderate (excessive) friendliness (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 52). An activating leader likes to share competencies, motivate for action, and support in action (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 52).

Another type of leadership is operational leadership. It is responsible for operational management skills that aim to efficiently achieve the required short-term results. Significant qualities of an operational leader are the ability to maintain order in the team, a high degree of team productivity, and the ability to direct the team to complete the task. The fundamental characteristics/values of operational leadership are:

- a) order,
- b) efficiency, and
- c) execution.

The immediate advantages of this type of leadership focus on precise and conscientious completion of tasks, emphasis on team productivity, and supervision manifested through concern for order. Disadvantages in the operational leadership system include tunnel vision, intransigence, over-restrictiveness, tendency to revise, frequent cost control, as well as total process orientation (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 58). Operational leaders are distinguished by their ability to be focused and systematic organizing the work of the company, but unfortunately they lack the courage that is a characteristic of a strategic thinking style leader (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 57).

The last leadership style, and of course team management style, cited by Kaplan and Kaiser is forcing leadership. This leadership involves the value of power and imposing one's opinions, rationale, and decisions. The strengths of a forcing leader are the ability to persuade, urge, agree, and give opinions, as well as frequent scrutiny of the team's actions. The axiological pillars of a forcing leader are:

- a) persuasive ability (persuasion),
- b) ability to form opinions; and
- c) systematic control.

The advantages of forcing leadership are to be willing to take control, to be open-minded, and to encourage action; in other words, to mobilise activity. The disadvantages associated with this form of leadership include, for example, over-controlling and exaggerated dominance, which is often externalized in setting a negative – overbearing – tone to meetings (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 52).

A slightly different division (different typology) of leadership is described by Mariusz Sierackiewicz. In his book *Technical Leadership. Od eksperta do lidera*, citing Kurt Lewin, Max Weber and Arthur Carmazzi, among others, Sierackiewicz writes about charismatic, transactional, transformational, visionary and servant leadership (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 18).

Charismatic leadership, as explained by Sierackiewicz, refers to leaders who hold high positions. Basically, these are leaders who influence with the power of words (language) and emotions. The role of a charismatic leader is to stimulate energy and develop passion. Through their ability to influence, a charismatic leader builds strong relationships that help in the pursuit and completion of the task (Sierackiewicz, 2016, pp. 18-19).

In the case of transactional leadership, the most important role is played by the manager who uses a system of rewards and punishments as a form of motivating the employee/team member. A team managed by a transactional leader is focused on task completion. Sierackiewicz measures that this model of management will work „in a predictable and uncomplicated environment, while it will fail in the case of a group of passionate people who want to do something on their own” (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 19).

Alignment of declarations and actions are hallmarks of transformational leadership. This type of leader is characterized by a very high emotional intelligence, self-awareness, empathy, visionary, and at the same time simplicity and humility, through which they motivate, inspire, and communicate creating with the team a common future filled with the implementation of specific tasks (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 19).

A higher level of visionary/predictive leadership is manifested by a leader who is a visionary leader. Visionary leadership makes the leader a person characterized by uncommon creativity in creating attractive ideas (visions) that he or she can easily vividly present to the team. A visionary leader is an influential idealist who infects an idea, but needs others to implement it (contemporary examples include Elon Musk, Robert Murdoch, Ted Turner, and the late Steve Jobs) (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 19)⁴.

The last type of leadership that Sierackiewicz distinguished is servant leadership. It focuses on meeting the needs of team members and the goals set by the team. This type of leadership works well in a culture that respects ethics and values. It involves the use of agile methodologies and a coaching style of influencing team members who are characterized by independence (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 19)⁵.

5. Selected leadership skills of a leader – characteristics

Sustainable leadership and related sustainable management should include all of its patterns. Unfortunately, a leader often pushes only one form of management, which affects the shape of relationships built in the team. However, leaders need to nurture a unique ability to blend contexts, such as operational and strategic contexts, which is the ability to combine the characteristics of these two types of leadership: effective tactics with clear and decisive messaging; and clear and transparent communication.

