Lesson 6: Team Management and leadership

Learning outcomes:

LO#3 - The student has a basic insight into the theories discussing the features and dynamics of team roles, procession and decision making

LO#7 - The student will get familiar with the most important leadership models

LO#14 - The student can select and apply the most adequate leadership model according to the given circumstances.

Managing a research project means collaborating with different actors and its teams: the PI and its scientific team, the funding agency and its contact points, the consortium partners (in a case of collaborative projects) and its management teams, the other institutional offices and divisions (such as Human Resources, Procurement, Financial, Open Access/ Library, Data protection Officer, etc.), as well as the RMA colleagues at the office/ institution. **Working in a team is a crucial competence in project management and especially for the RMA**. Nevertheless, an RMA can also coordinate efforts from the different actors involved in the project management as well as the project implementation. This lesson is thus dedicated to leadership.

Management and Leadership

Management and leadership roles are interlinked but are not the same. There several definitions about leadership, but the following one provided by Steve Myers clear stat its differences (citation from https://www.teamtechnology.co.uk/leadership/management/definitions-of-leadership-and-management:

- *Management* *controls or directs people/resources in a group according to principles or values that have been established.*
- *Leadership* *is setting a new direction or vision for a group that they follow, i.e.: a leader is the spearhead for that new direction.*

To better understand such differences, you can see some examples of Leadership without Management and Management without Leadership and the article Three Differences Between Managers and Leaders.

Leadership theories

The studies about leadership spans over more than 100 years, with different concepts of leadership being debated through time and different models and styles being proposed by different authors. On this regard, we can identify three seminal leadership theories:

1. **Situational Leadership Theory**: created by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard in the 1970's, this theory proposes that effective leadership requires a rational understanding of the situation and an appropriate response, rather than a charismatic leader with a large group of dedicated followers. Its key principle is that there is no single

"best" style of leadership. Effective leadership is then task-relevant, and the most successful leaders are those who adapt their leadership style to the individual or group they are attempting to lead or influence. taking also into account the task, job, or function that needs to be accomplished.

2. **Transformational Leadership Theory:** developed by Bernard M. Bass (1985) as an extended work of Burns (1978), transformational leadership and transactional leadership are part of the Full Range Leadership Model. Transformational leadership models emphasize the role model of a leader that works with teams to identify the need of a change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group.

3. **Transactional Leadership Theory**: focuses on the exchanges that occur between leaders and followers, where leaders promote compliance by followers through both rewards and punishments. Transactional leaders differ from transformational leaders because they don't inspire others; they reward good work or positive outcomes.

Different reviews and critics of all three models can be found in the 2014 Situational, transformational, and transactional leadership and leadership development.

Leadership models

Building from the Transformational Leadership Theory, Dulewicz & Higgs propose in their 2003 article A new approach to assessing leadership dimensions, styles context where they bring together the latest thinking on competencies, emotional intelligence and intellectual ability into the leadership performance. In here, the authors identify the following features of an effective leadership:

1. Key competences:
    a. Envision – the ability to identify a clear future picture, which will inform the way in which people direct their efforts and utilise their skills.
    b. Engage – finding the appropriate way for everyone to understand the vision and, hence, the way in which they can contribute.
    c. Enable – acting on a belief in the talent and potential of individuals and creating the environment in which these can be released.
    d. Inquire – being open to real dialogue with those involved in the organisation and encouraging free and frank debate of all issues.
    e. Develop – working with people to build their capability and help them to make the envisioned contribution.
2. Personal characteristics:
    a. Authenticity – being genuine and not attempting to "play a role"; not acting in a manipulative way.
    b. Integrity – being consistent in what you say and do.
    c. Will – a drive to lead, and persistence in working towards a goal.
    d. Self-belief – a realistic evaluation of your capabilities and belief that you can achieve required goals.

e. Self-awareness – a realistic understanding of "who you are"; how you feel and how others see you

Personal characteristics: personality types

Although the latest studies show that the composition of teams in terms of personality profiles does not seem to predict team development very well, the same findings suggest that the Myers Briggs Personality Types (MBPTI) may be used as an instrument for personal development and as a vehicle for group members to gain a better understanding of each other.

Myers Briggs Personality Types was developed by Katherine Briggs and Isabel Myers as an adaptation of the theory of psychological types produced by Carl Gustav Jung in the 1920s. It started with the goal of assisting women entering the industrial workforce for the first time, was continuously further developed and popularized and, since 1975 it has become the best known and most used personality type assessment. In brief, Myers-Briggs theory It is based on 16 personality types, which Jung viewed as stereotypes (Jung based on four preference points (what type of person do you prefer to deal with:)

3. People and things (Extraversion or "E"), or ideas and information (Introversion or "I").
4. Facts and reality (Sensing or "S"), or possibilities and potential (Intuition or "N").
5. Logic and truth (Thinking or "T"), or values and relationships (Feeling or "F").
6. A lifestyle that is well-structured (Judgment or "J"), or one that goes with the flow (Perception or "P").

