ETHICAL LEADERSHIP: CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract:

Being ethical leader is not as easy as other job. There are a lot of challenges but I always believe that if there are a lot of challenges there are a lot of solutions too. If we understand that how to properly and ethically communicate with our subordinates we can understand their problems easily. Communication starts with listening. Ethical leader has to be good listener. If we know how to use our team member‚s capabilities properly we can find way to success easily.

Key words: ethical; leadership; communication; teams; behaviour

1. Introduction

A leadership philosophy can be millions of pages long, full of theories, diagrams, experiences, examples, and include an endless list of considerations. There are a lot of internal and external reason, which influence the development of different sets of leadership philosophies. People try to develop and shape their personal leadership philosophy during the whole life.

From the past to now, many studies have been conducted about leadership and textbooks have been prepared. People think of an idea for many years, Leader is born or leader is made? Let's try to answer this question. Of course, People are born with leadership gene. They are still promoting "leadership" among their friends while they are kids, this, in turn, school, university and business lives is going up. Throughout history, have become such people. As we all know, kings and nobles have grown up with a spirit of leadership and have undergone a series of trainings. At the same time, it is quite clear to us that not all of them have reached the peak of leadership.

2. Leadership concept

Leadership is the ability of one to guide others, it is based on ones abilities and qualities rather than skills. Everybody is capable of being a leader, but not everybody exercises his leadership abilities. In order for a person to lead, he does not necessarily have to lead a team, a company, or a country. We already know many countries leader can not manage their countries properly. We have a lot of example about these. Everyone in life has, in one way or another, leadership. When he comes together with friends or family, it gives the direction of the crowd to be in favour of everyone, that person is the leader. We have a lot of experience how to manage small groups. It has been started since kindergarten and continuing throughout middle school, high school, universiti until end of the life. I have been serving in Azerbaijan Air Force since 2001. I have always worked with many ethical leaders, both good and bad, and have experienced many leadership successes and failures over the

past years. The criteria relevant for judging ethical behaviour of a leader include individual values, conscious intentions, freedom of choice, stage of moral development, types of influence used, and use of ethical as well as unethical behavior. [1] Some of the characteristic behaviours of ethical and unethical leaders are shown in the table below.

Ethical & Unethical Leadership

The Ethical Leader	The Unethical Leader
Is humble	Is arrogant and self-serving
Is concerned for the greater good	Excessively promotes self-interest
Is honest and straightforward	Practices deception
Fulfils commitments	Breaches agreements
Strives for fairness	Deals unfairly
Takes responsibility	Shifts blame to others
Shows respect for each individual	Diminishes others' dignity
Encourages and develops others	Neglects follower development
Serves others	Withholds help and support
Shows courage to stand up for what is right	Lacks courage to confront unjust acts

Table 1: Ethical and unethical leadership Source: (Zanderer, 1992)

These all have shaped my philosophy regarding how to be ethical leader. Considering my experience working with other leaders and through my involvement in leading others I have developed my personal leadership philosophy whose foundation is based on following:
   a.   Self - confidence and courage.
   b.   Teamwork
   c.   Communication.

3. Ethical leadership

3.1 Self - Confidence and Courage

The organization has to be personal, human, and individual. Everyone must feel empowered and responsible for the reputation of the company, and the leader must demonstrate an interest in uncovering problems and finding solutions. [2] We try to increase the ethical awareness, skills, and knowledge of all employees while encouraging dialogue and conversation with others around ethical dilemmas. We have to create stories on how colleagues deal successfully with issues of integrity. Fundamentally, we have to create an environment that is ethically competent and ethically sensitive. We strive to understand the challenges created by the complexity and scale of our organization and what the implications of these challenges mean for ethical leadership. Being a leader provides a way of building confidence in a system that has fueled our small but honorable success. Leadership integrity carries over to corporate governance as well. Every company, no matter how strong and ethical, needs to take a second look at corporate governance, to take advantage of every opportunity for improvement. I tried to develop my personal ethical leadership philosophy throughout my 20 years in the Air Force and through witnessing many leader's successes and

