

Chapter 6

Effective Leadership for Multicultural Teams

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Leaders are not commanders and controllers, bosses and big shots. Instead they are servers and supporters, partners and providers.

—Jones et al. (1996)

Introduction

The literature on effective multicultural teams identifies leadership as an important factor in effectiveness. In some instances it has pointed out that there is a need for cohesion and a shared vision, while in others it has shown a need for a collaborative environment and expert coaching. This literature on the role of leadership does not agree on a coherent and systematic approach as to how multicultural teams can be effectively led. Although there is no one generic formula for the effective leadership of multicultural teams, there is a need to systematically approach leadership of multicultural teams in order to create a framework that takes into account the cultural dimensions as well as individual characteristics and behavior.

This chapter offers some insights on how multicultural teams can be effectively led that take account of their many features that present challenges for members and leadership alike. It focuses on a leadership approach that is not about controlling teams but about providing an atmosphere where members can flourish and be creative. This approach, referred to as shared leadership, aims at engaging all team members as full participants who are fully empowered in a manner that recognizes their worth and importance as equal members of the team. Shared leadership stresses interdependence and connectedness, where all members work in an influence relationship that is multidirectional between leaders and followers.

In order to build a platform for this shared leadership approach and to provide a context for how shared leadership might work in multicultural teams, the chapter first provides a definition of leadership that lays out the philosophical underpinnings for this approach. The chapter then discusses critical aspects of team leadership in general, and of multicultural teams in particular, that lay the foundation for the approach to be

effective. Finally, special attention is given to the shared leadership approach, including a description of the conditions that are necessary before the approach can be successful and the steps that need to be followed in implementing it.

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter you should be able to:

- Discuss how leadership can function as a multidirectional relationship with leadership roles being shared
- Distinguish coercive from noncoercive uses of power and influence tactics, and recognize the use of noncoercive influence tactics in teams
- Determine the different power styles that can be used in team situations
- Describe the appropriate uses of the leadership, management, and facilitation roles in the leadership of multicultural teams
- Identify effective leadership behavior for dealing with culture and gender in multicultural teams
- Recognize how elements of earlier leadership approaches might be useful in the leadership of multicultural teams
- Discuss the conditions that promote shared leadership in multicultural teams
- Describe a process for sharing leadership in multicultural teams

Defining Leadership

Many theorists in the field agree that the definitions of leadership are unclear and inconsistent, and that providing a unified and all-embracing definition is very challenging (Northouse 2004; Avery 2004). It is even more difficult when we think of defining leadership in the context of a multicultural team. Early definitions of leadership focused on notions of leadership as a single-handed phenomenon, with leaders having rare traits and being able to manage from the top in a manner that commanded and/or controlled others (Stogdill 1948, 1974). More recent definitions view leadership as a distributed phenomenon involving followers in an influence process (Antonakis et al. 2004; Lakey et al. 1995; Rost 1993). This chapter draws upon these more recent definitions as being most appropriate for multicultural teams.

Leadership as an Influence Process: Defining leadership as a process suggests that a leader affects and is affected by followers, and recognizes that leadership is not a linear unidirectional phenomenon but a series of interactive occurrences, making leadership multidirectional and available to everyone in the team (Northouse 2004; Rost 1993). The process can be seen as an influence relationship, which is concerned with how leaders affect followers and vice versa using noncoercive social influence tactics.

Leadership as Shared and Distributed: Definitions of leadership that focus on shared influence processes are especially important for leadership in teams. In Chapter 1, Tirmizi identifies interdependence and shared leadership roles as two of the elements that distinguish teams from groups. Leadership as an influence process emphasizes this interdependence and encourages sharing of leadership roles. Shared leadership, which is also referred to as participatory leadership, involves all members in decision making and leadership functions are distributed. Distributed leadership works through relationships, with team members assuming leadership in different circumstances depending on their expertise and with the focus on participation by all members (Bennett et al. 2003).

