

**The Lecture Contains:**

- ☰ Conceptualizing leadership
- ☰ Key traits of leaders
- ☰ Leadership styles
- ☰ Transformational leadership
- ☰ Transformational leaders' approach towards the group and its goals

◀ Previous   Next ▶

### Conceptualizing leadership

- Leadership is the process that helps in gaining an increased level of efforts of the group members towards achieving the group goals through the influence a leader (as a member of the group) is able to exert on the group members' motivation to perform.
- We will take up the following theories of leadership in detail :
  - The great person theory or the trait theory (along with leadership styles), and
  - The Transformational leadership

◀ Previous   Next ▶

### Key traits of leaders

- Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991) noted the following traits of a leader :
  - **Drive** : A leader exhibits the desire for achievement. He/she is ambitious, highly energetic, tenacious and an initiative-taker.
  - **Honesty and integrity** : A leader is trustworthy and reliable.
  - **Leadership motivation** : influencing others to reach the group goals.
  - **Self-confidence** : Having realistic measure of one's abilities and trust on the same.

### Key traits of leaders (continued...)

- **Cognitive ability** : Having high ability to process and integrate information.
- **Creativity** : Can think of new or innovative ways to handle a problem effectively.
- **Flexibility** : Having the capacity to adapt to the new situations and demands of group members.
- **Expertise** : Having a comprehensive understanding of group functioning and technical expertise required to achieve the group goals.

## Leadership styles

- Social psychologists have pointed out different styles of leadership. A style of leadership is actually a 'personal' style that a leader employs in influencing the group members. These are the following :
  - **Autocratic-democratic** : If the leader takes his decisions on his own without consulting the group members, this style is known as an autocratic. However, he/she takes into account the opinions of the group members, it is known as a democratic style of leadership (Lewin et al. 1939).
  - **Directive-permissive** : The leadership styles concerning directive-permissive dimensions are related to whether a leader 'directs' the members to carry out an assigned task in certain ways or he/she leaves it up to the respective member to decide about that.

### **Leadership styles (continued...)**

– Task orientation and person orientation : The task- or person-orientation is about whether a leader accentuates the accomplishment of tasks related to group goals or the maintenance of a friendly and harmonious relationship with the group members.

- Neither of the styles are correct or incorrect. It not only depends upon the nature of group, group-goals but also the specific situation encountered by the leader to adopt a certain kind of style to address the group-related question being faced by him/her.

◀ Previous   Next ▶

### Transformational leadership

- Transformational or charismatic leadership is a process through which a leader influences the group member by utilizing a special type of relationship between him/herself and the followers. The significant characteristics of this special relationship are :
  - The members experience a high degree of devotion, loyalty and reverence towards the leader
  - They are also enthusiastic about the leader and his/her ideas
  - They follow the leader to an extent that they are willing to sacrifice their own desires and interests to work towards achieving larger group goals
  - They engage in achieving the group goals with a high degree of performance

 **Previous**   **Next** 

**Transformational leaders' approach towards the group and its goals**

- Following are some of the ways the transformational leaders work towards group goals through a meaningful relationship with the group :
  - **Having a vision** : Rather than just having a set of goals for their groups or masses, the transformational leaders express their broad vision about 'what their group should become'. For example, we take a close look at Mahatma Gandhi, his goals were simply not the achievement of freedom from foreign rule but how to transform one's character to build a progressive society.
  - **Route for attaining vision** : They also clearly chart out for the followers the ways the vision could be made a reality. For Mahatma Gandhi, for example, building a progressive society began with making efforts towards realizing one's true self and its growth situated in the welfare of fellow human beings.
  - **Framing** : framing, here, means the influence of their vision on the followers to an extent that each and every activity of the followers (in the direction of attaining that vision) becomes meaningful.
  - **Confidence in and concern for the followers** : They have a deep faith in their followers and feel concerned the followers.
  - **Masters of impression management** : They have also been observed as the very apt at managing their impression before others; whether it is their appearance or their communication, each speak for the goals or vision they stand for.
- One caution must be maintained about the transformational leaders that their vision may not always be prosocial in nature. In the history of mankind, there have also been such leaders who didn't prove to be good society at large.