

## Learning Resource

### Leadership

It is important to set a corporate strategy to identify the organization's priority objectives—where is the organization going and how does it get there? Having a strategic plan in place, however, means that your work has just begun. The success of executing a business strategy depends on the quality of the organization's leadership—those who will guide the organization in the right direction.

Leadership is a much-studied and written about topic; below are several descriptions of leadership.

#### Perspectives on Leadership

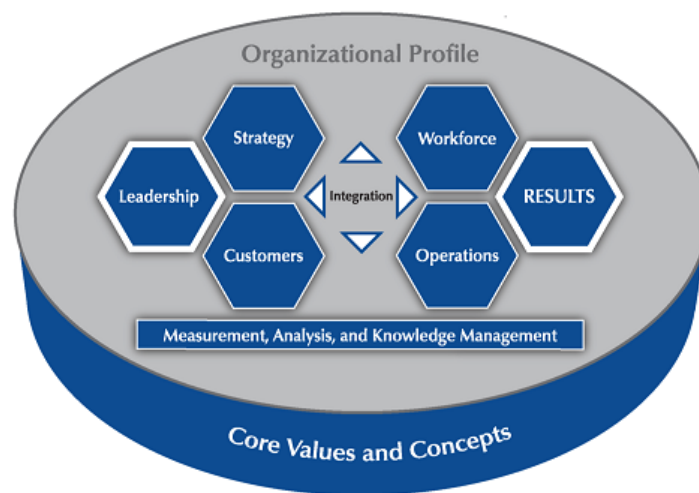
Quote	Speaker	Source
"Leadership is a function of knowing yourself, having a vision that is well communicated, building trust among colleagues, and taking effective action to realize your own leadership potential."	Warren Bennis	Saladis (2006)
"The aim of leadership should be to improve the performance of man and machine, to improve quality, to increase output and simultaneously to bring pride of workmanship to people. Put in a negative way, the aim of leadership is not merely to find and record failures of men, but to remove the causes of failure to help people to do a better job with less effort."	W. Edwards Deming	<i>Out of the Crisis</i> (1982, p. 248)
"My definition of a leader...is a man who can persuade people to do what they don't want to do, or do what they're too lazy to do, and like it."	Harry S. Truman, 33rd president of the United States	Legacee (2011)
"Leadership is the art of influencing and directing people in a way that will win their obedience, confidence, respect, and loyal cooperation in achieving a common objective."	US Air Force	<i>The Cadet NCO Guide</i> (n.d., p. 25)
"The task of a great leader is to get his people from where they are to where they have not been....Leaders must invoke an alchemy of great vision."	Henry Kissinger	Clawson (2003)
"Through years of study, teaching and working with people all over the world, from all walks of life, I have determined that leadership is: Communicating to people their worth and potential so clearly that they come to see it in themselves. It is the influence we have with others to help them discover their own voice, to find their own purpose, to make their unique contribution, and to release their potential, that truly defines leadership."	Stephen R. Covey	Khan (2005)

Source: Leadership Quotes, n.d.

One thing you might have noticed in the six leadership quotes presented above is that position or hierarchy was not mentioned. This was not an inadvertent omission; it indicates that individuals at any level in an organization can influence and exhibit leadership characteristics. Think about your own life experiences, and you can most likely identify some influential leaders who lacked positional power, yet others willingly followed their lead. "Leading strategic change can occur on at least three levels: organizational, work group, and individual" (Clawson, 2003, p. 39). Although leadership is traditionally thought of as being at the executive and most senior levels of an organization, leadership can, and should, be carried out throughout the organization. Sometimes the strongest influencers in an organization are not sitting in the executive office suite, but are running machinery, working in the production areas, or sitting in a lower-level supervisory position.

Although many factors can contribute to an organization's success or failure, leadership is certainly a critical success factor. The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) provides seven criteria that organizations can use to assess their organizational effectiveness. It is no surprise that leadership is a key category; in fact, it is among the highest-weighted criterion for the MBNQA.

To reinforce these qualities, the graphic below shows the Baldrige Criteria Framework (Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2017) from a systems perspective. This framework demonstrates the importance of leadership to achieving results, and the effectiveness of leadership determines an organization's level of success.



