

The correlation of the forces of leadership and the level of management

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Abstract

Does a low-level shop-floor manager lead its employees with other forces of leadership than a CEO its high-level managers? In general it seems to be, but is it really different and what is the most common part in the leadership of a CEO and a shop-floor manager?

The basis for this literature research is the idea of a confidence based leadership which should be an important part of each human management method. In eyes of the author, confidence is not only a part, which modern managers have to take into account when they try to manage their employees. From author's point of view, it's one of the basic forces of leadership, which is needed on every kind of management level.

Confidence seems to be the missing force of leadership, which is really relevant on each kind of management level. So that's the reason why French & Ravens "Forces of Leadership" will be researched into the direction of confidence and its own position of between the well known factors.

Introduction of Leadership Forces

French and Raven (1959) divided five categories of leadership forces:

(The force of information advance is later detected by Raven and Kruglanski (1970) and sometimes mentioned as the 6th force of leadership. The author sees the „knowledge/skills“ force also as an knowledge based forces, that's why it's combined here.)



Figure 1: forces of leadership by French & Raven

These forces are not ranked by each other, as shown above. It was meant, that these forces can be shared and combined by each other and that each kind of combination results as one specific kind of a leadership method. From the other way around, each specific management method can be separated into the before mentioned categories.

From the experiences of the author, the personal relationship between manager and employee becomes more important, the higher the management level is. On the other side force

elements same as threat / punishment or just legitimation shall not be used to lead high-level managers.

This is why the author defined the following order:

- 1.) Force due to threat / punishment
- 2.) Force due to legitimation
- 3.) Force due to information advance / knowledge and skills
- 4.) Force due to gratification
- 5.) Force due to personality / character

Also with the target, that the higher the number, the higher the management level is. It is not the idea that low-level employee has to be led with threat / punishment and high-level employees are led with gratification and personality only. It's more that people shall be led with a higher number of category and that the possibility on a higher management-level, hopefully have better learned skills to do so, than less trained manager on a lower level.

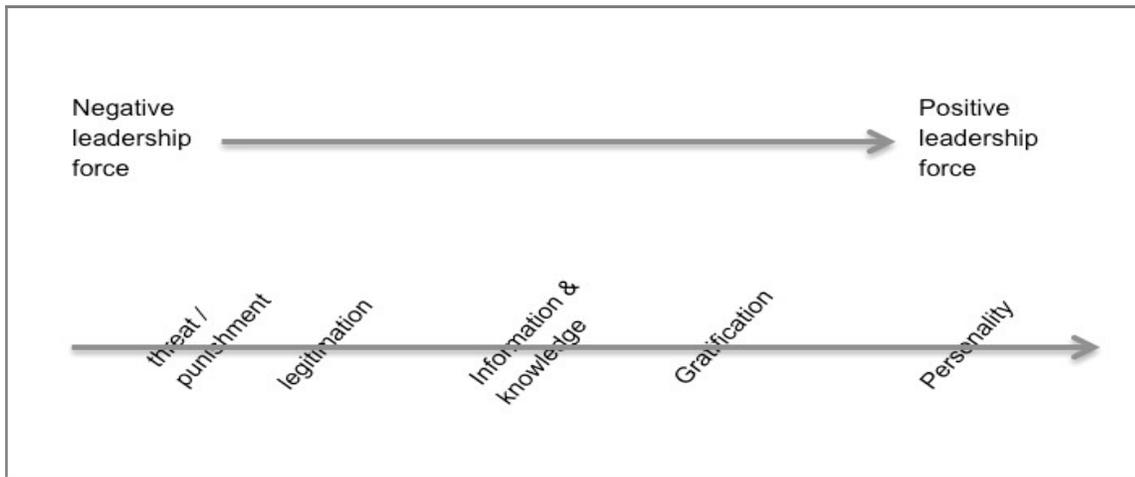


Figure 2: negative and positive leadership forces by author

So in general it's wished, that both kind of management levels, shop floor, same as CEO-level, should have the same (positive) management style. But in reality it's expected that low-level manager are in comparison to the high-level manager on the left (negative) side. That means based on these five categories the following kind of positive or negative effect for leadership.

	Treat / punishment	Legitimation	Information & knowledge	Gratification	Personality
Management level	low ←				→ high
Management style	negative ←				→ positive

Table 1:

Position of management level and style

Overall and in reality, the following situation is expected, because of the before mentioned reason.

