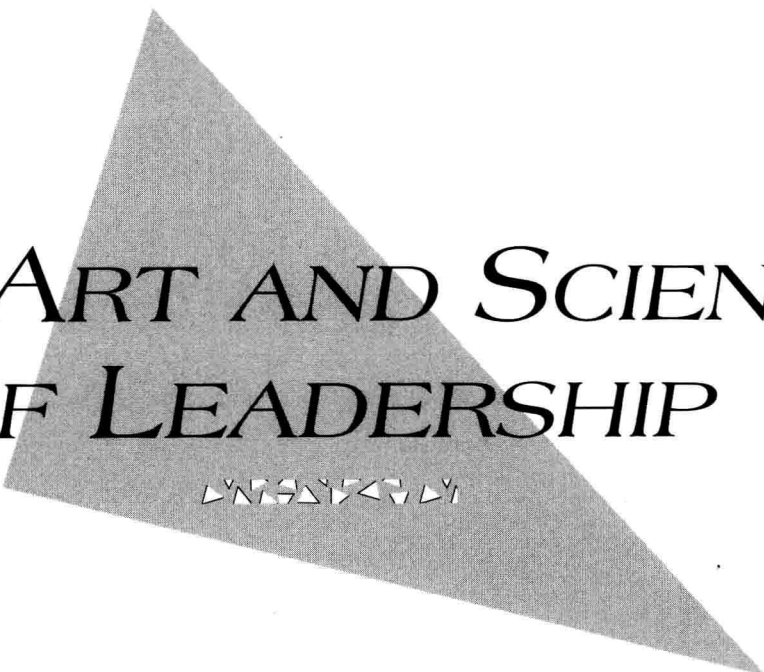




*The Art and Science of*

# **LEADERSHIP**

**Afsaneh Nahavandi**



# THE ART AND SCIENCE OF LEADERSHIP

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AFSANEH NAHAVANDI

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## PREFACE

The subject of leadership is neither new nor exclusively the domain of private industry and the military. As long as people have organized into groups to accomplish a task, there have been leaders and followers. Philosophers and historians from all civilizations have written about leaders and leadership. Lao Tzu, the Chinese philosopher, seemed to have been a precursor of current emphasis on the leader as a facilitator when he wrote: "A leader is best when people barely know he exists. . . . When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: We did it ourselves." The prophet Mohammed seemed to be a believer in situational leadership when he proclaimed that men only get the leadership they deserve. The history of human civilization is replete with theories of leadership, with advice for leaders ranging from Confucius, to Homer in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, to Nicolo Machiavelli in *The Prince*.

This book presents a broad review and analysis of the field of leadership. Its application however, is not limited to business organizations. The processes of leading others to achieve organizational goals are applicable in any institutional setting. Not-for-profit organizations and educational institutions, for example, face the same dilemmas faced by leaders in business. While their contexts are different, the leadership challenges are largely the same.

Throughout history, the fate of millions has depended on leadership qualities of kings and queens and on their battles for succession. Children in many countries learn very early through listening to fairy tales that the happiness and misery of people depend on the goodness (or evilness) of leaders. We are truly fascinated with those who lead us. To some, leadership is a magical process. Indeed, when we read about some historical figure or meet some of the leaders of our times, we are sometimes transfixed by their seemingly magical exploits. They move armies, create new countries, and destroy whole civilizations through what often appears to be the sheer strength of their will. They affect our very existence on this planet. While we are dazzled by the leaders, we often fail to consider that none of their achievements could have been accomplished by the leaders alone. It is the strength of their followers that moves history. It is the hard work of employees that turns a profit in a faltering company. It is the initiative of volunteers that achieves an institution's goals.

Additionally, we need to remind ourselves that many magical, extraordinary leaders have often found themselves shunned and rejected by the peo-



ple who once admired them. President Charles DeGaulle's road to the leadership of France was long, tortuous, and fraught with failure: After coming to office as a hero after World War II, he was forced out of office twice. Churchill was booted out of office twice and faced long periods in his life during which his leadership was neither valued nor wanted. Julius Caesar experienced many ups and downs in his battles with the Roman Senate. More recently, Margaret Thatcher has seen her fortunes come and go with the mood of the British public and the economic upheaval in Europe. Henry Cisneros, once Mayor of San Antonio and recently HUD secretary under President Clinton, fell into disfavor with the electorate before he regained his popularity. Benazir Butho of Pakistan has moved from national hero to national villain and back to hero again. Lee Iaccoca of Chrysler was not always the hero that some consider him to be today. George Watson, Jr., was booted out of office after successfully leading IBM for many years. If the powers of these leaders are truly magical, why do they wax and wane? Why are they not effective all the time? This question, along with many others, will be addressed in this book.

