



The Indispensable Liabilities of Leaders in Times of Covid-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This explanatory paper seeks to examine domestic and international competences of world leaders towards the organizations in COVID-19. In this crisis phase, the organization empowers leader's critical competences to survive in the crucial business environment. The role of leaders in this Pandemic ramification is exclusively meticulous. The particular research question that drives this work is: what leadership skills are needed during crises? And what is it? What are the critical competences which help their organizations during and post-crisis? In this manuscript, we have some literature-based descriptions from foreign and domestic perspectives as necessary competences for leadership activities a worldwide epidemic. We discussed leadership skills needed in period of disasters, accompanied by discussing best practices leadership in various ways and new reflections for top management analysts and professionals post a financial crisis. This study highlights and extends a few appropriate leadership qualities and competences which are highly useful for all the current leaders and organizations.

KEYWORDS

COVID-19, crisis management, leadership competences, critical leader's qualities

1. INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization has named the COVID-19 epidemic a pandemic owing to 'alarming levels' of spread, intensity and inaction. As of March 25, 2020, over 914,000 businesses fell into crisis worldwide and over 384,000 fatalities occur. The causative novel human Corona virus, extreme acute respiratory syndrome (SARS)-CoV-2, is mainly transmitted through the distribution of respiratory droplets and close contact; it may also live in air (Nadanovsky & Santos, 2020). Transmission is also possible in asymptomatic carriers. Thus, it is important that world leaders adopt appropriate public health interventions to restrict human-to-human transmission, including hand hygiene and self-isolation. Governments, societies and organizations in crisis mode are in need of their leaders' instructions. The dilemma is that our international understanding of the order of matters, what we believed we understood of the order of systems, falls apart and could result in our institutions, agencies and systems splitting up or breaking down because it all depends on our representatives. How leaders respond to the crisis will forever change their societies' fiscal, social and health pillars (Looi, 2020). Any of these leaders meet the task and others vanish. This is the moment for honest leaders to support processes and people transcend and enhance their results. The current public health epidemic of COVID-19 is unparalleled. It is known to be one of the turning points in history where social and economic norms are shuffled as we know them, and a new human age is ignited. In the various crisis that have resulted, the scale and intensity of failure is beyond anything witnessed in our lifetime (Newman, 2020). For example, hundreds of thousands of deaths have been triggered by the crisis, the boundaries of health services have been checked, and the planet has been held under a great lock down as the global economy is facing the greatest decline since the great depression. It is difficult to know what the modern future would look like with societal, fiscal, and health structures on the edge of failure, but the form will depend on the choices that leaders make now (Mohamed & Patwary, 2020).

This paper is an urgent reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic, expanding on this introduction. The aim is to analyze the reactions and responses of national and global leaders and organizations to COVID-19 and to consider the current role in top management focused on the implications of pandemics in general and in particular, COVID-19. The research question that drive this work is: what are the leadership skills needed during and after crisis phase? Based on literature and case

studies from foreign and domestic perspectives, we include many concepts in this manuscript that we see as important competencies for leadership strategies in reaction to a global crisis. We discuss leadership skills needed in times of crisis in the following parts and include examples of best leadership strategies in various situations, accompanied by discussing phases of crisis for leaders in an organizations and practitioners to help leaders in the COVID-19 era to respond to the modern standards.

2. DEFINING CRISIS

A number of emergencies are vulnerable to organizations. Although each one faces a particular form of threat, it helps to consider what differentiates a crisis scenario from an unfortunate or difficult business problem, and there is no one way to handle a crisis. On the surface, for instance, a train derailment may look like a disaster. A few studies claim that a derailment is an unfortunate outcome and a cost of doing business in many situations (Gilpin & Murphy, 2008). However, where a train derailment has caused the deaths of passengers or staff or caused the release of a dangerous material in a densely populated area, the situation is going from a problem to a crisis. To understand market crisis more thoroughly, we describe them as any emotionally fraught condition that attracts negative stakeholder reaction until it becomes public and therefore has the potential to endanger the financial well-being, credibility or sustainability of the corporation or any portion of it.