failures. In the early days of my military career, I tried to closely to monitor and evaluate the course of actions of my leaders. Their wrongs and truths were the beginning of my personal leadership philosophy. I always tried to grab just their truths course of action. When I was in the first year of Air force academe , my hard working and courage attracted the attention of the my company commander. Despite the new start of the school year, I was able to demonstrate my courage and ethical behaviors which were given me genetically but I have always tried to improve them. Without improvement you have never been successful. At the end of one month my company commander called me into his office and told me he would be appoint me team commander. He said me that he knew I was quiet and smart, but he could see I possessed the leadership skills necessary to team commander. It was my first promotion. Even though it was not a high position, I was proud to be commander. Not only I but also I have already been responsible for the entire team. I tried to work more with my responsibility and to be an example to my team with my ethical behaviors. Leaders serve as role models for their followers and demonstrate the behavioural boundaries set within an organization. Being responsible for the team really motivated me. Motivation was the first step to take me direct success or at least I was thinking like this. Motivation is critical in making any workforce carry out its responsibilities effectively without the need of supervision. Many different aspects of my life have affected my ethical leadership philosophy. These viewpoints on leadership, both good and bad, stuck with my memory as I progressed through the years of Air force academe. After I became a second lieutenant, I achieved a position where I could begin to influence others. Up until that time, I had many successes and failures that shaped the foundations of my ethical leadership philosophy. I was appointed commander of the radio technical support of flights company without looking at my youth and inexperience. This became turning point in my Air Force career. Where I began to develop my personal leadership philosophy.

All my life I have believed I can conquer any challenge. Thus I believe that there is no excuse for anyone to fail in what they can think of after thoroughly evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of any endeavor. This is why target clarity is so important. No matter the variables, the fog or friction involved in the decision making process, as ethical leader I had to pick a direction and go without unethical behaviors. You understand me sometimes it is not easy behave ethically. I forgot my youth and inexperience, I tried to focus my responsibility. I was already responsible for some technician guys and enough old Soviet radio technical systems. My company technicians was the last remnants of the ex Soviet Union. They were technically more knowledgeable than me, but did not like being submissive. They were at least 20 years older than me. They enjoyed drinking alcohol as ex Soviet Union military , even they were drinking during the work time. I could punish them for breaking the rules, but I did not punish them. Because our radio technical apparatus and systems were old as they. They knew about these old systems better than me. This knowledge gave them more courage being enough comfortable. I still needed their knowledge and technical skills. Based on all this, they thought that I would not give them orders, tasks or assignments. They thought that my technical skills was not enough to solve technical problems because I was younger and inexperience . But I did the opposite what they thought about me. I began to give them separate and multiple assignments. [3] Clausewitz's beliefs the courage of an army have always increased its physical strength. They were surprised by my self-confidence, ethical behaver and courage. Because that time I did not behave them unethically. [4] Sun Tzu said: "If a general show confidence in his men but always insists on

his orders being obeyed, the gain will be mutual". I did not let them come together for talking about my assignments and strange but ethical behaviours.

As a result of an unexpected, strange and smartly action, I already managed them properly. [5] Sun Tzu said: "The general who thoroughly understand the advantages that accompany variation of tactics know how to handle his troops". Over time, I became their best friend. When people are friends, the relationship between them is mutual and they often enjoy one another's assistance. We had already started drinking beer after work not work time like they did before.

3.2 Teamwork

Another important ethical leadership trait is teamwork. I always think that teamwork is best solution for solving many kind of problems. In my opinion, commanders, leaders or any organization bosses need best advisory council for managing their companies. Listening and Critical thinking are more important teamwork skill. When working in a group, it's important to keep an open mind. Recognize that your team members may see things from another perspective, and hear them out. [6] Listening to other points of view can help you see multiple sides of an issue, including ones that you have never considered before. This allows you to be a better colleague and leader, to anticipate needs and challenges before they arise and to respond effectively when they do. Critical thinking allows you to make better, more informed decisions. It can be tempting to follow along with whatever the group decides, or what one team member believes is the best course of action, but sometimes a different approach or a new idea can help achieve better results. By thinking critically about the situation – examining all sides of an issue, reflecting on past experiences, and listening to what other group members have to say – you could arrive at a breakthrough that moves your team forward in new and exciting ways. Working in a team can be challenging at times, but more often it is a great opportunity to uncover creative ideas, share different perspectives and experiences, as well as enhance your own skills. If you treat each group project as a learning experience, you can help foster a more productive team environment. Your desire to learn and your willingness to explore new approaches will make you a better contributor, manager, or leader. This really helped me in my work as commander as I aimed at accomplishing all the goals that my position expected of me. To help me in this I had to build a loyal and united team filled with the spirit of teamwork. Snowy and cold winter day the Radar antenna was broken as a result of hurricane. I got the order from the Air Force base commander to fix antenna. It would be very difficult to repair the antenna in the snowy and cold weather. Also my older team would not want to work in the cold weather. I gathered my old but gold team. I ordered food and vodka before explaining our difficult assignment. Then I told them we have to do our best and fix broken antenna until dinner. When the elderly heard of the vodka, they hurried to get started. [7] Sun Tzu said: "The general who thoroughly understand the advantages that accompany variation of tactics know how to handle his troops". We fixed broken antenna until dinner time. After finishing a difficult job we enjoyed food and vodka. I had already known how to handle the old but gold team. It is important for commander to understand the need and set up the appropriate team who will carefully determine what type of expertise and capabilities are required. I can more easily cooperate team members when all of us understand our common purpose. If people opt to follow your leadership, they tend to follow that same conduct that you exhibit. The people namely watch the walk, they usually do not listen to the talk. In real life one's behaviour depends both on the situation one finds