Our current research has done much to demystify leadership and teach it to the rest of us mortals. Although we still come across some leaders whose performance and behavior escape the bounds of scientific explanation, by and large, we know a good deal about leadership and how to train people to be leaders. The cornerstone to our new knowledge is that most of us can learn to become **better** leaders. Maybe only very few of us will someday shape human civilization, but most of us are capable of improving our leadership skills and of shaping our own organizations and communities.

In spite of all the knowledge that various disciplines have accumulated about leadership over the past seventy to eighty years, there are deep divisions in the field. Few scholars and practitioners even agree on how to define leadership and its key elements. There is much debate about whether a leader's personality or behavior should be the focus of our inquiry. Additionally, the role of followers and their characteristics are also the subject of much discussion. The many debates and controversies within the field of leadership will be presented in this book. However, rather than emphasizing the differences among the various theories, this book will focus on distilling useful and practical concepts from each theory, and on integrating them while taking a cross-cultural perspective.



## **PHILOSOPHY AND BASIC ASSUMPTIONS**

### ***LEADERSHIP SKILLS CAN BE LEARNED***

I have a very strong belief that all of us can learn to be better leaders. We can all learn skills that will allow us to deal with a variety of situations and therefore increase our effectiveness and that of our organizations. For some of us,

the learning will come easier in some areas than others; but with practice and support from our organizations, we can all improve our leadership capabilities. Like many of my readers, I have occasionally come across incredibly charismatic leaders who seem to have special talents at moving others. Although it is tempting to attribute to them a special leadership “gift” that defies systematic explanation, with some effort and critical thinking, I have been able to analyze in an objective manner their style and the situation in which they are effective. Such analysis demystifies their performance. Although it still may not be easy to teach others to perform the same way, the charismatic leader’s actions lose their magical qualities and become both understandable and predictable.

Most of us are not trying to change civilizations—although maybe we should be. Instead, we are trying to move our teams, departments, and organizations toward higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency. We want better decision making, more satisfied employees, better quality products and services, and more satisfied constituencies and customers. These are all difficult to achieve, but there is no magic involved in achieving them. We can use the many existing leadership theories to achieve those goals.

### ***APPLICATION FOCUS***

This book relies on the research about leadership; however, it is clearly application-focused. The theories and research that are presented have much to offer to the student of leadership. Although distilling the practical applications is sometimes hard, each contains pragmatic elements that can be used in understanding the role of leadership in our day-to-day activities.

### ***CHANGING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT AND FOCUS ON CROSS-CULTURAL VIEWPOINT***

Leadership is not a culture-free process. It occurs within the context of a culture. Which styles and behaviors are considered key to effectiveness differ from one culture to the next. There also may be some common threads that run through different cultures. Many leadership theories presented in this book do not consider the cultural context, either globally or internally within the United States. Issues of race and gender are often also not addressed. Part of the goal for this book is to include cross-cultural, racial, and gender-based analyses of leadership as a regular part of the discourse about leadership effectiveness. The changing demographics within the United States and the globalization of our economy make such analysis essential.

### ***LOOKING AT THE FUTURE***

In addition to the practical applications and the cross-cultural focus, I have attempted throughout the book to focus on the future rather than the past. Our institutions are undergoing considerable structural changes. Both businesses and not-for-profit organizations are reorganizing and redefining the





role of leaders. The reliance on teams is becoming a mainstay of our institutions. Quality and customer-focus have moved from the academic domain to the everyday language of many in work organizations. These structural changes and redefinitions of our institutions' focus on their internal and external customers require a new look at the role and functions of leadership. Our old theories do not explain all the current changes adequately. Throughout the chapters, I have established the link between the old and the new and attempted to present how what we have known and used can help the reader deal with the current and the future trends in leadership, particularly the focus on teams and nonhierarchical organizations.