⁴ Elon Musk is the owner of SpaceX and co-founder of Tesla Motors; Robert Murdoch is the owner of „The Times”; Ted Turner is an American media entrepreneur; and Steve Jobs was the inventor of the Macintosh computer and co-founder of Apple.

⁵ Agile methodologies address contemporary forms of management and are based on constantly changing priorities; it is a set of management methods that takes into account contemporary working conditions/realities.

Often the ability to combine contexts is associated with the art of creating a vision, the talent of leading and inspiring motivation; also building alliances or conducting difficult, demanding and complex negotiations (Kaplan, Kaiser, 2013, pp. 129-130.). According to the Hungarian-American psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, linking management contexts is a specific state of „flow” as a form of „relaxed focus” in which all attention is diverted to achieving the goal (Csikszentmihalyi, 2005; Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 133).

As Rob Kaiser writes: „Leaders today face a serious dilemma. On the one hand, conservative, strong, top-down management has become the key to success over the past decade. On the other hand, however, creativity, the ability to collaborate, and the full involvement of employees, made possible by involving them in the management and decision-making process, may be paramount in the hard-to-predict future” (Kaplan, and Kaiser, 2013, p. 15).

A leader is able to mitigate/suppress his or her inner contradictions in order to engage in the team’s professional activities with passion, yet great composure and calmness (Kaplan, Kaiser, 2013, p. 133). A versatile leader does not develop only one talent – the chosen dominant leadership trait. A versatile leader does not neglect his/her other talents/traits. While nurturing his or her minor talents, they demonstrate a concern for other, more important, leadership skills.

According to the previously mentioned Jo Owen, they include, among others: efficient discovery of one’s leadership style, the ability to convince people by using a specific management style; a positive attitude and fostering happiness. Subsequently, also the development of problem-solving skills, above-average use of time and the accompanying constant learning to be a leader (also by drawing up one’s own leadership plan), systematic and continuous education in the field of informal survival rules, combined with high-efficiency use of business ethics; motivating shaping of people of various characters combined with the efficiency of building a management team; effective acquisition of loyalty among colleagues/subordinates, also the ability to formally assess subordinates, including taking responsibility for the selection of employees (including their employment in a specific position). The ability to provide informal feedback and implement a coaching culture in the organization, the resourceful management of a mismatched team, the ability to manage conflict/crisis situations, project management, and change management may also be included (Owen, 2012, p. 5).

Similarly, a good leader should have: knowledge of the 10 laws of power, modeling support networks, and reinforcing the value of trust; technical speaking and presentation skills; a willingness to develop excellence in listening; and writing proficiency. Owen also suggests that a good leader should have business competencies combined with an effective form of communication, use of power mechanisms, and the ability to conceptualize/create a vision (Owen, 2012, p. 5).

However, the list of leadership skills for a team leader is much longer and should include many niche characteristics, such as the mathematical ability to read results from numerical data, the leader's willing participation in business deliberations and meetings, fruitful collaboration with the board of directors, the realization of values while creating value for the company, and the leader's/leader's constant discovery of the context of his or her actions (Owen, 2012, p. 5).

6. Nature of leadership

Leadership is a learned skill – it is based on skills that everyone can and should learn, for example through observation. In the systematic learning of leadership, it is important to remember to develop and use one's own strengths, while recognizing that it is impossible to fully develop all the qualities of a leader. The ideal leader does not exist (the ideal leader is an invention).

Authentic leadership is about encouraging people to go „where they would never go on their own” (Owen, 2012, p. 13). The nature of leadership, then, is to realize several aspects of management: the realization that „everyone can learn to lead and to lead others better” (Owen, 2012, p. 13); and the realization that there is no flawless leader; „a leader can be at any level” (Owen, 2012, p. 13), however, there will always be certain characteristics of a leader that will dominate over other characteristics determining the nature of the leader.