There are two main types of crisis situations, borrowing terminology from the Centre for Crisis Management (ICM). Sudden emergencies are sudden incidents about which the company has practically no influence and perceives little blame or liability. Calling the damage associated with the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks a tragedy is an underestimate, but for some companies the attacks reflected a sudden crisis of the greatest magnitude. Company executives of this country could not dream of such a disaster, and so most were responsible for it. Employees, clients, and other partners spent weeks or more in the dark. For example, disruptions in technology such as phone lines and computer systems left many employees unsure of where or when to report to work (Coombs, 2000).

In comparison to abrupt crises, smouldering crises are viewed as the duty and liability of the firm's leadership. Most of the most infamous class-action racial discrimination cases in the

United States were initiated against Texaco Corporation in the mid-1990s. The claims against Texaco included disparate wages and promotional treatment for African-American and white workers. The recorded tapes of the company's top executives using racial epithets and making other disparaging remarks about Black workers became viral feed (Coombs, 2000). While it was these tapes that made headline news, both the inappropriate actions of these administrators and the unjustified disparities between pay and promotion decisions were a result of bad management and contributed to an expensive, smouldering scandal. It is not the crisis itself that necessarily threatens the organization, but the management of the crisis. A well-controlled smouldering crisis would do less harm to a company than a badly managed unexpected crisis would do. The crisis which has been occurred in this COVID-19 would recline under uncontrolled circumstances but similarly it is the responsibility of the top management to secure the employees from this viral threat by enforcing the SOPs. Moreover, the leaders must design some appropriate strategies to support the worker's financially. During this COVID-19 thousands of people lost their source of income and many of them lost their businesses. This paper focuses on the required capabilities which are needed and useful for the top organizational leaders to design the way out for any crisis management.

3. PHASES OF A CRISIS

Researchers have established a minimum of five phases depicting a typical business crisis. These phases provide some insight into effective leadership practices during times of crisis.

- **Signal Detection:** In certain unexpected crisis situations, while they are less obvious, smouldering crises almost often leave a trail of red flags or warning signs that something is wrong. Unfortunately, for many causes, these alarm signs frequently go unheeded by management: (1) An sense of invulnerability leads individuals to believe that only other individuals are having severe issues. (2) Ego defense mechanisms, such as denial, encourage politicians, often in the face of facts to the contrary, to maintain a pristine picture of themselves and their institutions. (3) A breakdown in signal identification is far more alarming simply because it is the decision-making and actions of corporate leaders leading to the pending crisis. Management operation sparks more than 50 percent of all emergencies (Bundy, Pfarrer, Short, & Coombs, 2017).

- **Preparation/Prevention:** This indicates that businesses can escape multiple disaster scenarios with careful planning and training. However, this is not to say that the aim for executives is to avoid all disasters, which will be unlikely. Yet they would be well prepared to escape such disasters and better able to handle others that are inevitable with any reasonable preparations and aspirations (Bundy et al., 2017).
- **Containment/Damage Control:** People equate these operations with the handling of emergencies. This is obviously a significant step towards market recovery, and the aim of this process is to restrict the credibility, financial and other risks to the existence of the group. The crisis is successful if the plan work out properly by administrators of damage management and containment. However, ending a crisis is not the same as leading a business into a crisis with the vision of becoming a stronger organization as a result of it (Reuter, Hughes, & Kaufhold, 2018).
- **Business Recovery:** One of the ultimate aims of any disaster situation is to return to "business as usual." In this current pandemic all the business executives are continually attempting to convince customers that, amid the uncertainty, business runs seamlessly or will return to normal quickly. In the process of corporate recovery, what differentiates crisis management from crisis leaders is the willingness to understand short- and long-term recovery efforts and think a new model beyond business as the normal paradigm for a company (Reuter et al., 2018).
- **Learning:** Organizational learning is the mechanism by which new knowledge is obtained, understood and disseminated across the business. However, firm leadership typically assumes a reactionary and reactive stance in the handling of crisis situations, which inhibits learning. The standard sequence of events is: the crisis arises; the crisis is handled by the organization (Reuter et al., 2018). The clear effort by firm leaders to identify the business forces which are behind the problem, to use this experience to promote fundamental shifting processes and practices, will reinforce the same phases in the learning approach. To build leadership competencies to lead companies effectively in challenging times, knowing these phases of a market crisis is important.

4. CRITICAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

Traditionally, crisis companies are involved in intervention practices similar to the containment process. This process also facilitates a one-dimensional orientation. In addition, it has been found that damage management practices appear to be protective or aggressive, provided that companies in distress are floating in bad publicity (Wisittigars & Siengthai, 2019). In the crisis situation not only the management practices are required but the appropriate leadership strategy that takes full and total account of the organization. This study identified few core competencies for crisis leadership. Under this abrupt situation, the organization needs leaders who use the available data and knowledge to make informed decisions and to take anticipatory, constructive and timely action. This may not have a full image or any of the details available in times of crisis. Nevertheless, leaders must be able to extrapolate on the experience they have to make educated choices. This requires leaders who make responsible decision-making and take anticipatory, efficient and prompt action using the relevant data and knowledge. It may not have a full image or any of the details available in times of crisis. Nevertheless, leaders must be able to extrapolate on the experience they have to make educated choices. That can involve going through often contradictory and sometimes daunting knowledge from their medical professionals in a world context and behaving accordingly to minimize harm. Leaders need to be able to trust the information provided to them, to think critically, to make preparations and actions prompt and effective, and to keep others and themselves responsible for the achievement of those plans, but not so rigidly that plans and goals cannot be changed and redirected easily as the situation progresses as new evidence comes in (Park, Jeong, Jang, Yoon, & Lim, 2018).

At times of crisis, people need politicians to take action that will result in the best outcome. Leaders must inspire others by their acts and speech, and lead by example. Exemplifying personal honesty is very much needed in these times: as Forbes points out, "employees look at their leaders for examples of what behavior is acceptable." While this applies in a spiritual context, it can also extend in the sense of being a solid, outwardly-positive cornerstone for people to unite around (Park et al., 2018). During these tough moments where it's possible to feel in the dumps, leaders must be able to propel others to perform herculean or admirable deeds far above what they believe they can accomplish in "normal" circumstances. Leaders must be able to think "outside the box," but still inspire people to read and think about new and imaginative behavior and strategies to solve unparalleled challenges. To this end, leaders must place some

confidence in the people who drive the company from below and expect others to be responsible in taking prompt and successful steps to get the job done.

Unsurprisingly, in these days of confusion, company executives are nervous. They're just humans, after all, like the rest of us. Yet it forces them to promote good cooperation and to be emphatic and caring for others when they go through tough times, considering their position within an organization (Hirpara & Taylor, 2020). Not all has the same degree of endurance and stress resistance. Members ought to understand this and act with people with compassion. In other words, they have a high degree of emotional maturity, which allows leaders to be mindful of their own actions and their effect on others. Sometimes, this must be done in culturally complex cultures, where different communities can not necessarily appreciate or comprehend messaging and interactions in the same way. To sum up, leaders in a situation ought to be able to set their own worries and anxieties aside. They ought to demonstrate confidence and lead by example, illustrating that they don't expect people to do something they aren't able to do themselves.