himself in, as well as on standards of ethical behaviour. Majority of people do not use particular ethical frameworks to judge morality. Instead, they use personal and cultural values, religious beliefs, ideology, organizational mores, family upbringing practices, own behavioural experience and intuition. It is more difficult for business people to adhere to an ethical mind than it is for other professionals, because in business one does not need a licence to practice. It is relatively easy to wander off the correct path, as professional standards are more a vocational option than part of the territory. [8] Some of the characteristic Criteria for evaluation of ethical leadership are shown in the table below.

Criterion	Ethical Leadership	Unethical Leadership
Use of leader power and influence	Serves followers and the organization	Satisfies personal needs and career objectives
Handling diverse interests of multiple stakeholders	Attempts to balance and integrate them	Favours coalition partners who offer the most benefits
Development of a vision for the organization	Develops a vision based on follower input about their needs, values and ideas	Attempts to sell a personal vision as the only way for the organization to succeed
Integrity of leader behaviour	Acts consistent with espoused values	Does what is expedient to attain personal objectives
Risk taking in leader decisions and actions	Is willing to take personal risks and make necessary decisions	Avoids necessary decisions or actions that involve personal risk to the leader
Communication of relevant information operations	Makes a complete and timely disclosure of information about events, problems and actions	Uses deception and distortion to bias follower perceptions about problems and progress
Response to criticism and dissent by followers	Encourages critical evaluation to find better solutions	Discourages and suppresses criticism or dissent
Development of follower skills and selfconfidence	Uses coaching, mentoring and training to develop followers	Deemphasizes development to keep followers weak and dependent on the leader

Table 2: Criteria for evaluation of ethical leadership Source: (G. A. Yukl & Yukl, 2002, p. 422)

Leaders respect their co-workers and perceive them as people who share common purpose. Their individuality and freedom is accepted within the borders of ethical behaviors. I always believe that who can manage team properly he get solutions easily. Teamwork is an important factor that affects my personal leadership philosophy.

3.3 Communication

Communication style is not exclusively determined by personality. It is also affected by the choices we have learned to make by watching others, trial and error attempts, parental influence and a variety of life experiences. Communication style is a choice. For example, we choose words, how loudly we speak, timing of the conversation and the strategies we use to influence others. These choices affect whether or not people hear our point or are distracted by our behaviors. When we make the wrong communication choices, people think that first "Why is this person acting this way?" second "Why is this person treating me this way?" If our improper communication style becomes the listener's focus, the point we are trying to make is ignored. Unfortunately we are not always conscious of the choices we are making. We have all had conversations in which our emotions dictated our behaviors. Also, we are often focused on our intent behind the message and fail to monitor how we are delivering that message. Much of our communication behavior is difficult to self-monitor. Most of our communication choices have become habit. We are not thinking of how we are being perceived, but instead are communicating on impulse. Each person's idea of leadership is different. My personal philosophy of leadership is the ability to effect change through leading communication, taking initiative, and encouraging others. I can communicate effectively and comfortable one-by-one or with a large group. I truly believe that learning from the experiences of others is an incredibly valuable resource. Learning about others is also a valuable tool. It is important to understand how communication processes interact as well as what is its respective effectiveness in various settings. It is thus very important to be able to understand how communication styles interact and replace one another. To have good communication, the lines of communication need to be open and flow in all directions and must also be seen within the context of the observation to get a full appreciation of the true nature of the communication. When I was assigned to another Air Force base, there were not old team. The new team was quite young and inexperienced. It was my most important job to teach and manage them properly. [10] Putting employees first and taking care of those for whom the leader is responsible makes ethical sense. The best way to do this was to communicate. I spent all my time with them, so I was able to communicate with everyone and watch all their actions. I would take time to listen to them. If I do not listen to them, I would not know their problems. If I don't take care of my team and their families, they will not stay comfortable in the Air Force base. We have to trust each other unconditionally. We were trying to solve the problems together. All this made me a real leader in their eyes. As a result of which I could fully control them. Trust is a critical factor in making decisions about how to communicate with others. Think of someone whom you do not trust. Your communication with that person is limited, guarded and skeptical. Trust changes everything in relationships. This is the main reason why making effective communication behavioral choices are so important. When people are focusing on how poorly they are being treated in an interaction, they do not accept the point being made. – even if that point provides the solution to every problem in the World. If your words improve or maintain trust you most likely have chosen your approach carefully and will be communicating in a way that is clear, respectful and influential. The listener who determines the success of the interaction. The point of view of everyone in the conversation is considered. Paraphrase is used to clarify, empathize and keep the conversation focused on the real issue. Information is shared with appropriate relevance, detail and self-disclosure. "No" is said tactfully, yet assertively. Knowledge is shared freely without worrying about how ownership of that knowledge