Leadership as Fostering Participation and Connectedness: Wheatley (2006) reminds us that all life depends on participation with its environment in the process of development, and that this applies to life within organizations and teams as well. As Wheatley points out, the participation process empowers individuals and recognizes the worth and importance of each individual within any given system. Nothing exists independent of its relationships, and encouraging full participation awakens the full potential of the interactions we create in working together. In terms of work teams, when team members believe they are full participants in a process, the work of the team can come alive as a personal reality, which can lead to commitment, and ownership of the work. For this to happen, it is critical that this interaction is real and that participation focuses on interconnectedness and the dynamic processes that value all team members as equals.

Leadership as a Multi-directional Influence Relationship: A definition of leadership that stresses a multidirectional influence relationship, providing a sharing of leadership functions, can create the type of team climate that produces effective multicultural teams. As noted by Tirmizi in Chapter 1 in his report of the study done by Thomas et al. (2000), allowing team members to be influential in charting the team's path is a significant element in moving teams towards success. This study indicated the importance of participation by team members in achieving team effectiveness.

In order to better understand how leadership can be shared in teams in a noncoercive manner, the following section examines power and influence and the different ways they can be used on teams.

Power and Influence in Multicultural Teams

Sources of Power

Within the context of teams, leaders are viewed as the ones exerting power, with power being defined as the capacity to influence beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors (Yukl 1998). *Personal* or *soft power* comes through personal characteristics and

includes expert, referent, and information power. *Positional* or *harsh power* is based on formal position and includes legitimate, reward, or coercive power (see Table 6.1). *Authority* is power that is based on position, and includes legitimate or coercive power (Sennett 1993).

Leaders usually use personal and positional power in varying amounts, but over-reliance on either can lead to a coercive atmosphere. *Coercion* involves the use of force to influence followers and often results in manipulation of penalties and rewards, resulting in the use of threats, punishment, and negative rewards (Levi 2001; Northouse 2004). Using coercion runs counter to the practice of shared leadership in teams, which works best with the use of soft sources of power rather than positional power. Decision making is best when members with the most relevant information on an issue dominate the conversation rather than members who rely on positional power or authority.

Creating a balance between the amounts of personal and positional power can be a challenge in a multicultural team where members have different orientations towards sources of power. In a study of 53 nations, it was found that leaders from some Asian, African, Latin American, and Caribbean countries relied more heavily on vertical or hierarchical sources of guidance for their leadership decisions than those from many Northern European countries (Smith 2003). This means that in multicultural teams there may be members who rely more on vertical or positional sources of power because of their cultural orientation.

It is desirable for leaders to have only moderate amounts of positional power. Although there can be occasions when positional power may be necessary and appropriate, too much dependence on it can restrict use of relationships as a means of influence and can result in exploitation and domination of followers. Personal power is less open to misuse since it erodes quickly if leaders act contrary to interests of followers, but it is also subject to abuse when a leader with charismatic appeal attempts to use this power for personal benefit. Studies of the uses of power at different levels of authority indicate that interactions between leaders and followers are most effective when there is a high degree of multidirectional or reciprocal influence, which may be the best way to restrict abuse of power (Bachman et al. 1966; Smith and Tannenbaum 1963).

Table 6.1 Types of power (Adapted from French and Raven 2004)

Personal or soft power

Sources:

- Expert Power based on one's credibility or perceived expertise in an area
- Referent Power based on another's liking and admiration
- Information Power based on knowledge or information one has about a topic

Positional or Harsh Power

Sources:

- Legitimate Power based on recognition and acceptance of a person's authority
 - Reward Power based on the ability to reward behavior that one wants to occur
 - Coercive Power based on the ability to threaten or punish undesirable behavior
-

Case Study: Sources of Power in a Multicultural Team

As you read the case study below, consider the following questions:

- *What are the sources of power being used by Kevin and Melanie?*
- *What mechanisms are being used to restrict the use of coercive power?*
- *Identify examples of reciprocal influences used in this case.*
- *What other recommendations would you give to this team to restrict abuse of power by Kevin?*

