

Meiya G. Nthoesane
Hellicy C. Ngambi
Vatiswa Mlonzi

Strategic Leadership Fundamentals for Africa

Identifying and knowing the pillars of leading
competitively in Africa

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to:

My wife Vatiswa, for the unconditional support she has always provided, and to my special angels, Omphile and Siyazingca; to my late grandmother Mathetha Alina Nthoesane who taught me the principles of life and the value of education; to my mother for her love; to my mentor and friend Chukuka Enwemeka who continues to be my inspiration. **M.G. Nthoesane**

My dad, the late Bwana Chakosamoto Ngambi, the foremost of the senior chiefs of Mwenechifungwe in Isoka, Zambia, and to my mom, who taught me the principles of leadership and values of life; my best friends commonly known as the three Ts, Temweka, Taonga and Tumbiko, for always putting a smile on my face; my children, Nothulu, Kondwani and Masizane; my siblings, especially my brother Davelias for the investment he made in me; to my younger brother Loyd, Bwana Chakosamoto the second, for braving it out with me as we walked through dark forrests and crossed dangerous rivers for more than thirty kilometers; my spiritual parents, Dr and Mrs Sitima and Pastor and Mrs Tshiping of Bible Life Ministries for all their guidance, support and mentorship. **H.C. Ngambi**

My parents with love: Mrs. Nosimo Agnes Mlonzi and the late Mr. Siphio George Mlonzi who taught me the importance of education and believed that when you educate a woman you educate the nation. Nangamso Mazibula nawe Gcwanini, Sbewu! Also to my two beautiful angels Omphile and Siyazingca for always putting a smile on my face and for teaching me life lessons. **V.F Mlonzi**

Above all this book is dedicated to Our Lord Jesus.

About the Authors

Meiya G. Nthoesane (MBA)

Meiya Nthoesane is leadership and coaching executive. He is the founder and Director of MBS Leadership and Coaching Institute; he has had varying leadership responsibilities in start up enterprises, public sector and non-governmental organisations. Nthoesane is a Fellow of Ford Foundation International Fellowships Programme and a member of Golden Key International honour society. Nthoesane is an active researcher and is currently studying towards a Doctorate in Business Leadership degree.

Professor Hellicy C. Ngambi (DBL)

Hellicy Ngambi is the professor of business leadership and the Executive Dean of the College of Economic and Management Sciences at the University of South Africa. She served as the first woman in South Africa to head one of the four top business schools as the Executive director and CEO of Unisa's Graduate School of Business Leadership. She was previously the Principal and Managing Director of the Academy of Business Management in Botswana. Professor Ngambi is a sought after speaker and has made numerous local and international presentations. She has an American Council on Education (ACE) fellowship, USA.

Vatiswa Mlonzi (MBL)

Vatiswa Mlonzi is a Human Resources practitioner and an entrepreneur. She is the founder and Director of Lumengo services, a talent search and management organisation. She was the team leader of the prestigious Women In Aviation programme, a initiative of South African Airways.

Preface

This book is a result of years of leadership research and observation. The 21st century presents a different reality, of rapidly evolving organisations and where change is the only certainty. The effect of globalisation, new technologies and increased global challenges require leaders to be equipped with much needed tools of leadership.

This book focuses attention on four areas that leaders, most particularly African leaders need to observe in order to make the 21st century Africa's century. These areas are Individuals in organisations; Change managements; Diversity management and Leading in the 21st century. Part A takes the reader on a journey on how to deal and manage individual in organisations, it also touches on those aspects that make individuals to behave the way they do in organisations.

Part B is about change and how it should be managed in organisations. This part aims to empower leaders on how to effectively advocate for and manage change. Part C talks about the management of diversity. Unique to this part is the presentation of a diversity management maturity matrix. Finally, Part D is about leadership, with specific reference to tackling Africa's challenges and charting Africa's agenda for the 21st century.

Meiya G. Nthoesane

July 2011

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PART A: UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUALS IN ORGANISATIONS

Introduction

Organisational success in the 21st century rests in the hands of individuals, both at the management and worker level. Hence, studying individual differences is an important factor in understanding individual behaviour influences organisational performance. Individual differences have a direct effect on people behaviour because people are unique based on their backgrounds, characteristics, needs and perceptions. People's experiences shape their perceptions, and people's personalities and values play a role as to how they relate to their bosses and colleagues. As a result individual differences in a way can shape organisational behaviour, organisational success and individual success. Individuals' qualities and their skills and competencies are found to be instrumental in creating an environment for a desired output (see figure A.1).