Related to these personality types, the same authors developed the MMDI™ system that proposes eight leadership styles that can applied in different situations, groups, or cultures.

Source: https://www.teamtechnology.co.uk/leadership/styles/

MMDI™ system eight leadership styles are described as below:

1.   Participative leadership

Participative leaders achieve through people, teamwork and collective involvement in the task. They promote ownership amongst the followers so that they feel jointly responsible in the decisions taken and its achievement. Participative leaders make the group itself become the focus for the team, as the team members achieve through their relationships and collaborative work.

2.   Ideological leadership

Ideological leaders achieve through the promotion of certain ideals and values. They are founded on a strong belief system that is shared by the group. Ideological leaders make the group focus on supporting those beliefs or championing causes with which they are associated.

3.   Change-oriented leadership

Change-oriented leaders achieve through the promotion of the exploration of new/better ways of doing things, or trying to uncover hidden potential in people, things or situations. They promote change based towards a better future (even if they don´t know yet what lies ahead) and then learn from experimentation where exactly that potential lies. The initiatives that succeed are pursued further to uncover even more potential.

4.   Visionary leadership

Visionary leaders develop an astute sense of the unknown and can often envisage, in general terms, the various ways in which the organisation might respond to future challenges as well as position the organisation to meet those challenges. They present a vision, a direction.

5.   Executive leadership

Executive leaders achieve through the introduction of organisation into the way things are done, such as the organisational structure, the processes and procedures, the skills/competencies of the people involved, etc. Executive leadership can lead directly and indirectly by a control structure or a quality assurance process.

6.   Theorist leadership

Theorist leaders try to identify the best models or explanations of how the organisation works and how it can improve its performance. They acknowledge the latest research about leadership theories and incorporate the better ones into their own understanding of how the organisation they are leading operates.

7.   Action-oriented leadership

Action-oriented leadership involves acting and leading by example. They achieve focusing on the task in hand and its completion. Often other team members act as supporters of the action-oriented leader, who is the prime achiever.

8. Goal-oriented leadership

Goal-oriented leadership involves setting clear, specific and achievable goals. This type of leadership is based on experience/ previous knowledge and a realistic outlook, taking in consideration the context in which the organisation operates, and the risks being taken. These leaders may establish a hierarchy of goals or define a step-by-step approach towards a long-term objective.

Students may try out this personality/ leadership test at https://www.teamtechnology.co.uk/tt/t-articl/mb-simpl.htm. Students can be asked to share their results and a discussion will be generated around the personality types, main characteristics of each type, strong points, how can these personality types fit into a team work, how to avoid conflict by knowing that each person has different characteristics, but that bring diversity into a team and may be seen as an added value instead of a problem.

Leadership in action: the main functions

Working in an R&I institution, in many of the different types of private and public institutions that compose the R&I ecosystem, an RMA can perform leadership roles, such as leading a R&I management office or a small group of RMA colleagues in a particular task-force or being the responsible to management a R&I project. When looking at leading a team, it is important to understand the leadership processes and its development across time. McMorgeson et al. in the article Leadership in Teams: A Functional Approach to Understanding Leadership Structures and Processes identifies 15 functions divided amongst two mutually dependent phases of team activity - transition phase (planning activities) and action phase (towards goal accomplishment).

Leadership functions during the transition phase:

1. Compose the team – bringing together the best available people for the job, considering complementary competences and ability to work together for a common goal
2. Define the mission – clarifying the team purpose
3. Establish performance expectations and set team goals – goals which are appropriately challenging and motivating
4. Structure and plan – dividing out tasks and responsibilities, scheduling and so on
5. Train and develop team members – including through coaching by the leader
6. Sense-making — defined as "identifying essential environmental events, interpreting these events given the team's performance situation, and communicating this interpretation to the team"
7. Providing feedback – both to individuals and to the team collectively

Leadership functions during the action:

8. Monitor the team – "examining the team's processes, performance, and the external team context"

9. Manage team boundaries – "representing the team's interests to individuals and groups outside the team in order to protect the team from interference as well as persuading others to support them" and co-ordinating activities with other teams
10. Challenge the team – its performance, assumptions and ways of working
11. Perform team tasks – "participating in, intervening in, or otherwise performing some of the team's task work"
12. Solve problems – diagnosing and resolving issues that prevent performance
13. Provide resources – for example, information, equipment, finance and people
14. Encourage team self-management – empowerment, accountability and responsibility
15. Support the team social climate – encouraging positive and supportive behaviours between team members

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