

The Fourth Annual Engineering Managers Conference

Day 2 Chairmen's opening remarks.

This is an Engineering manager's conference. What is the significance of the manager?

Is it generic?

Is it related to the work?

Is it confining to the incumbent?

Does it mean you cannot lead?

In 1997 Warren Bennis and Joan Goldsmith published a revised edition of Learning to Lead. In this book they make 13 distinctions between managers and leaders.

And the distinctions are:

1. The manager **administers**; the leader **innovates**.
2. The manager is a **copy**; the leader is an **original**.
3. The manager **maintains**; the leader **develops**.
4. The manager **accepts reality**; the leader **investigates it**.
5. The manager focuses on **systems and structures**; the leader focuses on **people**.
6. The manager **relies on control**; the leader **inspires trust**.
7. The manager has a **short-range view**; the leader has a **long range perspective**.
8. The manager asks **how and when**; the leader asks **what and why**.
9. The manager has his or her eye always on **the bottom line**; the leader has his or her eye always on **the horizon**.
10. The manager **imitates**; the leader **originates**.
11. The manager **accepts the status quo**; the leader **challenges it**.
12. The manager is **the classic good soldier**; the leader is **his or her own person**.
13. The manager **does things right**; the leader **does the right thing**.

I read some of the comments on the web site and can share some:

So without trying to choose most of the comments are in my opinion very defensive.

There are some other aspects that are worth considering:

6 Speed with which changes are taking place

I was in Europe in October when the sub-prime crisis seemed to hit and my breath was taken away with the response and reactions taking place. Question in my mind though remained these were the same people that allowed Lehman Brothers to go belly up without understanding the ,by their admission now, systemic nature of this failing.

7 There was a time where business cycles were defined, understood and predictable.

CEO, s were planning their business activities around this. No longer the case. One example of this is the impact on the Steel industry, comodities such as Platinum etc.

Global village is a reality, no better example of this than a country, Iceland going bankrupt because of the sub prime crisis in the USA.

There was a time where as I pointed out response was slower, measured and the key was to manage the situation.

Leadership I would suggest is about speed of response.managing the unknown, anticipating the unforeseen.

Leadership is about empowering developing people.

Marcus Buckingham uses the example:

Chess pieces versus Draughts where in the first case each one has his own unique skills or strengths and is used accordingly. In the case of draughts there is very little difference and the moves are very predictable.

Leaders of Leaders have now become the key in learning Organization where responses are daily and not only waiting for a Board or Steerco to define.

Having said that and in view of the next papers being presented.

- 8 The reason that innovation seems to be so difficult is that established companies that employ highly capable people and then set them to work within organisational structures whose processes and values weren't designed for the task at hand

From HBR.

- 9 Historically most major business transformations efforts fail. The failure rate is often as high as 65 percent to 75 percent.The primary cause of failure is most frequently the failure to anticipate and effectively manage cultural and organisational change.

Gartner group

- 10 Nearly half of all major technical initiatives fail because of fear and anxiety in the organisation, and resistance from key managers.

Computer World

11 E- Business transformation is no different. Having a good strategy is not enough. Executive management must take the step and implement an effective change management programme.

Gartner group

Having said all that, leadership by definition of one of the most renowned Leadership authors John n Maxwell:

Leadership is a decision not a position

Leadership is influence nothing less and nothing more.

I trust we will have an engaging day .