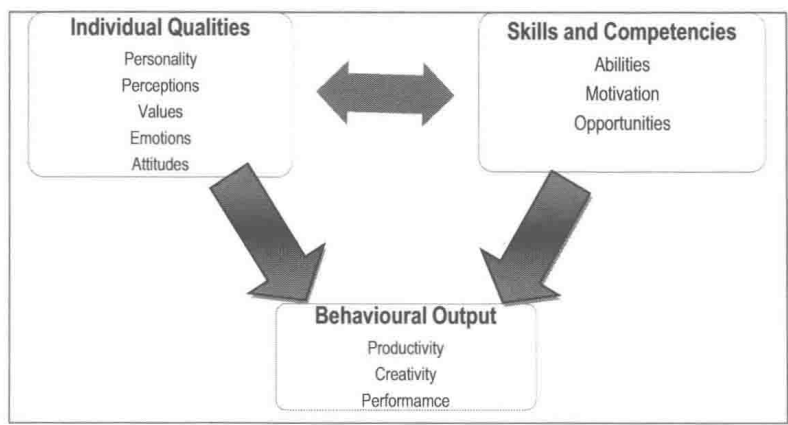


Figure A.1: Conceptual approach to people management in organisations

Individual qualities

Individual qualities are personal characteristics of an individual. These are what make up one's personality and are based on individual perceptions. Individual qualities are driven by an individual value system and the level of individual's emotional maturity. All this combined determine the individual's attitude towards the organisation. Individual qualities combined with combined with individuals' skills and competencies can predict individual behavioural output. Individual qualities enable people to get along with each other, most especially in new situations and settings. Let us now focus our attention on personality and its role in organisations.

Personality

Personality can be regarded as a relatively established pattern of behaviours and set of feelings that have been significantly constructed by internal genetic make-up and the external environmental factors to explain one's behavioural tendencies. The importance of understanding individual's personality and how it leads to behavioural outcomes is crucial, because it enable managers to select and appoint workers with 'fitting' personality if job satisfaction and productivity are to ensue. An individual personality just does not happen, it is a product of both internal and external factors and forces, (Ivancevich, Konopaske and Matteson, 2008) say that personality is a "product of nature and nurture" (see figure A.2).

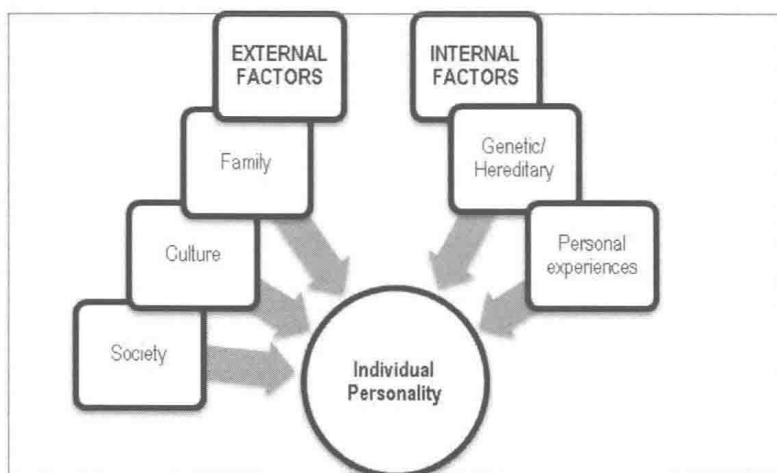


Figure A.2: Major factors influencing personality

The internal factors and forces include the *genetic composition* we inherit from our parents, it is a partial determinant of the kind of personality we display, and therefore hereditary plays a key role in one's personality. In addition, we tend to also behave in a manner that is occasionally based on our past *personal experiences*, for example an individual who has experienced a lot of personal hurt in the past, may subconsciously develop a *safety shield* and avoid if possible any circumstance that will expose her/him to similar situations.

External factors determining individual's personality include:

- **Family** – family values and relations play a role in developing individual personality; the value one's family hold dear and noble will shape an individual's personality. In addition, the relations within the family setting will also determine one's personality.

- **Culture** – culture provides that sense of 'how we do things' and is another major determinant of an individual personality, even in today's cosmopolitan societies the issue of culture is still regarded by many as important and therefore it is essential to understand individual's culture in order to understand their personality.
- **Society** – society and social class influences one's view of the world. The ways people reside tend to be arranged by a particular class of neighbourhood and this shapes how we behave. Societies turn to have their own unwritten values and norms and this is reflected in the personalities of people in that society. However, it is also critical to realise that societal influence changes all the time, the society one engages with at work might not necessarily be the same society that one engages in at home.

Anova Communications Group (2008) asserts that 'personality testing'; contribute to a cumulative 38 per cent of job performance predictors. In addition, studies by Robie, Brown and Bly (2008) and Tyler and Newcombe (2006) confirm that personality traits assessment is related to managerial and work performance. Therefore, this backs the idea that personalities and personality assessments are key ingredients of individual and organisational success. The personality box below indicate the success based on a particular trait of personality, achievement-orientation.