There are some world-leading leadership competencies to identify the unique strengths the organization needs from its leaders (Jenkins, 2012). Each multi-level competency includes up to three progressive levels to deal with the crisis. (See figure 1.1) The first is leadership competencies that based on leadership studies, this competency cluster focuses on the role of a leader in shaping and encouraging others to accomplish a joint purpose and move towards a common vision. Secondly, Business competencies that addition to empowering and encouraging those around them, in fields such as corporate procedures, financial capabilities, people management, and policy, a successful leader must show a high degree of business acumen.

Transformational Leadership Competencies	Business Competencies	Personal Competencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplifying Integrity • Ensuring Accountability • Inspiring Others • Leading Change • Nurturing Innovation • Fostering Learning and Development • Acting with Empathy and Compassion • Embracing Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridging Cultures • Improving Business Processes • Managing Resource • Planning and Organizing • Using Financials • Visioning and Alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision Making • Emotional Intelligence • Fostering Communication • Organizational Savvy • Resilience • Thinking Strategically

Figure 1.1 Leadership Competencies

That business-focused proficiency is characterized by this cluster of competencies. Lastly, Personal competencies that's includes the Personal characteristics such as stamina and self-awareness are an important part of individuals' workplace performance in any position, and that includes those at the level of leadership. This competency cluster describes certain personal habits on which good job performance depends.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP CRISIS COMPETENCES DURING COVID-19

The spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has resulted in intensified global commercial and economic instability and misunderstanding. Analysis suggests that the outbreak of COVID-19 will drive the global gross domestic product (GDP) for the full year from the 2.5 percent expected in January 2020 to 0 percent. Companies are trying to handle the effect of the epidemic on their ability to fulfill business targets and client needs in this situation of crisis management (Dirani et al., 2020). The increased occupational legislation and travel limits, decreased consumer spending, postponed acquisitions, fragmented supply chains, and financial sector instability are likely to result in spillovers of the COVID-19 epidemic on firms. In addition, coronavirus came so rapidly that there was little or very little time for most organizations to set a plan on how to deal with it. Therefore, the key priority these days for both crisis management and internal relations practitioners is to ensure that all staff is aware about the actual state of COVID-19 and that crucial information is not lost.

Worldwide tremendous attempts are being made to contain COVID-19. In relatively brief periods of time, the virus could be effectively suppressed, but even though it is, the effects for companies are long waning. In exceptional situations are discrete and contained emergencies of some shape – even in abrupt peaks and rivers – and COVID-19 should also reflect on the minds of global business leaders. Crisis management is a part of corporate life. In 2019 almost 69% Global Crisis Survey members have endured at least one crisis during the last five years, with 95% predicted to experience the first crisis in future. The question is not if a disaster is going to happen, but how well it is planned and how – and if a company recovers intact (Osland & Lester, 2020).



Figure 1.2 *Leadership Competencies for Crisis in COVID19*

These leadership competencies are extracted by few latest studies during this COVID-19 crisis (Mendenhall, Burke-Smalley, Arnardottir, Oddou, & Osland, 2020; Osland & Lester, 2020; Sunil, 2020). The above (figure 1.2) has shown a few capabilities and competencies discussed in the following details. a) Being Resilient: Challenges are viewed by citizens as possibilities rather than risks. People share obligations and are trying to continually change. Crises are moments of rapid and drastic transition. Leaders who respond to these shifts and help their teams are much more likely to accomplish their objectives. b) Solving Problems: Problems are found easily and dealt with carefully and systematically. The ability to simultaneously and dynamically delineate, disentangle, and address several conflicts is essential to crisis reduction and is one of the most critical crisis management abilities. c) Critical Thinking & Data-driven Decision Making: Based on the provided data, people know how to compile, organize, and analyze information, and make well-informed decisions. For the alleviation of every crisis, data-based decision-making is critical. In addition, as is often the case in crises, people and teams need to be comfortable making decisions with insufficient knowledge. d) Prioritizing & Delegating: People are able to make the most of the individual people and the expertise on the team in order to accomplish the goals. Crises are exacerbating the pressure on scarce human capital. The ability to priorities and coordinate work and assign it to those better positioned to do so, even if not within their normal area of work, is essential to the effective resolution of crisis situations. e) Managing &

