DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY: EMERGING PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on emerging new perspectives on developing leadership competencies for the 21st century. Based on innovative action research studies across cultures, case studies, and best practices, new models and approaches are presented. Models presented include a new strategic organizational leadership model, the eight core roles and competencies for the 21st century leader, and a leadership programs focal learning dimensions model.

INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the new millennium, with changes accelerating all around, it is time to stop and carefully look at where we are now….and where we are headed in the HR leadership training field. Many are feeling increased pressures and higher levels of stress. Research concludes that traditional leadership development training and learning methods proposing to help executives and managers make the transition from being a manager to a leader in most cases don't work**.** Too often in the field of leadership training and popular culture, simplistic solutions are offered as panaceas for a much more complex problem. What is required is a much higher level of thinking and understanding of the underlying issues and barriers that stand in the way of real development and change.

Effective leadership development programs and learning methods will need to have more of an applied, "real world" focus and be grounded in new "leadership" paradigms which emphasize principles and practices of personal growth, development, break-through thinking, and transformation. This paper focuses on emerging new perspectives on developing leadership competencies for the 21st century. Drawing from innovative action research studies across cultures, case studies, and best practices, three new models are presented to help to guide HR Executives in developing effective leadership development programs within the context of a changing global environment. These models include: (1) a strategic organizational leadership model , (2) a model that includes the eight core roles and competencies required for being an effective 21st century leader, and (3) a model that emphasizes the focal learning dimensions for an effective leadership development program.

A STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP MODEL

HR executives will need to adopt a more strategic and long-term approach in designing and implementing effective leadership development programs that are focused on the acquisition of 21st century leadership competencies. The following model emphasizes that leadership development programs need to be connected to performance outcomes.
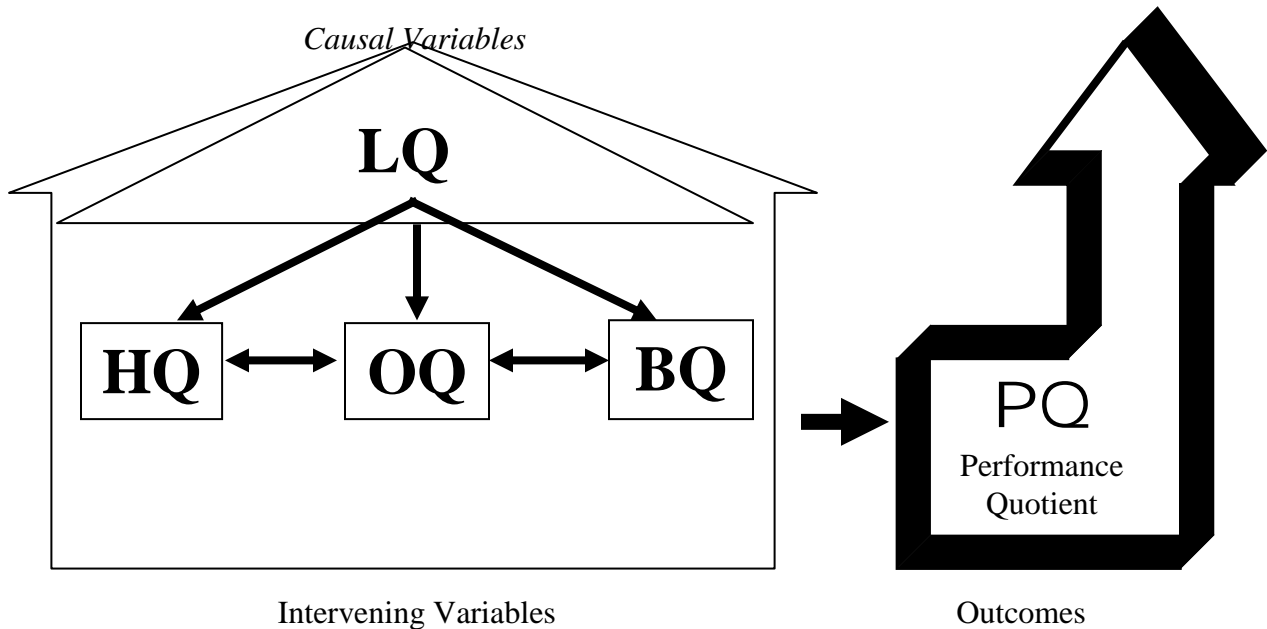
Performance Outcomes

To survive in today's globally competitive and fast paced environment, the pressure is on for organizations and businesses to maintain themselves at the highest levels of performance. An organization's performance is often described as being based on a number of classic ingredients such as degree of operational excellence, financial savvy, marketing effectiveness, and ability to be flexible and

adjust to changing environments. HR executives will need to ensure that the effectiveness of leadership development training programs and support services are measured by way of their impact on traditional performance outcomes indices.