Personality and the Presidency

Personality traits are unseen dispositions that can affect the way people act. Their existence can be inferred by a person's consistent pattern of behaviour. One way of examining a person's standing on the trait of achievement-orientation is to examine one's achievement and accomplishment over the life span. People with higher levels of achievement-orientation tend to set high personal goals and are persistent in the pursuit of this goals. When considering the following leader's achievements and goals, think about the person's standing on this personality trait, and try to guess who this person might be:

At age 23 he lost a job; at 23 he was defeated in a bid for state legislation; at 24 he failed in a business venture; at 25 he was elected to the legislature; at 26 his sweetheart died; at 27 he experienced several emotional problems; at 27 he was defeated in bid to be the speaker of the house; at 34 he was defeated for nomination in the Congress; at 37 he was elected to Congress; 39 he lost renomination to Congress; at 40 he was defeated in a bid for land office; 45 he was defeated in a bid for U.S. Senate; at 47 he was defeated for nomination to be vice president; at 49 he was defeated in a bid for Senate a second time and at the age of 51 he was elected the president of the United States.

The person was Abraham Lincoln

Source: Hughes *et al.* (1999: 202)

Although personality traits provide a useful approach to describing distinguishing behavioural patterns, a potential problem is the sheer number of trait-like terms to describe another's stereotypical behaviour. Hence, the development of the *Big Five Personality Dimensions*.

Big Five Personality Dimensions

Ivancevich *et al.* (2008) highlighted that over the past century numerous personality dimensions and traits have been identified, but within the past three decade a consensus has emerged that for the greater part individual personality can be described by the five dimensions. The five major dimensions are represented by an acronym CANOE and they include conscientiousness, agreeableness, Neuroticism, openness to experience and extraversion, they are further outlined in Table A.1.

Table A.1: Five Dimensions of Personality

Adapted from (Ivancevich *et al.* (2008); McShane and Von Glinow (2007); Hughes *et al.* (1999); Nadkarni and Herrmann (2010); Larson and Sachau (2009); Ulu and Tezer (2010)

Dimension	Associated with these work behaviour	People with score of this turn to be more:	Traits
Conscientiousness	job performance across most occupations; motivation; fewer counterproductive behaviours	careful, dependable, self disciplined	achievement and dependability
Agreeableness	peer rating of team members; interpersonal skills	courteous, good-natured, empathic, caring	tendency to be altruistic and compliant

Neuroticism	respond poorly to environmental stress and likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening	anxious, hostile, depressed	tendency to experience negative emotional states
Openness to experience	training proficiency	sensitive, flexible, curious	tendency to be creative, imaginative, perceptive and thoughtful
Extraversion	training proficiency and respond better in interactive environments.	outgoing, talkative, sociable, assertive	represents sociability and expressiveness.

Conscientiousness – this is displayed by those individuals who are careful, organised, dependable and responsible. It is also associated with the greater will to achieve and perform, perseverance, hard working and it is the dimension that is most closely linked to job performance.

Agreeableness – a person is described as someone who gets along easily with people and it includes traits like being courteous, forgiving, tolerant, good nurtured and empathic. Some scholars prefer the label “friendly compliance” for this dimension, and usually professions like customer service, teaching and social work require people high on this dimension.

Neuroticism – individuals turn to experience job-related stress, and display high level of anxiety, hostility and depression. In contrast people with emotional

stability have the tendency to experience more positive feeling, are calm and relaxed.

Openness to experience – this dimension generally refers to people who has broad interests and are willing to take risks. The traits that are displayed here include being, sensitive, flexible, creative, broad-mindedness, imaginative and curious.

Extraversion refers to the tendency to be sociable, outgoing, talkative and assertive. However, it is crucial to note that introverts do not necessarily lack social skills, but are more likely to direct their interest to ideas than to social events.

These five personality dimensions will affect work related behavioural output(s) and will also play a huge role in enabling individuals to build and develop skills and competencies to perform. Study by Nadkarni and Herrmann (2010) shows that these dimensions have a significant positive influence on the firm performance. In addition to assessing the big five dimension or certain dimensions, organisations also focus attention to those traits that believe to be closely linked to performance. We now will look at two such personality traits of interest to many organisations, and they are locus of control and self-efficacy.

Locus of control

Locus of Control refers to an individual's perception about the underlying main causes of events in his/her life. Or, more simply put by (Neill 2006) *Do you believe that your destiny is controlled by yourself or by external forces (such as fate, god, or powerful others)?*

A locus of control orientation is a belief about whether the outcomes of our actions are reliant on what we do (internal control orientation), or efforts and skill or on events outside our personal control (external control orientation) like luck or fate.

Thus, locus of control is conceptualised as referring to a uni-dimensional continuum, ranging from *externals* to *internals*:

EXTERNALS	INTERNALS
Individual believes that his/her behaviour is guided by fate, luck, or other external circumstances	Individual believes that his/her behaviour is guided by his/her personal decisions and efforts.

In organisations *internals* will usually do not need much of the supervision because of their deep-rooted internal personal drive to perform and achieve set goals. Generally it is emotionally and psychologically healthy to perceive that one has control over those things which one is capable of influencing. Therefore, a more internal locus of control is generally seen as desirable. Having an internal locus of control can also be referred to as "personal control" and "self-determination" (Neill 2006).

However, research by Neill (2006) warns people against lapsing in the overly simplistic notion that internal is good and external are bad. There are important subtleties and complexities to be considered. For example: