LEADERSHIP – A NECESSITY IN PROJECTS

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Abstract:

Leadership is one of the most discussed subjects nowadays, because more now than ever, the world needs good leaders to define a path and to determine others to follow. The understanding of leadership will better enable managers to be effective leaders and to more effectively lead their organizations, given the opportunities and challenges they have to face with. Leaders are agents of change in organizations and a tool they can use to determine change of attitudes, behaviors and actions are projects.

Key words: *leadership, manager, project, project management.*

1. Introduction

Leadership can be defined as a social influence process that involves determining a group`s objectives, motivating behavior in aid of these objectives and influencing group maintenance and culture (Smith, M., 2011). Also, leadership can be explained as a process of influencing the thinking, attitudes and behaviors of a group to work together synergistically toward common goals.

Rowe W.G. and Guerrero L. (2013) explain several components central to the phenomenon of leadership: leadership is a process; leadership involves influencing others; leadership happens within the context of a group; leadership involves goal attainment and these goals shared by leaders and their followers. From these we can see the connection between leadership and a project, because a project is known as a sequence of connected activities, conducted in an organized manner, undertaken in a defined period of time and designed to generate a well-defined result, a goal (Văcar, A., 2013).

The research conducted wanted to find if there is a connection between leadership, through its characteristics, and project management, by using projects to achieve any result that is unique, which can be defined and which must be reached within a certain period of time, in order to obtain organizational performance.

2. The research's objectives

This research is the fifth part of a long cycle aimed to determine the knowledge and application of the leadership concept in the Romanian organizations under conditions imposed by the external environment which is characterized by frequent changes and variations with both positive and negative effects on organizations, and also to determine the response of the organizations to these changes (Văcar, A., 2013).

Under the main objective of the research, as identifying the level of knowledge and use of leadership in project management via its methods and specific instruments among managers and employees of Romanian organizations in order to achieve organizational performance, we consider important for this research to determine the importance of using leadership to maximize the performance of project management from the perspective of managers in Romanian organizations.

In order to achieve this objective a national research was performed with the support of a Romanian company that makes online market research. The identification data of the subjects in the research, necessary to the observation of the concepts under analysis, are: the position of the subject within the company, the professional training of the subject, the subject's age and sex, the work field of the organization and its turnover.

3. The results of the research

Managers spend more time in communicating than in any other activity. Mintzberg estimated that managers spend 59% of their time in scheduled meetings, a further 10% in informal meetings and 6% telephoning; thus, without counting the time they spend on written communication, managers spend no less than 75% of their time communicating, so good communication ability is an essential skill for all managers (Smith, M., 2011).

Looking at things in depth, and noting more indirect the need of using leadership in project management, most managers consider communication as the main factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and supporters (67%), the second is the trust and empowerment (17%), both specific elements of leadership. All other listed items consist of independent factors (money 9%, time 4%, leadership 2% and others 1%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Factors that generates a positive relationship between leaders and team identified by managers

Which do you think is the main factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and supporters, having as a result the organizational performance?

Time 4% — Leadership 2% — Others 1%

Empowerment 17%

Money 9%

Communication 67%

In order of their performance, managers currently give importance to the following actions: creating an united and strong team (59%), strengthening relationships between team members through good communication (53%), creating a vision and long term strategy (45%) fair and efficient allocation of resources needed to achieve objectives (44%), performance of management functions (33%), proposing changes (26%) and influencing, directing and empowering team members (18%). Managers are mainly giving importance to the creation of the general scenery where they will try to exercise their influence on employees in order to achieve the proposed targets (Figure 2).

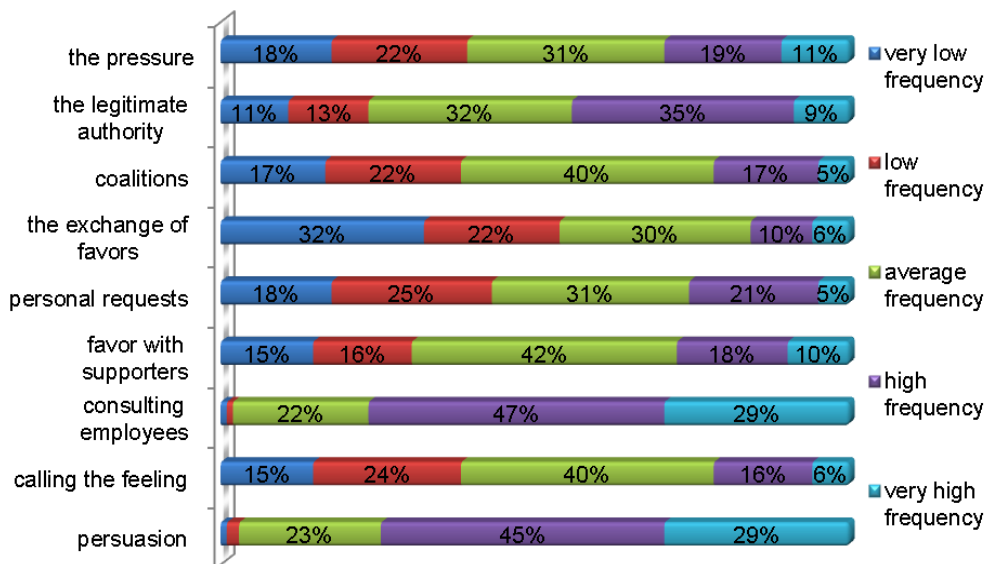**Figure 2. The main actions consistently performed by managers**

Which of the following activities and actions you consciously and consistently perform in your organization?

