

LEADERSHIP APPROACHES FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ITS PARTICULARITIES IN THE MILITARY ORGANIZATION

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Abstract: *The activity of a manager within an organization is influenced by their general and specialized knowledge as well as the skills necessary for organizing, leading, and guiding subordinates. The most important organizational resource is the human being. The consequences of wrong decisions made by military managers in peacetime cannot be as grave as those made during wartime. In war, we no longer speak of the quality of life of the personnel but particularly of their lives. Unlike civilian leaders, military leaders have the prerogatives to ask their subordinates to risk their lives if the situation demands it for the mission's accomplishment. A manager must have the ability to work with people. They must also be aware of the problems that people face within the organization, get involved in solving these issues, empathize with them, and know what motivates them the most to encourage them to surpass themselves in the actions undertaken. When you take care of your soldiers, ensuring they are well dressed, equipped, fed, and cared for, you demonstrate good administrative skills. It is hard to imagine a good leader being a poorly prepared administrator or manager, even if this practice involves delegating competencies to subordinates. In this context, the concept of leader-manager is utilized.*

Keywords: Leadership, Management, Organization, Army, Commander

1. Introduction

The presence of leaders within organizations makes it possible for them to function as communities rather than hierarchies, offering their members more autonomy, promotion opportunities, and motivating rewards. Thus, leaders will become the beneficiaries of the voluntary cooperation of people in achieving their and the organization's goals. It is very difficult as a leader to pursue only the objectives at work by fully mobilizing people without considering that your success and even the success of the organization you belong to depends on how you have learned to keep people close, respect them, enthuse them, and get them to follow you in implementing your vision.

The manager's work gradually transforms into leadership work as dependence on other members who make up the organization increases, and the leader's prerogative lies in the complex network of conditioned relationships. The leader's contribution to leadership is presented by their vision, motivations, personality, moral concepts, and legitimacy within the organization. All these variables attributed to the leader decisively influence people's attitudes and behaviour at work.

To perfect their qualities as a military manager, each commander must capitalize on their own experience, approach the leadership of people and the military organization creatively and constructively. People, regardless of their hierarchical level

within the military organization, must be treated with respect and helped to eliminate the difficulties they encounter.

A young military manager must try to adapt to the new challenges of a changing environment, as has become the case in the military organization, and remove some outdated mentalities rooted in tradition that are no longer compatible with the way of acting in a modern professional army with missions that go beyond the country's borders.

2. Chapter I: The Specificity of Leadership within the Military Organization

"Wars are conceived, prepared, triggered, directed, and concluded by leaders according to the interests they represent and promote".

It is important to know why the organization operates in a certain field. In this sense, Cromwell's words are relevant: "Give me a simple captain with a red coat (referring to the colour of the English army uniform) who knows what he is fighting for and loves what he knows".

The ability to realistically evaluate the problems faced by the military organization as well as the battlefield is fundamental for ensuring success in military leadership. A consistent set of competencies of the military leader provides a formidable foundation for practicing effective and successful leadership.

"Commanders must seek success in this complex and seemingly chaotic operational-actional framework where actions do not always lead to the desired effects with certainty. This factor affects both the nature of command and the activities of subordinates. Complexity can be controlled through the simplicity of the plan, which should focus on the essentials". Having the same information as others, leaders are in a position to identify the essence of things. Increasing emphasis is placed on leadership, as evidenced by the multitude of books on the subject that have invaded the market. Leadership is a topic

that has managed to capture the attention of people from various fields of activity: business, politics, culture, etc.

"Recently, the word LEADERSHIP is in vogue. It has caused a real invasion in the specialized courses of the Force Academies and in the bibliographies of the National Defense University's treatises on the military domain. This is natural considering the semantic area it covers but also the Romanian Army's membership in NATO".

The army is not a profession for everyone. A telling example is provided by John C. Maxwell: "One of my favourite stories illustrating the Law of Influence centres on Abraham Lincoln. In 1832, many years before he became president, young Lincoln gathered a group of men to fight in the Black Hawk War. At that time, the person who managed to gather volunteers for a war automatically became their commander. Thus, Lincoln acquired the rank of captain."

Like politicians who manage through various means and tricks (more or less realizable promises, fostering hope for betterment, attractive visions, etc.) combined with a state of uncertainty, wandering, despair, dissatisfaction, or the burning desire to evolve characterizing people at the time, to easily exercise their influence in determining them to transform them into dignitaries through voting. Similarly, Lincoln managed to influence the people he came into contact with to follow him into battle, thereby obtaining the rank of captain according to the existing rules at the time.