Coordinating Stakeholders: Stakeholders are interested and bought in, endorsing the winner and supporting the work of the squad. In emergency cases, the number of stakeholders also multiplies exponentially, often adding new and unfamiliar partners to the table. In a good crisis response, being able to learn what motivates these actors and how best to leverage their expertise will be crucial. f) Influence & Negotiation: Citizens, without having to revert to conventional hierarchies and power structures, are engaged and mobilized to do things more willingly. The ability to manage changing conditions, overcome opposing interests, and effectively negotiate paths forward is becoming increasingly necessary as stress levels escalate during a crisis. g) Managing Risk: Employees and departments should see danger instead of being avoided as something to be accepted and handled. Creativity, creativity, and thoughtful experimentation are welcomed by people. Crises raise the threat to some intervention (or inaction). Getting a risk assessment approach helps executives and administrators to embrace the challenges that need to be taken and minimize them against the consequences of others. h) Managing Change: Teams respond to fresh and constantly changing circumstances and administrators help people resolve fears and adjust resistance. Crises bring transition at a rate that even seasoned leaders can feel dizzy. Ensuring teams are engaged with transition, and learning how to handle and welcome it, will be the difference between paralysis and purposeful action. i) Managing Time: People are more effective and effective, achieving better with less "down time" and less "waiting around." In the midst of a crisis, time is precious and it is crucial for everyone to realize what they can do and add to the team's efforts. J) Motivating Yourself & Taking Initiative: Managers and teams recognize a personal motivation and align with the organization/department/Mission unit's & Vision. People push projects/initiatives to successful accomplishment, taking control of errors made with a view to learning and change. Situations change rapidly in crises, and normal bureaucratic processes and structural levels can delay critical responses. The ability to inspire and steer oneself without specific instruction is crucial to reach goals quickly and adapting creatively to new challenges. k) Understanding & Managing Emotions: People make informed choices, share their opinions and emotions freely and calmly, tension is surfaced and overcome, and the team works closer together. Crisis periods are challenging, rising conflict opportunity. The willingness to be self-aware, self-regulate, compartmentalize, express desires and concerns, and disagree more than ever without being unpleasant in helping teams to continue effectively l) Balancing Work & Life: leaders have the energy and space to contribute to and connect with work during working

hours and to commit to and exercise self-care during non-working hours with family and friends. Crises can easily feel all consuming, but to balance the various needs that demand focus, it is important to maintain a level mind. Leaders and executives who successfully achieve this equilibrium will do more in the long term and reduce the chance of burning out.

CONCLUSION

This explanatory study aims at secure operating conditions, the latest pandemic and historical crisis situations demonstrate that in uncertain and ambiguous circumstances, decision-making processes exist which can be controlled by adopting new latest leadership practices in a organization. In this respect, we recommend that leaders, clinicians and researchers ought to analyze essential measures that can be introduced during unstable periods and recognize potential conclusions about the effectiveness and failure of applicable interventions. In this manuscript, we have some literature-based descriptions from foreign and domestic perspectives as necessary competences for leadership activities a worldwide epidemic. We discussed leadership skills needed in period of disasters, accompanied by discussing best practices leadership in various ways and new reflections for top management analysts and professionals post a financial crisis. This study highlights and extends a few appropriate leadership qualities and competences which are highly useful for all the current leaders and organizations. This paper guides organization to choose and train the managers or the middle management regarding crisis management such balancing of workers in the pandemic and how their needs could accelerate without demoralizing the organizational benefits.

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE STUDY

This paper is based on particular area that only explores the crisis competences in pandemic as this crisis is still going on. Notably, the 34 percent organizations are still improvising their techniques and work abilities. The future researcher can enhance the area of research by adding a number of most utilized and workable competences of leaders worldwide.

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