

Chapter 5

Pillars of Leadership Development

ABSTRACT

Pillars of leadership are the foundational pieces for building one's leadership and building leadership skills relative to the organizational environment. Pillars, therefore, play a critical role; there are two streams for developing personal and organizational capacity. First, the literature supporting such efforts is thoroughly discussed. Second, the supporting six pillars are provided along with the context for how they apply to an individual and organizational capacity. The discussion in this chapter provides an example of how the pillars could be incorporated into the work environment. Pillars are foundational and support an individual's leadership discipline.

INTRODUCTION

Pillars of leadership are the foundations for building upon whatever the organization expects a leadership team to be. These pillars build capacity that is supportive from the individual and organizational perspectives. It has been notable through chapters that employees and leaders or their agents work in collaboration to carry the strategic mission of the business. Through this chapter, individuals will be able to identify skill builders for cultivating their leadership skills. The identified pillars are supported by research, especially those based on competencies, and their development follows a structural approach.

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Any sound leadership development planning will have a proper foundation. Foundational pillars are supports upon which to build further on one's leadership discipline. These foundational pieces are pillars for leadership development, and they help move an individual toward leadership capacity. Building a foundation for leadership is not the sole responsibility of the individual; as previously discussed, the organization has the most significant responsibility for developing a person's skills for meeting the needs of the organization.¹ Although skills development is accomplishable exclusively, it works best when individuals and organizations work in conjunction. The pillars for leadership development discussed here will address both individual and corporate leadership development.

The Role of Competencies

Before discussing leadership development, it is essential to understand that individual talents represent one of the most valuable commodities of an organization or business. Chapter 1 focused on competencies and competency models as a necessary avenue for a company to pursue. Competencies as tools are very popular in various industries and businesses. When implemented correctly and when they are validated, they are highly effective (Sanghi, 2016). Their effectiveness in employee development is that they accelerate growth and development, and they build upon an organizational capacity and capabilities. Traditionally, competencies had been a very personal aspect of an individual's development, work development, and leadership development. From this traditional perspective, the skills a person brings to the work environment are an offering to an employer (Boyatzis, 1982). The conventional view of competencies still has value in today's business environment, in that talent identification and acquisition are necessary to meet the business needs. Therefore, what was true then is not necessarily untrue today in the knowledge age. The difference, however, is that the total focus is not on the Human Resources aspect of talent acquisition and retainment.

In the current era, the emphasis is on a balanced approach relative to an organization's need for talent and a need for developing employees or upskilling employees. The approach businesses and organizations take with competency-based systems and systems with an integrative model is strategic relative to employees, future employees, and the development of employees. As organizations change with the markets, so do their competitive advantages.

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