ILGE Model

ILGE's strategic organizational leadership model, presented in Figure 1, provides an

Figure 1:**Ilge Strategic Organizational Leadership Model[c]**

Causal Variables

LQ

HQ **OQ** **BQ**

PQ
Performance
Quotient

Intervening Variables   Outcomes

example of a new model that emphasizes that an organization's or business's actual performance can be best predicted by a more careful evaluation of causal, intervening and outcome variables as portrayed in its model above. The ILGE model emphasizes that these traditional performance outcomes (P) are not ends in themselves, but actually are the outputs directly dependent upon three major intervening variables, forces, and elements found in any organization. These include: (1) business quotient (BQ), (2) organizational quotient (OQ), and (3) human quotient (HQ). These intervening variables, however, are seen as derivative and a product themselves of the primary causal variable, the organization's leadership quotient (LQ). A formula simplifying the linkages suggest that: LQ + [BQ+HQ+OQ] = P.

Business Quotient BQ)

Business quotient (BQ) refers to the applied intelligence, competencies, and knowledge the organization demonstrates with respect to its specialized core business. Each organization whether it be in the manufacturing, service, government, education, IT, health care, hospitality-tourism, profit, or not-for-profit sectors can be predicted to perform based on the extent to which it excels or languishes in terms of the basic essentials of the "business" it is in.

Human Quotient (HQ)

An increasingly recognized intervening variable directly associated with organizational or business performance relates to the human quotient (HQ). This refers to the combined applied intelligence, knowledge, and competencies of the human players in the organization.

Organizational Quotient

The third intervening variable in the ILGE model is the organizational quotient (OQ) or applied knowledge and intelligence via the organizations culture, systems, structures, processes, policies, and procedures. An organization may have very high BQ levels and HQ levels, but if OQ variables are not designed for optimization, performance will languish.

Leadership Quotient (LQ)

As displayed in Figure 1 above, the defining causal variable impacting the above intervening variables and ultimately an organization's performance is its leadership quotient (LQ). This refers to the applied intelligence, knowledge, and competencies of its leadership. LQ refers to leadership as practiced throughout all levels of the organization, not just to those designated as formal leaders.

Summary

An organization's performance is best perceived not as an end in itself, but more of being a product of its intervening variables. To impact performance, it is most critical to carefully assess and diagnose the current state of the organization's BQ, HQ, and OQ. Benchmarking and development of action plans both for individual, departmental, and organization-wide interventions for these intervening variables will be the necessary, but not sufficient ingredients to ensure both short-term and long-term viability and success in the marketplace and challenging global environments.

EIGHT CORE ROLES AND COMPETENCIES FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LEADER

An examination of international research, study, and analysis, suggests that the 21st century leader will need to be able to be flexible in adopting eight core roles, accompanying competencies, and an underlying philosophy. For example, the "inner self and reflection" role at the top of the diagram is balanced with the "building relationships and trust" role at the bottom. On these as well as other roles, the issue is balance and selectivity. The eight roles include:

• The leader as thoughtful, contemplative, and reflective thinker
• The leader as relationship and trust builder
• The leader as the idealist and demonstrator of highest ethical standards
• The leader as reality-based, attentive to details and facts
• The leader as a visionary, change agent
• The leader as business savvy, sensitive to political realities, and focused on getting things done
• The leader as team and culture builder
• The leader as customer and stakeholder focused

The philosophical foundation underlying leadership development programs should emphasize the important role of will, courage, ethical idealism, and awareness of choice as at the core of executive excellence.

Leadership programs should help each participant benchmark themselves on each competency and assist them with personal coaching to move forward on building from their strengths and guiding them on practical ways to advance in areas needing development. The content of the programs as well as the process and format the programs take should help all build from current levels and advance to higher levels on all competencies and skills.

