

ETHICS of LEADERSHIP

Management Versus Leadership

As you read the material for our next class, keep the questions below in mind. To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages. Keep in mind that there are two basic kinds of information that you need to look for in the reading:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, *it is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible conclusion about an issue, rather than another.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.

Reading

- Zaleznik, A. (2004, January). Managers and Leaders: Are They Different? *Harvard Business Review*, 82(1), 74–81. (Original work published 1977).

Background

When Abraham Zaleznik wrote this article in 1977, the dominant approach to organizational leadership was based on due process, stability, control, and compromise. However, Zaleznik thought that this was better understood as “management”, whereas true leadership was sensitive to substance (over process), change (over stability), chaos (over control), and invention of novel solutions (rather than compromise). In this way, Zaleznik believes managers are mere bureaucrats whereas leaders have more in common with artists, scientists, and other creative thinkers (like philosophers, perhaps?). Organizations need both managers and leaders to succeed, but developing both requires a reduced focus on logic and strategic exercises in favor of an environment where creativity and imagination are permitted to flourish.

Questions

1. In your own words, what is the central claim (or main thesis) of this article? That is, can you put into one sentence the claim that this paper was written to defend? (Answering the remaining questions should help you better understand Zaleznik’s argument for that central claim.)
2. Why does Zaleznik believe that managers and leaders have radically opposed personalities? Why does this seem to suggest to Zaleznik that it is impossible to have a single person act as both?
3. In the sections on “Attitudes Towards Goals” and “Senses of Self”, Zaleznik focuses a lot on the differences between how managers and leaders approach *change*. What are these differences?
4. In the sections on “Conceptions of Work” and “Relations With Others”, Zaleznik focuses a lot on the differences between how managers and leaders respond to and deal with *conflict*. What are these differences?