

# Chapter 54

## Global Leadership Development: Implications for Training and Business Education

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### **ABSTRACT**

*No firm is immune from the impact of globalization. The new global context and the accompanying technological improvements are driving an increased need for global leaders with a wider variety of competencies, skills, and abilities. This chapter presents current perspectives on global leadership to better assist management educators in the design and implementation of global leadership programs. The fil rouge of this exploration will be the acknowledgement of the role of culture and its influence on business and management practices. First, the author will present current broad approaches to investigate global leadership; then he will focus on the development of global leadership, including practical challenges in business education. Finally, future directions will be discussed.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The world has become increasingly interconnected and almost no firm is immune from the impact of globalization. Chaotic organizational changes, boundary integrations (such as–mergers and acquisitions), information technology advancements, and the emergence of a knowledge-based workforce have led to an ever-more complex business environment (Thomas et al., 2013). Given this premise, it has become fundamental to train a new breed of leaders and new project global leaders who are able to integrate practices of leadership in a context characterized by risk, time and resource constraints (Canals, 2014). In the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Global CEO Survey (2016), 75% of the 1,409 CEOs interviewed in 83 countries say that a skilled, educated and adaptable workforce should be a priority for business. In effect, many organizations are struggling with a critical shortage of global leadership talent (Conger, 2014; Sloan

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et al., 2003). Hence, one of the main challenges of business education is the need to identify and train competent leaders to manage organizations with culturally diverse employees (House et al., 2004).

International business educators and facilitators need to respond swiftly to the impact of demographics, technology, and globalization in order to offer specific job skills development on global leadership, work ethic, and continuous learning (Aggarwal, 2011). They also need to recognize the unique capabilities required by global leaders. In fact, the next generation of youth increasingly must master critical 21<sup>st</sup> century skills sets, which include global awareness (Steward, 2007) and competence (Seeberg & Minick, 2012; Sperandio et al., 2010). In addition, today's leaders need to acquire and cultivate a wider variety of competencies, skills and abilities if they intend to be effective in present day global societies. This requires being open to new ideas, global thinking, appreciation of diversity, tech-savvy, willingness to partner, and openness to sharing leadership (Goldsmith et al., 2003).

The concept of global leadership studies has taken a firm hold (Biermeier-Hanson et al., 2015; Mendenhall et al., 2012) with scholars examining skills, abilities and competencies of people who occupy global leadership positions (Cumberland et al., 2016; Teller & Rosenbusch, 2013). In effect, a search of google.co.uk on 8 May 2017 returned around 22,440,000 hits for the term 'global leadership'. Similarly, by looking at the scholarly literature, a search of another popular web-searching engine, Google Scholar, returned 2,800,000 hits. According to Google's Ngram Viewer, reference to 'global leadership' has risen significantly since 1980. In addition, almost every handbook on leadership contains one or more chapters devoted to cross-cultural leadership or to global issues (to cite an example, see Northouse, 2012).

Given this global scenario, the purpose of this chapter is to present current challenges related to global leadership development by offering significant implications for management education. By offering a brief historical review of how the field of global leadership evolved, the first part of the chapter provides a theoretical base and defines the concepts of cross-cultural leadership and global leadership. With the aim of summarizing some key findings from the literature, the author will present these broad approaches to investigate global leadership while the *fil rouge* will be the acknowledgement of the role of culture and its influence on business and management practices. This recognition is fundamental to devise global leadership development programs. Geert Hofstede's research has become a paradigm for comparing cultures (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, 2011) and several research efforts have followed and built on it, such as the GLOBE project, which will be briefly presented. Another overlapping leadership framework focuses on broad leadership competencies and styles (Mendenhall et al., 2012) and on the search for a core of common leadership competencies. In fact, regardless of the geographical scope of the firm, many of the broad tasks of leaders are similar across cultures. (Canals, 2014)

The second section of the chapter focuses on the development of global leaders and tries to address the question, "How can management and business educators develop leaders in cross-cultural settings?" In doing so, the author will present a review of some of the tools employed in global leadership training. This section also highlights several practical implications related to the implementation of global leadership programs along with a brief reflection on the role of the business schools.

## **APPROACHES TO GLOBAL LEADERSHIP**

Globalization is no longer an option, but a strategic imperative for all corporations, from the largest to the smallest (Gupta et al., 2008). This scenario requires globally-competent business leaders who can operate successfully in today's global environment. However, the nature of the global business context

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