7. The nature of leadership versus personality types

To recognize the nature of leadership is to know oneself openly and to recognize the influence one has on others. The mode of influence determines/encourages an extroverted or introverted way of acting, resorting to cognition or intuition in one's actions, deciding a problem based on thinking or feeling, or acting based on judgment or observation.

Extroversion describes a personality type that gains energy among people. Introversion characterizes the personality type that draws energy from within itself. Therefore, while „introverts think before they utter a single word [extroverts – A.M.], speak because it helps them gather their thoughts” (Owen, 2012, p. 21).

From a psychologist's point of view, a person who relies on cognition is a non-creative, but very good, because she performs/executes tasks collaborator. On the other hand, a person based on intuition is a great creator of unique ideas and new ideas but is not able to translate these ideas and ideas into concrete actions; she cannot complete tasks (Owen, 2012, p. 21).

In comparison, a thinking person focuses attention on finding concrete and appropriate solutions, so working with him or her will facilitate the work of the team. In contrast, the feeling person will psychologically support the team during difficult times/moments, that is, when the team is experiencing difficult moments (Owen, 2012, p. 21).

The judging type as organized and schematic values order, discipline, rigid framework, and punctuality, while the observing type is an opportunist who seizes new opportunities and seizes opportunities. While the judgmental type is distinguished by a high work ethic, the observant type appreciates and pursues the concept of time management in a work-life balance (WLB) scheme: a coherent and balanced work-life (Owen, 2012, pp. 21-22).

So, in light of the above leadership/management analyses, what is leadership coaching and what purpose does it serve? Consequently, what is the supportive nature of leadership coaching?

8. What is leadership coaching

Leadership coaching is a method of coaching; a form of human resources management dedicated to team leaders. A leader is a person responsible for the effective functioning of a team. He is the father of successes and failures of this team; it is not uncommon to say that he is also „the person responsible for making things happen” (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 13).

A good leader, on a technical level, should know what needs to be done, how it should be done, and how to win/recruit allies, i.e. influence individual team members to complete a project or successfully complete a task with their help/active participation (Sierackiewicz, 2016, p. 13; Nieckarz, Celińska Nieckarz, and Godlewska-Werner, 2017, pp. 83-99; Kuzior, 2017, pp. 81-82). Helping nature of leadership coaching is hidden in the mentioned characteristics of a leader.

Dariusz Wylon consultant and agile and business coach notes that the factor that significantly affects the sense of belonging and commitment of team members/co-workers is the behavior and conduct of the leader. A leader should be able to define his leadership model, should see the positive impact he can have on people, also find a way to achieve the company’s vision and learn to say „I don’t know” (See pl.linkedin.com/in/dariuszwylon). In this way a leader shows his authenticity.

9. Conclusion

Authenticity, openness, and willingness to learn are important characteristics of a modern leader in an organization. These qualities confirm that an organization is not walls, but people properly managed. A proper form of management, in the form of leadership coaching, among others, is distinguished by noticing and nurturing not only leading traits but also niche traits that will make a leader a versatile executive. This versatility is provided by holistic and non-directive coaching. In this article, I attempted to describe selected types of leadership by linking them to a specific, inherent axiology and at the same time pointing out that the broader the axiological horizon, i.e. the leader's value system, the better the way he or she manages the team.

Awareness of the leader's and the team's axiological resources, openness to change, action, and systematic work on transformation seen through the prism of daily multifaceted formation of positive habits in oneself and team members are important steps in building the personality of a versatile leader and an effective team (Bielińska, and Jakubczyńska, 2016, p. 259; Stoltzfus, 2005; Hawkins, 2021). Good and versatile leaders can build healthy teams in imperfect organizations. Action is a prerequisite, so do not wait and do not put off your goals, values, needs and feelings. One should take activity and boldly implement beneficial ideas.

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