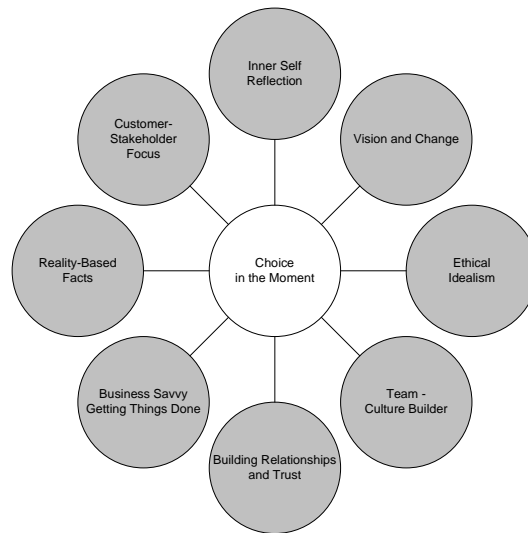Figure 2: Ilge Eight Core Roles and Competencies For The 21st Century Leader Model[c]
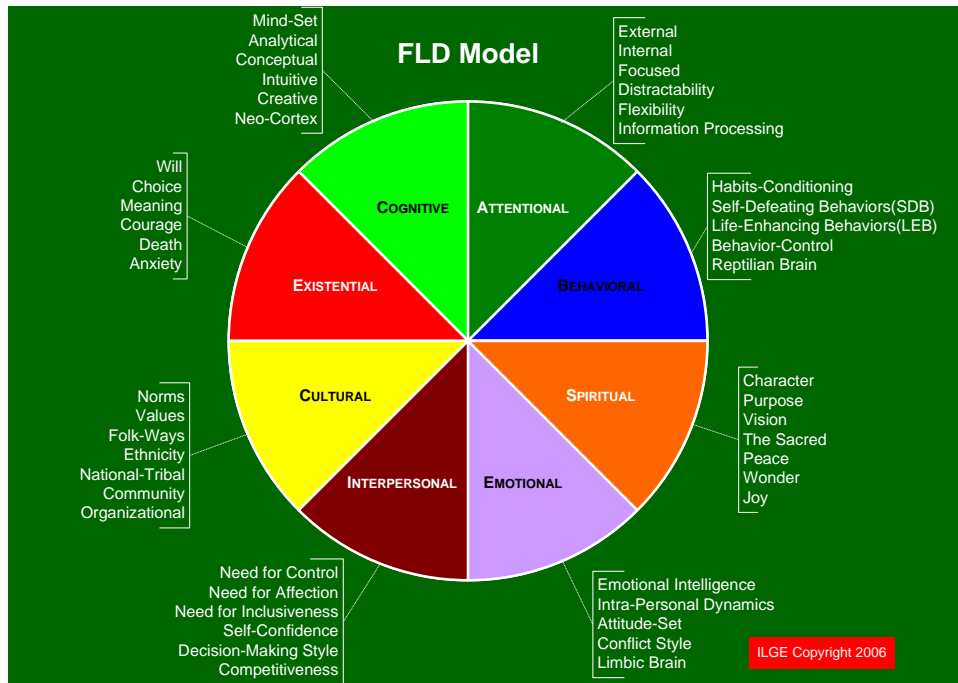

Figure 3:Ilge Leadership Programs Focal Learning Dimensions Model[c]

LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS FOCAL LEARNING DIMENSIONS

HR executives will need to understand that traditional cognitively-based learning approaches are limited in the impact that they have on the learning process. Continued research on learning reinforces that there are multiple learning dimensions that humans possess. The following proposed new model as presented

in Figure 3, emphasizes 6 focal learning dimensions. Each dimension represents a guide for helping develop a more integrated and successful educational program.

Traditional **cognitive** levels should be addressed in each program with emphasis on intellectually stimulating exchanges of ideas, raising questions, encouraging dialogue, and presenting stimulating concepts. **motional** levels of learning should also be addressed in programs in that emotional intelligence and understanding can be assessed and discussed through various instruments, exercises, simulations, and group discussions. **Cultural** levels of learning are critical elements that should be included within programs. Program format and content should be adjusted according to the unique cultural backgrounds of attendees. **Behavioral** levels of learning are most directly approached through simulations and exercises. Individuals and teams should be challenged to solve problems, handle difficult situations, and engage in diverse exercises that draws them into acting along familiar behavioral patterns. **Spiritual** levels of learning are most directly approached by stimulating individuals to examine the issue of leading with soul, the importance of purpose, vision, and mission in life and the role of the leader in bringing transformational change. **Existential** levels of learning can stimulated through the continual reinforcement of the role of will, courage, and choice for leaders within any situation they find themselves in.

SUMMARY

The preceding discussion has focused on the need for HR executives in the Middle-East to consider new models and frameworks in developing, designing, and presenting innovative leadership development programs. Models presented included a new strategic organizational leadership model, the eight core roles and competencies for the 21st century leader, and a leadership programs focal learning dimensions model. Executives in the 21st century need to be prepared to meet the challenges of surviving within the context of a changing global environment. The goals of this paper are to stimulate Middle-East HR executives to evaluate and better understand that new models and strategies which are in tune with a changing 21st century environment will be best suited to guide them in the successful implementation of leadership development programs and support services.