"Let's take the military world simply: in peacetime, an army can survive usually with efficient administration and management at all hierarchical levels coupled with effective leadership concentrated at the highest level. In contrast, in wartime, an army needs competent leadership at all levels. No one has yet discovered how people should be commanded in battle; they need to be led".

Given the serious consequences that a military leader's order can have on

subordinates, especially in wartime, there is a greater need for awareness among military and civilian teachers and military instructors of the immense responsibility they have in shaping future military leaders. Equally, more emphasis should be placed on the professional training of military students and all trainees, regardless of their branch, rank, or function, as the lack of specialized knowledge will be felt in the decreased influence of the military leader over subordinates, and in a combat situation, it can lead to insubordination, considering that they can lose their lives due to his incompetence.

“When acting within alliances, the military leader must understand the deep motivations of the political, military, and security context, as well as the visible and invisible motivations of the armed actions in which the country they represent is involved, as well as the organization or alliance of which the state is a part”.

When leadership talent is not also developed through specialized knowledge in the field in which you operate, you end up being demoted in terms of influence, losing the benefits of the initially won position, or stagnating without being offered the opportunity for promotion, being labelled by others as stagnant, incompetent, or uninterested.

All activities conducted within the military organization are the product of commands that follow the hierarchical line.

“The concept of hierarchical commands or chain of commands is a military invention. It links the supreme commander to the corporal. The principle of respecting the hierarchical line means that a colonel does not tell a soldier what to do but tells the major, who tells the platoon commander, who informs the non-commissioned officers who communicate to the soldier”.

The stability of the bureaucratic system within the military organization is given by clearly stipulated rules, the way people interact within a strict hierarchy, the objectives, and structures imposed at the organizational level. The order that

characterizes the military system, associated in the popular Romanian language, more precisely in Transylvanian, with the term “ordinance”, refers to civilization, education, industriousness, and those habits of people who can coexist by sharing the same system of values. From this bureaucratic system, we also highlight an important aspect characterizing the military organization – the principle of unity of command.

“The principle of unity of command is considered one of the most important principles both in the leadership and functioning of the army in peacetime and in the command of troops in battle”.

Military leadership at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels is carried out by commanders and the specific staffs of each organizational structure in the army. As a commander, the military leader utilizes all the resources available according to the competencies and responsibilities of the position to achieve organizational objectives.

3. Chapter II: Military Leadership – Team Leadership

Regardless of the position held by the military leader within the organization, to achieve performance, they must determine the subordinates to work as a cohesive team and create a pleasant work environment that sparks enthusiasm and the desire to come to work willingly.

Talking about the science of leadership, Maxwell said: *“The one who is a leader but no one follows is just taking a walk”.*

Leadership cannot take place in isolation. There is no leader without people to follow them. You are a leader only when you have at least one follower.

Within organizations, people may have conflicting opinions regarding the purpose, leadership style exercised, and methods of work used at the organizational level. Due to numerous divergences between organization members, it is necessary to choose a leader who homogenizes people’s wishes, resolves organizational problems at

the team level, and establishes common methods of action.

Military leadership will always be team leadership. For example, General Ghiță BÂRSAN, as the rector of the “Nicolae Bălcescu” Land Forces Academy of Sibiu, highlighted the importance of the team’s contribution to achieving objectives. A military leader who evolves up the hierarchical ladder, even reaching the top of an institution, by promoting team spirit at the organizational level, contributes to creating a beneficial work climate for institutional development and encourages the enthusiastic involvement of all members in fulfilling their tasks, regardless of the positions they hold.

Even though leadership generally involves building a team, when discussing military leadership, we particularly refer to teamwork. Regardless of the role of each soldier within the organization, the mission must sometimes be accomplished with the ultimate sacrifice of those who constitute it. It is very true that a country’s history is marked by the achievements of strong, visionary, courageous leaders who have taken considerable risks. Equally true is that the great aspirations of a nation have been realized by leaders at the cost of personal lives, often reaching the stage of sacrifice, and with the efforts of their comrades who have passed into eternity.

John C. Maxwell succinctly captured in one sentence the teamwork specific to exercising military leadership: *“I have seen with my own eyes the war memorial in Washington D.C. of the United States Marine Corps that commemorates the raising of the flag on the Iwo Jima monument”*.

What would it mean for a military pilot on a *surveillance* or *patrol mission* if those on the ground lacked competence or team spirit, influencing, for example, the way the pilot lands? For a military pilot to successfully complete a mission, it requires the involvement, determination, competence, and team spirit of those serving on the ground.

We can even talk about the team’s moral responsibility.