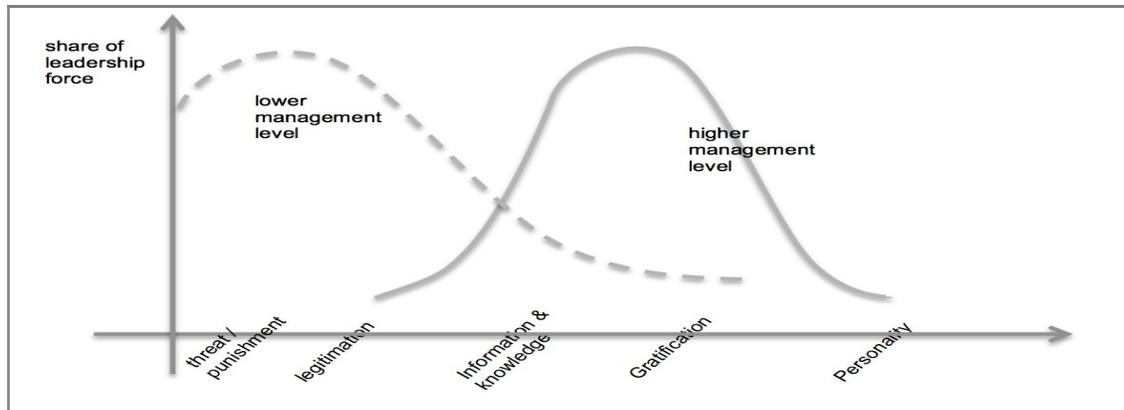


Figure 3: author's ranking and distribution of the forces of leadership without confidence

The right graph shows the situation on high- management level. In the same time, it's probably something like a best-case leadership method for all kind of management levels, independent if it's low or high. But also in reality it's the ideal one, because it is a situation, which is normally wished by the CEO itself. This person is able to take the direct, active part to lead its high-level manager and so it describes an independent best-case situation for its own company. With this graph it can be shown, how the direct employee feels the leadership of the boss, just by asking boss and employee in the survey and it can be done in both management levels, high and low. It can be shown, what kind of forces of leadership are really used and relevant in a modern leadership.

Leadership Factor Confidence

Independent from a possible result from the chapter above, the author detected in many years of leadership, that most of the forces of leadership became more and more irrelevant the higher the management level is.

Compared with French and Raven's forces of leadership and its further developed variations, the author came to the hypotheses, that the single forces have not only their defined importance ranking. Also the item "confidence" became more and more important in last decade of leadership and should be in the eyes of the author a single standing force of leadership, because the 2nd hypotheses is that leadership on a high management level will not work without confidence.

Luhmann (2000) is saying, that human is only capable of acting when it's possible for them to reduce the numbers of information, so the confidence of the leader to the employee reduces such information and gives the possibility to work with more information. Or based on a more global point of view, same as Coleman (1990) interprets Simons (1964, 1957) view of the rational choice theory: It's impossible, to act just on hard facts. The actor must have confidence in his own decision, based on the experiences he made by himself. This is similar or same than to decide on information, which are coming from another person or employee. In most cases the manager decides not on its own information. He must have confidence to the other person, where the information is coming from.

So confidence seems to be a must and if confidence is not a basic source of the management forces, why doesn't work new leaders with the old staff of its forerunner? Just have a look at the politics; here it's normal that new leaders start working with a staff, they can trust.

Based on the theory that confidence is a Leader-Member-Exchange, e.g. LMX-Model (Graen, 1976), both parties must interact to create confidence and the manager has to start this progress. In addition the problems on this management level are much too complex, that they could be solved efficient without confidence. - Confidence reduces the complexity of human acting, expands in the same time the possibility of experience and acting and gives safety (Luhmann, 1973). So the employee must be led with confidence to be efficient and with the 2nd hypotheses it is an absolute

must to lead with confidence, because if the employee is not able to trust the manager, the relationship will end. Same result we have the way around.

Based on these facts, the author implemented the factor confidence into the graph of the ranked forces of leadership and put it based on the necessity of being, more to the positive, right side and it is expected, that every good relationship between manager and employee has a high share of this confidence force.

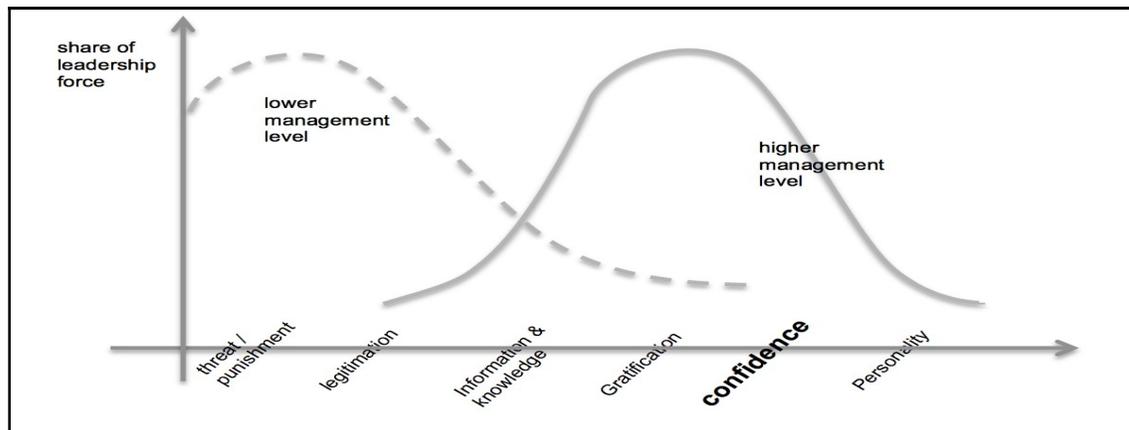


Figure 4: author's ranking and distribution of the forces of leadership with confidence

Explanation of the expected result

(see grey line of figure 4) The different forces and their awaited occurrence will be described in the following section. The forces of leadership are ranked from the unimportant to the most important ones.