From Baldrige Performance Excellence Program, 2017. 2017–2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework: A Systems Approach to Improving Your Organization's Performance. Gaithersburg, MD: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology. <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige>.

### Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence Framework: A Systems Perspective

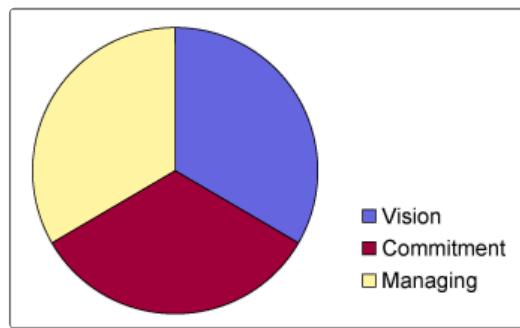
Seven criteria used to assess organizational effectiveness

## What's the Difference Between Management and Leadership?

This is a common question and potential source of confusion, although managers may be leaders, the terms are not synonymous. The role of a manager, while it may vary from organization to organization, focuses on directing activities and employees from an operational perspective—what work needs to be done in this department for this particular time period of the project. In contrast, leaders not only are more forward looking but also set the vision for the direction and lead by example, building relationships and encouraging followers, evaluating opportunities and potentially taking risks to propel the organization to new levels.

## Vision, Commitment, Managing Model

Just as there are many definitions of leadership, many different leadership models, sets of characteristics, and clever acronyms have appeared over the years. One simple model that supports the leadership qualities we want to emphasize comes from James Clawson (2003), author of *Level Three Leadership: Getting Below the Surface*. Clawson calls it the *VCM model* and uses it to illustrate three areas in which leaders demonstrate their ability to influence, as shown below.



Source: Adapted from Clawson (2003, p. 37)

**Vision** is a critical component of leadership. **Visioning** is describing where the organization will be at some future time, which sets the direction in which the organization should move to reach the stated goal. Strategic planning is part of the process because it defines the route to achieving the vision. Critical leadership skills are required to help establish and convey that vision to the rest of the organization. The leadership skills required to be successful in this area include:

- identifying trends,
- scanning the environment,
- knowing what has happened in the past, and
- understanding where the organization is in the present.

**Commitment** involves garnering the dedication of others. This includes sharing the vision to get others involved with the direction and strategic objectives. Communication skills are critical and include the leader's ability to convey his or her message to others. But equally important is the leader's ability to *listen* to others. Part of gaining commitment is **alignment**—getting individuals to understand how they fit into the vision and how they contribute to meeting the organization's strategic objectives. Aligning individual goals with department goals that support the corporate goals is important to organizational success.

**Management** includes monitoring, measuring, directing, and controlling the organization. Skills required here include the ability to assess how well the organization is moving toward its vision and how well the strategy is being executed. Having effective measures in place enables leadership to course-correct as needed if the organization begins to stray. Recognition is also important here—rewarding and praising those who are helping to guide the organization and achieve the intended results (Clawson, 2003).

## References

Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. (2017). 2017-2018 Baldrige Excellence Framework: A systems approach to improving your organization's performance. Baldrige National Quality Program. Retrieved October 3, 2018 from <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/publications/baldrige-excellence-framework/businessnonprofit>

Clawson, J. (2003). *Level three leadership: Getting below the surface*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Leadership Quotes. (n.d.). The Teal Trust. Retrieved April 13, 2007 from <http://www.teal.org.uk/leadership/quotes.htm>

## Licenses and Attributions

### Framework Overview

([https://www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/styles/960\\_x\\_960\\_limit/public/images/2016/09/06/2015\\_2016\\_Bus\\_NP\\_Overview.jpg?itok=4PqRGvg7](https://www.nist.gov/sites/default/files/styles/960_x_960_limit/public/images/2016/09/06/2015_2016_Bus_NP_Overview.jpg?itok=4PqRGvg7)) from *How Baldrige Works* comprises public domain material from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Department of Commerce. UMUC has modified this work.