Kevin, an Indonesian male, was put in charge of a global team of a Danish male, a Columbian male, a Ugandan male, a Japanese male, and a Thai female (Melanie). The water resource management NGO for which they worked was recruited to help develop a sustainable water-safety management system for the Northern Indonesian region. The team's task was to work together to determine the best location to begin the project. Kevin told everyone to consult him before any action was taken because he understood the Indonesian people better than anyone else in the team, and he stated that he felt that the central Java island was where they should begin. He also announced that he had spent significant time with the chief regional manager, which gave him a clear understanding of what everyone needed to do for the success of the project. He assigned members to complete tasks according to their reported skills and gave them economic reports on Indonesia to study. Each person's progress would be reported to the regional manager and those making good progress were sure to join him on the next project. He stated that the criteria for joining him included demonstrating the ability to work in harmony with each other and completing all of their individual tasks. Kevin also asked members for feedback on his leadership, which he said could be given to his face or anonymously in writing.

Melanie immediately responded by identifying some of the errors in the regional resource management reports, which wrongly identified safe zone areas that had recently been declared as unstable tectonic regions. Kevin immediately recognized Melanie's knowledge of local geography and her obvious background experience in water resource management. Kevin pointed that Melanie was correct and he announced that he would be having some deeper discussions with Melanie before he made any final decisions. Melanie told Kevin that there were team members with much more knowledge about Indonesia than he had given them credit for and that he should let members discuss their strengths and areas of expertise, which she stated might be different from what was recorded on their resume. Kevin listened to Melanie carefully and acknowledged that he rushed things and that he should have given some time for members to discuss their areas of expertise and experiences in more depth, and he requested Melanie to lead the discussion on this.

At the end of the meeting, Kevin requested to have a private meeting with Melanie, where he told her that he felt as though she was challenging his

authority and although she had some very good knowledge and experience, he would prefer if she would behave like an Asian woman and speak to him privately about her views. Melanie apologized to Kevin for any behavior that seemed offensive but reaffirmed the importance of letting team members have a say in the tasks that they wanted to work on since she felt that it could lead to greater success of the team. Melanie gained the admiration of the team (who perceived her as their informal leader) for the remainder of the project. Kevin reaffirmed what he said at the beginning about his expectations and the criteria for working on subsequent projects, and informed Melanie he would prefer that she write some of her thoughts and views on a piece of paper and pass it to him before she spoke openly about any issue that would challenge his credibility.

Influence Tactics

Central to this chapter is not only who exercises leadership within multicultural teams but also how this influence comes about. Power is about influencing other people, but it can be accomplished in a number of different ways. The manner in which power is enacted involves influencing behavior that may be based on positional or personal power, but team members can abuse either of these sources depending on the way they are used.

Influence tactics are means through which individuals attempt to influence others. These influence tactics could be grouped into direct, indirect, cooperative, competitive, emotionally based, and hierarchical tactics, as is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2 Influence tactics (Adapted from Levi 2001; Yukl 2003)

Direct tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal appeals: appeal to members' sense of loyalty or friendship • Gentle pressure tactics: use of advocacy and constant reminders
Indirect tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ingratiation: use of flattery or friendly behavior to get a person to think favorably of you • Coalition tactics: seeking the aid and support of those with influential power to increase power of request
Cooperative tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rational persuasion: use of logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade team members • Consultation: seeking members' participation in decision making
Competitive tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harsh pressure tactics: use of demands, threats, or persistent reminders • Ingratiation: use of flattery or friendly behavior to get a person to think favorably of you
Emotionally based tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspirational appeals: attempting to arouse enthusiasm by appealing to members' ideals • Personal appeals: appealing to members' sense of loyalty or friendship
Hierarchical tactics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange tactics: offering to exchange favors later for cooperation now • Legitimizing tactics: claiming that one has the authority to get obedience.

Direct tactics are explicit methods of influence, including the use of gentle pressure tactics and personal appeals, while *indirect tactics* use covert measures to manipulate team members.

Cooperative tactics involve rational arguments or consulting with team members, while *competitive tactics* influence members through pressure tactics. *Emotionally based tactics* rely on emotional appeals and include inspirational and personal appeals. *Hierarchical tactics* rely on positions of authority or resources associated with their positions, and include making offers in exchange for compliance by followers.