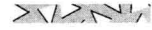
### **PLAN FOR THE BOOK**

The first part of the book (Chapters 1 through 4) will provide the building blocks by presenting working definitions of leadership and effectiveness (Chapter 1), a history and overview of current organizational changes (Chapter 2), an analysis of the individual attributes that are related to leadership (Chapter 3), and a look at the link between power and leadership (Chapter 4). The second part of the book (Chapters 5 and 6) reviews the major current contingency leadership theories, focusing on their similarities and differences and on their potential application to leadership training and development. The third part of the book focuses on current development and applications, with particular attention to issues of participation and teams (Chapter 7), and change-oriented leadership models (Chapter 8). Part Four (Chapters 9 and 10) is devoted to upper-echelon leadership, focusing on the differences between leading small groups and departments and the leadership of whole organizations (Chapter 9). Dimensions and types of strategic leadership are also identified and discussed (Chapter 10). Finally, the book ends with a look at leadership trends by refocusing attention on internationalization, cross-cultural and diversity issues, and the impact of current organizational restructuring and the total quality management movement on leadership in our organizations (Chapter 11).



### **WHO SHOULD READ THIS BOOK**

This book is targeted to the students of leadership—whether they are advanced undergraduate and graduate students, or managers who continue to learn and grow. Particularly, it is written for those who want not only to understand the various theories and research in the field, but also to apply that knowledge to becoming leaders and to improving the leadership of their organizations. The examples and cases used are from different types of industries and from both the private and public sectors. Although the theo-



ries are often developed and tested by psychology and management researchers, they have broad applicability to all students of organizational functioning and leadership.



## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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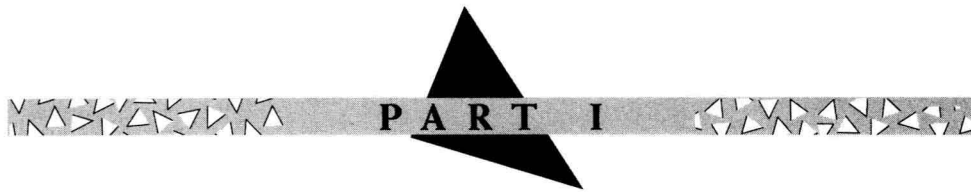
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# *BUILDING BLOCKS*

Part I lays the foundation for understanding the processes of leadership. After studying Part I, you should be able to define the basic elements of leadership and be ready to integrate them to understand more complex leadership processes.

## **Introduction**

*LEADERSHIP IS A COMPLEX PROCESS THAT IS THE RESULT OF THE* interaction among the leader, the followers, and the leadership situation. All three of these elements are key to the leadership process. Additionally, cultural factors and values have great impact on our images of effective leaders. Since the formal study of leadership started in the late nineteenth century in the Western world, we have developed many definitions of the concept. As any social phenomenon, leadership evolves and changes with social and cultural trends. What we knew 100 years ago helps us understand leadership today, but we also need to be aware of how the process of leadership and our images of effective leaders are changing as our organizational, social, and cultural environments evolve.

The first part of the book lays the foundation for understanding the process of leadership. The focus is on providing you with a sense of the history of the field of leadership and its current state, and on helping you understand the building blocks of the leadership process. These building blocks include a working definition of leaders and effectiveness, a cultural framework for understanding the process, a presentation of individual characteristics of leaders, and an analysis of power and its role in leadership. After studying the chapters in this section you should be able to define the basic elements of leadership and be ready to integrate them to understand more complex leadership processes.



## Definitions and Significance of Leadership

You cannot be a leader, and ask other people to follow you, unless you know how to follow too. (Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House, 1961)



### CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

AFTER STUDYING THIS CHAPTER, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- ▶ *Define leadership and effectiveness.*
- ▶ *Identify the four major cultural values that have the potential to affect leadership.*
- ▶ *List the major obstacles to effective leadership.*
- ▶ *Understand the similarities and differences between leadership and management.*
- ▶ *List the basic roles and functions of management and be aware of cultural differences in the use and application of those functions.*
- ▶ *Understand the basic elements of the debate over the impact of leadership in organizations.*