protects one's public image or status. [11] Some of the characteristic Communication Skills for Success are shown in the table below.

Goals of Communication	Barriers to Communication	Ways to Improve Communication	Active Listening Skills	Increase Understanding
To inform – you are providing information for use in decision making	One person has no interest in the conversation.	Encourage feedback - Listen to what others have to say, good or bad	Concentrate on what is being said, not the delivery of the message.	**Be Specific** - Useful – "I think it is good because …" - Not useful – "That is good."
To persuade – to reinforce or change a belief about a topic	You are not able to participate in the discussion due to lack of knowledge on the subject.	Listen - Make an effort to listen to what the other person is saying	Be open to whatever is being said, without judgment - don't form an opinion, just listen.	**Focus on Behavior NOT the Person** - Useful – "I think this report needs to focus more on …" - Not useful – "You really have done a poor job."
To build relationships – some messages that you send may have the goal of building good will between you and the other person.	Jumping to conclusions without waiting for the whole message.	Reduce misunderstandings - Meanings are not in words, but in people – consider the message in relation to its source. Different words mean different things to people. Keep this in mind when communicating with others.	Restate what has been said helps the speaker know that you understand.	**Focus on the Timeliness of the Feedback** □ Only give feedback when the person is receptive to hearing it, or is seeking feedback.
	Fear of offending the other person by expressing your opinions.	Understanding is the KEY to communication. Understanding requires active listening.	Summarize the important messages so that you and the speaker recognize what was important during the conversation.	**Share Information / Experience** - Share what, not only why something could have been done differently.

	You not feel comfortable sharing your feelings with the other person.		Avoiding distractions that pull your attention away from the speaker.	**Do Not Overload** Too much information, especially negative, can be overwhelming
	Messages do not come across to the listener in the way you intended.		Make sure you understand what the speaker means: - I think what you said was …, -What I hear you saying is …, -What did you mean when you said/talked about …, - Are you saying …	**Check that the Person Does Understand** - Ask…"What did you understand from what was said?"
	Not listening to the other person by allowing thoughts to wander, listening only to what you have to, filtering out what is not important to you, planning a response before the other person has finished speaking.			**Remember, Feedback is Given to Help, not Hurt** - Balance positive to negative feedback by giving 2 positive comments for 1 negative comment
	Spending more time arguing or debating along with put-downs and sarcasm.			**Open and Closed Questions** - In order to gain more information, ask questions that require more

				than a one word answer. - A closed question allows a single word answer, for example YES, NO or OK - An open question keeps the communication going.

Table 2: Communication Skills for Success Source:
http://new.slpl.org/slpl/interests/article240078069.asp

4. Conclusion

After going through the details of the subject, I base my analysis on the arguments that the unethical leadership can bring good results in short terms but that cannot be a successful model in the longer term. Being an ethical leader is a more challenging task but this in my opinion is the most suitable way for the success of any organisation. I think that three cardinals are a must for ethical leaders, which are Self-confidence and courage, Teamwork and Communication.

Being ethical leader is not as easy as other job. "Nobody can predict with certainty the various ethical dilemmas that may occur during the day-to-day activities of an organization and how one should react to them. Each person will have his/her own set of rules and values, which may differ from one context to another, and no internal regulation will be able to substitute for solid individual ethical principles regarding the responsibility of one's own actions"[10]. There are a lot of challenges but I always believe that if there are a lot of challenges there are a lot of solutions too. If we understand that how to properly and ethically communicate with our subordinates we can understand their problems easily. Communication starts with listening. Ethical leader has to be good listener. If we know how to use our team member's capabilities properly we can find way to success easily. All team members have to want to work same things for the team. Unity is powerful.

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