“An aircraft carrier is a place where you can easily observe how all pieces of a military puzzle fit together to support each other”.

On the responsibility of the team and the essential role of each member in keeping a plane in flight, pilot Charlie Plumb, who carried out missions in the Vietnam War, illustrates this: *“No one understands this better than a combat pilot. Let’s take the example of Charlie Plumb, who retired as a captain of the U.S. Navy. A graduate of the Annapolis University, Plumb fought in Vietnam in the mid-1960s, completing 75 missions aboard the USS Kitty Hawk aircraft carrier”*.

“Good supreme commanders have always been managers and leaders”.

It is beneficial for any organization for the manager to also be a leader, just as the formal leader should also be the informal leader. There is also the possibility that the formal and informal leader form a formidable team based on the same value system, with cohesion representing a valuable benchmark for other members of the organization.

“For a military ship to function optimally, it must be commanded, supplied, and maintained. It has various defense systems that must be kept in perfect working order. Routine maintenance of a ship never ends, and there are dozens of activities that must be carried out by the onboard personnel”.

Given that these activities must be managed effectively, following established procedures, daily, and periodic schedules, it is clear that people need to take care of them so that the ship can fulfill the mission for which it was designed. In this context, the role of leaders is practically nonexistent. Leaders guide the people who manage all these activities.

“Leadership means more than management. Leadership means:

*people before projects;
more development than maintenance;
more art than science;*

more intuition than calculations;
 more vision than procedure;
 more risk than caution;
 more action than reaction;
 more relationships than rules;
 who you are more than what you do.

If you want to influence others more, then you need to learn to lead them”.

Starting from the premise that leaders rely on intangible things, precisely by exceeding their limits, aspiring to everything great and worthy of their vision, they are continuously concerned with finding new challenges that allow them personal and professional development in a manner with beneficial consequences for the

organization they belong to and the people they lead.

“Remember that inventories can be managed, but people must be motivated”.

It is well known that in conditions of uncertainty or organizational change, war, crisis, etc., when the future and lives of people as well as the existence of the organization (military institution) are jeopardized, the necessity of brave, authoritative, decisive, rational, energetic leaders who find optimal solutions in a short time to overcome obstacles is both recommended and opportune.

“A good leader is always focused... Controlling the direction is better than letting the direction control you”.

Table 1 Leader - Skills Expert and Enabler

Leader - Skills Expert	Leader - Enabler
Purpose	Purpose
To share knowledge and skills with others, forming them as leaders;	To facilitate self-knowledge and intuitive revelation as foundations of change;
To examine strengths and knowledge manifested in the organization;	To strengthen self-confidence, self-assurance, and interpersonal competence of the manager;
To advise managers in managing activities more efficiently within the organization.	To correlate individual authenticity with practical achievement of organizational objectives.
Requirements: 1. Leadership and specialized competence combined with experience in the field; 2. Organizational competence and availability to improve the functional role of the manager 3. Encouraging and motivating interpersonal style.	Requirements: 1. Psychological competence, organizational competence, and relationship development competence; 2. The ability to translate intuitive visions into practical changes.
Source: Adapted from Graham Lee, <i>“COACHING FOR LEADERS: From Personal Development to Organizational Performance”</i> , Codecs Publishing House, Bucharest 2007, p. 278	

4. Conclusions

People’s mentality still boils down to preconceived ideas like “the army is beautiful just to look at”. The military system, considered hermetic, is viewed by some of the civilian population as being very rigid and should be avoided. But when individuals choose a military career, they

get infected with a lifestyle sprinkled with habits and military spirit that endures throughout life, whether they are active, in reserve, or retired. They discover, like Colin Powell, a family environment that honours them, being proud of their belonging to such a value system.

The issue of perfecting leadership will remain within the researchers' concerns to identify those necessary or ideal leadership models for organizational efficiency. In the case of the military leader, whose values promoted within the military organization define both their identity and personal life, everything depends on the organization and how the subordinates perform their activities, the beliefs, norms, and character of the commander.

Management generates predictability and order through: nominating action directions, objectives to be achieved, and necessary deadlines and resources; organizing work; managing problems and recording results.

Leadership generates organizational change through: cultivating the vision of achieving necessary change; explaining the vision; sharing the vision with the organization's members and motivating them to implement it.

At the organizational level, it has been concluded that both categories of leaders are needed since the leader's ideas are welcome but combined with the manager's sense of reality. The leader is seen as a superhuman being loved and appreciated by people, while the manager is seen as a cold, distant person, confined to the specific rules of bureaucracy, highly criticized by subordinates.

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