Team leaders often use pressure and legitimizing tactics on followers, while team members often use rational argument, personal appeals, and ingratiation to influence leaders (Levi 2001). However, research indicates that manipulative forms of influence are ineffective. In a study of influence mechanisms used by leaders in 12 countries, it was found that pressure tactics that involved using threats, demands, or persistent reminders to convince followers to complete work were the least effective methods for getting followers to complete work assignments (Kennedy et al. 2003). In this study, rational persuasion, consultation, and personal appeals were the most effective influence methods for leaders. These methods of influencing are noncoercive and can encourage participation among team members. Emotionally based tactics also have the potential to equalize and encourage participation among members, though there need to be mechanisms to ensure that leadership does not abuse their power. One such mechanism can be the use of multidirectional or reciprocal influence, where team members use noncoercive tactics to influence leaders and restrict their use of coercive influence tactics.

Differences in cultural orientations to power can affect team members' use of, and response to, influence tactics. Members from high power distance cultures may prefer leaders to use direct and hierarchical tactics, while members from low power distance cultures might prefer leaders to use indirect tactics (see Chapter 2). Individual characteristics based on personality and intelligences may also affect preferences for certain influence tactics. For example, members with logical/mathematical intelligences might tend to use rational persuasion, while members with intrapersonal intelligence might prefer to use inspirational tactics.

Power Styles in Teams

Team members express power through their behaviors, which can be categorized as passive, aggressive, or assertive, with emotional tones helping to define different power styles (see Table 6.3). The *passive* or *nonassertive power style* is polite, using pleasant emotional tones, with the aim of avoiding problems by not taking definite stands, and being unclear about positions. This style can send mixed messages, with receivers being uncertain about the beliefs and feelings of the passive communicator. This style is helpful in high conflict situations and is often used by members from a diffuse culture orientation (see Trompenaars's Value Framework in Chapter 2).

Table 6.3 Power styles (Levi 2001)

	Styles	Impact	Use
Non-assertive/passive	Polite and deferential	Resentment and confusion	Dangerous situations
Aggressive focused on winning	Forceful and withdrawn	Satisfaction and unequal status	Emergencies
Assertive confident problem solving	Clear and trust	Satisfaction equal status	Most situations

The *assertive power style* uses clear communication with little emotion attached and focuses on concern for others and self. This power style uses open communication, respect and relies on high trust in teammates to solve problems and conflicts. It is appropriate in situations where there is emphasis on equality (Lumsden and Lumsden 1997), but is not always successful, especially when there are team members from high context cultures as described by Griffin (see Chapter 7). Members from neutral cultures may perceive emotional expressions of members from affective cultures as aggressive or passive-aggressive (See Chapter 2).

The *aggressive power style* is forceful and critical, using negative emotions to appear powerful while being unwilling to listen to others. This power style may be appropriate in emergency situations where a forceful approach is needed, but is inappropriate for designated team leaders to use in most situations, especially in situations of unequal power. A combination of the passive and assertive styles may be more appropriate for use by leadership in team settings.

The use of these different power styles can present a challenge for the functioning of a team early in its development, as evidenced in the example below. The main task of leadership is to try to equalize power.

Case Study: Power Styles in a Multicultural Team in Graduate School

As you read the case study below, consider the following questions:

- *What are some examples of the power styles used, naming the persons using them?*
- *What power styles were effective?*
- *What were the influence tactics that were used by team members?*

Mary, Suki, Cheda, Ally and Josh are members of an international multicultural team recently formed in a graduate school class to create a team charter¹

¹ Team Charter is a tool to gain clarity around the direction and purpose of the team. The purpose of the team charter is to serve as agreement between members around what the team is supposed to do and how they will move forward.

and get to know each other. Mary is an American female who has been working in the nonprofit field in various countries as a manager for many years. Suki is an Asian female, recently graduated, with one year of work experience as a Peace Corp volunteer. Cheda, also an Asian female, has worked in the corporate world for many years as a manager. Ally, a middle-aged African male, has worked as a project field officer for many years in different regions of the world. Josh, who is a much older western European male, grew up in several non-Western countries but now resides in Latin America and works as a farmer on a ranch. He has good relationships with Suki, Cheda, and Ally, having lived in all of their native countries and having spent time with them during the previous week of orientation.

