Module Eight: Leadership

Chapter 12 focused on leadership theories, leader roles, and the challenges therein. Leadership must take into account personality traits, behavioral training, and workplace contingencies. Though extraversion and conscientiousness top the list of desirable leadership personality traits, according to Robbins and Judge (2019), empathetic people are also more likely to emerge as leaders. Empathy plays a part in affiliative, coaching, and democratic leadership styles (Goleman, 2002). This sensitivity to follower needs, when combined with vision, personal risk, and unconventional behavior, creates the Charismatic Leader. The charismatic leader lies near or at the top of the full range leadership model, which features idealized influence visionaries at the top and laissez-faire ineffectual leaders at the bottom. Transcendent leadership (individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence) is more effective than transactional leadership (contingent reward, management by exception, and laissez-faire) because it draws on the intrinsic motivators discussed in module seven. Regardless of style, leaders must gain their employees/ trust by operating within ethical bounds.

I scored a 4.7/ 5.0 (High) on the Ethical Leadership Assessment. 85% of students in this Organizational Psychology course scored High and 15% scored Moderate. The course results differed slightly from global average (90.7% High, 9% Moderate, and 0.3% Low). Sampling error and future psychologist friendly personality traits may have contributed to this variance. I am cognizant of the complex and competing values of what is right or wrong in part because I have practiced nursing under varying leadership styles for many years. The more I learn about leadership, the more I come to understand it is ultimately better for companies and their employees to be managed by authentic, honest leaders.

This module's takeaways are numerous. Leadership is defined as "the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of a vision or set of goals" (Robbins and Judge, 2019, p. 440). Leadership and management are not mutually inclusive. Any psychologist who guides a group is a leader and, as such, is obligated to lead in an authentic, ethical manner. Secondly, Hogan (2007) asserts employees at the bottom of the organizational power hierarchy tend to believe with enough hard work, they will eventually be able to rise to the top. Hogan (2007) later goes on to say, "the influence of leadership (for good or ill) is silent and inexorable" (p. 93). Because people with higher emotional intelligence experience less stress and resulting burnout (Keefer and Parker, 2018), it's best for companies to seek out, train, and utilize emotionally intelligent leaders.

References

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