- 1.) Threat / punishment - will have no or nearly no influence in a stable manager / employee relationship. Here we are on the very left, better to say negative side, which shall be not used as a modern leader. The more important is the situation of the employee, especially on high management level. If he got the feeling of being threatened, he will leave the company. On the other hand, everybody, who has the possibility to work on a high management level, knows how hard and long the way was until this management level was reached. So he made his own experience, what the result of a disappointment was. So the employee doesn't need this force of leadership. The person makes this kind of pressure by himself.
- 2.) Legitimation - with this kind of force only average or bad manager will work with. Especially on high management it will not reach in daily business that the manager says: "I'm the boss, because I'm on this position now. So you have to follow me." If a manager wants, that the employees will follow him, it's not enough to say words, it's needed to live the own words. The manager must be a paradigm, who can convince with experiences and facts instead of trying to convince people, that everybody has to follow, just to the reason, that he is sitting on the boss' chair. Due to this and the situation, that most managers on high-level management should be aware about the circumstance, this kind of force is expected just with a minor share.
- 3.) Information and knowledge - is as explained before a more important factor than the legitimation. It's good for the employee, same as for the manager, if the last one has a good knowledge basis. Combined with experience on products, same as the experience with other colleagues, customers or suppliers, it will help the manager to convince its employees that they will do as it's wished. So normally this should be one of or the most important factor in leadership. The problem with this factor is, that its lifetime is limited and so this factor of leadership is consumed very fast. Today, the employee is very good trained. Often the employee has a better education, than the manager and latest after some years of making

own experiences, the employee gets the feeling, that he can do the job of the manager, too. Due to that, this kind of force of leadership can be just used in short- and mid-term relationships, never as a long-term force of leadership.

- 4.) Personality - is something, not to say god given, but something, which can't be really trained. If managers have this kind of force of leadership, that employees want to get a friend of him, want to work with the manager and not because of money, than a manager can be very happy. If this kind of factor could be easily trained, probably it would be the most interesting one. The one which would be mostly used from the managers, but that's not reality. It's not a question of training, the general basis for this is something everybody wants to have but just a few persons really have. That's the reason, why also this point is expected with a lower share.
- 5.) Gratification - is one of the two factors, which are really important in the today art of leadership. It's possible to work with this factor on short-, mid- and, the most important, on long-term basis. The gratification, can be a bonus, a higher salary, more holiday, a firm car, a better job, more freedom for decision, a higher responsibility,.... This kind of factor can be made transparent, can be used on every manager or employee level. The worker gets 20% more loan, if he assembles 120 instead 100 parts each hour and the high-level employee/manager gets a better firm car, if a project is finished much faster than calculated. This force of leadership can and should be used every time, when a performance shall be improved.
- 6.) Confidence - is very near in the area of personality, but the big difference is, that whit this factor, both parties can work with. If the manager has confidence to the employee, he can make decisions faster, because he doesn't have to check each work of its employee. The employee will work more independent, because he knows, that he has the confidence of the manager. He learned how the manager thinks, has the experience what's bad and good in the eyes of the manager, and gets by this every day the experience that the manager has confidence to him. Everything between the manager and employee is transparent and because of this the output of decisions and so on looks logical in the eyes of the other. So there are some special ways of confidence, starting by the first level "I trust him/her, because what he/she makes is good for me" up to the last level, which can be often found in a marriage or an old friendship "I trust him/her, because I know her/him so good and long, that I would follow him also when I don't know the reason". So independent of the stage or level, confidence must be there, otherwise decision would take too long, if everything has to be controlled and/or double checked. The daily business is much too complicate, that the manger has time and/or knowledge to check everything. So if the manager has no confidence to the employee, the relationship and as a follow up the leadership will not work over time.

Conclusion

Based on the before mentioned arguments, it seems to be that in modern times the forces of leadership can be concentrated to gratification and the over years hidden factor confidence, independent from the level of management. The other output of this research is, that the forces of leadership can be ranked in importance, negative and positive factors or also in occurrence, which naturally has to be investigated with a survey in the later doctoral thesis. Anyhow, and coming back to the main idea, it seems, that the well known forces of leadership are already existing, but some of them are no more used is the daily business, going one step further, the author wants to talk about a replacement of these no more relevant forces by the new one, named confidence. Confidence is a factor, which is in general so self explaining, such a matter of course that it was missed over year as a standalone factor. A further research about confidence will be done in a further research.

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