Action	Percentage
influencing, directing and empowering team members	18%
proposing changes	26%
performance of management functions	33%
fair and efficient allocation of resources needed to achieve objectives	44%
creating a vision and long term strategy	45%
strengthening relationships between team members through good communication	53%
creating an united and strong team	59%

The tools and tactics applied to influence the team that are most commonly used by managers in order to determine employees are persuasion (29%) and consulting employees (29%) with very high frequency, then the legitimate authority (35%) with a high frequency; coming into favor with supporters (42%), calling the feeling (40%) and coalitions (40%) with an average frequency, the other with a low or very low frequency of manifestation: the pressure, the exchange of favors and personal requests (Figure 3) .

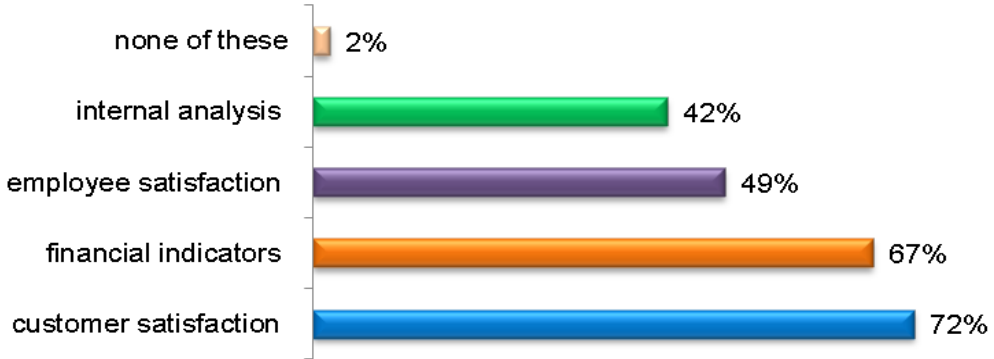**Figure 3. Influencing tactics used by managers**

How often are the following tactics used to influence the project team within your organization?

Regarding assessments currently used by managers to measure the performance of the organization, the most common are: customer satisfaction (72%) showing concern for the client and thus constant desire to welcome and meet their continuously changing needs, then financial indicators (67%) indicating the "health" of the organization in terms of financial, then employee satisfaction (49%) showing the concern of organization for human resource and automatically improving working conditions and finding the best ways to recognize the appreciation to it, followed by various internal analysis (42%) who are not among the presented ones (Figure 4).

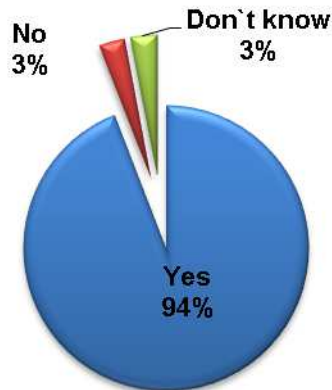**Figure 4. Reviews for measuring organizational performance
used by managers**

**Which of the following assessments for measuring the performance of your
organization do you use?**

Considering the three conditions in a project, to be done in a limited period of time, with the lowest cost and at the highest performance, and strong relationship between them, most of the managers (94%) consider that leadership, by its characteristics can have positive effects within the project.

**Figure 5. The effect of leadership on the relationship
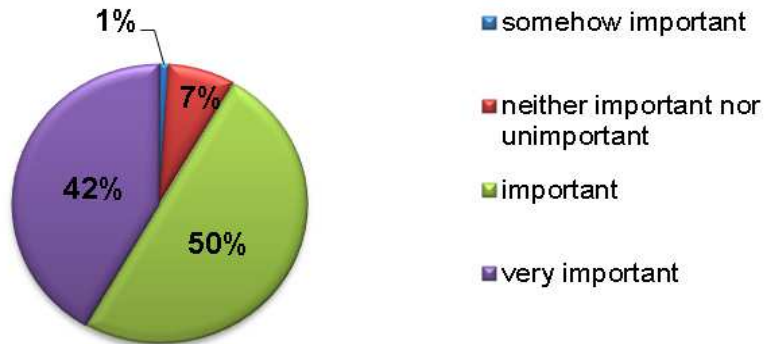between Time-Cost-Performance**

**Do you think that leadership can have positive effects on the relationship
between Time-Cost-Performance within a project?**

Measuring the importance of the three conditions of projects, the connection time-cost-performance, for the organizations where managers work with, most of them consider is important (50% of respondents) and very important (42% of respondents).

Figure 6. The importance of Time-Cost-Performance connection

How important is this connection Time-Cost-Performance for your organization?

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, we can say that most managers consider communication as the main factor that generates a positive relationship between leaders and supporters; the second is the trust and the empowerment, both being specific elements of leadership, in this way we may indirectly observe the need for leadership in project management.

Currently managers give importance to human resource actions which is indispensable in achieving organizational objectives through actions such as: creating a powerful and united team, strengthening relationships between team members through good communication, in this way is emphasized the human side of leadership and concern of managers for employees, specifically called managerial leadership, then actions concerning organizational side of management such as: creating a long-term vision and strategies, fair and efficient allocation of resources necessary to achieve objectives, performance of management functions.

The tools and tactics for influencing the team most commonly used by managers in determining employees are persuasion and consulting employees with very high frequency, then the legitimate authority with a high frequency, coming into favor with supporter, calling the feeling and coalitions with an average frequency.

Regarding assessments currently used by managers to measure the performance of the organization is measured employee satisfaction showing concern of organization for human resource and automatically improving working conditions and finding the best ways to recognize their appreciation to this.

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