Mary immediately identified what she thought should be the name of the group, stating with much enthusiasm and passion that she had spent much time in her job working on strategic plans and felt that the name of the group was a critical part in shaping its purpose. She provided information from several of her experiences and research, which supported her position. However, Josh verbally expressed his disagreement with Mary, stating that it was best to begin by getting to know each other better. He proceeded by stating all of the positive things he had observed about each team member, including Mary. His rationale was that this would give members a chance to know each other's strengths, and he also reassured Mary that her idea could then be pursued.

Cheda commended Mary for her knowledge and urged the team to listen to her because of her experiences, but also stated that the team should listen to Josh. Mary rebutted by stating how many years experience she had as a manager with organizations like the United Nations and Habitat for Humanity. Ally, after being very quiet, summed up what she perceived to be happening and said she felt they should approach the professor about the situation. She thought they needed to get one leader first so that they could have someone to follow on these issues. She asked Suki, who had not spoken, how she felt about the situation. Suki said that she did not have an opinion, and suggested that the team vote on the course of action.

Differentiating Leadership from Management and Facilitation

Leadership, management, and facilitation are often confused. They are different in function, though the roles may interchange. *Facilitation* is a process in which an individual either from within or outside the team helps a team improve how it works together (Weaver and Farrell 1999). The focus of facilitation is with helping team members do their own work, on the other hand, *leadership* focuses on setting direction for the team, and *management* focuses on directing and controlling the team. Leadership aims at producing constructive change and movement, while management seeks to help teams function more efficiently through coordination

Table 6.4 Comparing the roles of leader, manager, and facilitator (Weaver and Farrell 1999)

Leader	Manager	Facilitator
Takes long-term view	Takes short-term view	Helps people find a view and articulate it
Concentrates on what and why	Concentrates on how	Helps people concentrate and be clear in the here and now
Thinks in terms of innovation, development, and the future	Thinks in terms of administration, maintenance, and the present	Helps people think and communicate their thoughts
Sets the vision: the tone and direction	Sets the plan: the pace	Helps make meaning of tone and direction
Hopes others will respond and follow	Hopes others will complete their tasks	Hopes others will engage in the process
Appeals to hopes and dreams	Monitors boundaries; sets limits	Draws out meaning of hopes and dreams; pushes boundaries
Expects others to help realize a vision	Expects others to fulfill their mission or purpose	Helps others articulate a shared vision and common mission
Inspires innovation	Inspires stability, focuses on controlling and problem solving	Helps people respond to new and old things

and planning (Bennis and Nanus 1985; Kotter 1990). Leadership focuses on why and management on how (see Table 6.4).

Within a team, leadership may employ the use of any of these roles, with one person carrying out all of these functions, or leadership may use only one or two of these roles. Deciding which role to use depends on the situation, with the leader role being used if the main aim is to help members see the bigger picture and set direction. If the task involves setting deadlines, where team members share little responsibility for the work, then the manager role is best, while the facilitator's role is best if team members share full responsibility for the work. With the facilitator role, team members are more motivated to support the decisions made because they feel the decisions are theirs and not someone else's.

The stage of the team's development is critical, with teams at the earlier stages of development needing more direction from the leader role and more control from the manager role, while more advanced teams can function more effectively with the facilitator role. Below is an example of how this might play out in the early stages of a team's development.

Effective Team Leadership

Research on effective teams has identified characteristics of leadership related to building effective teams as including the leader's ability to inspire a shared and compelling vision in followers, provide enabling structures, provide a collaborative

environment, and give expert coaching (Leithwood and Jantzi 2000; Barnett et al. 2001; Lafasto and Larson 2001). Leithwood and Jantzi found that effective leadership of teams includes the ability to motivate followers beyond their own self-interest, inspiring them to work for a sense of idealism, resulting in a shared and compelling vision. Barnett et al. (2001), on the other hand, found that behaviors that appealed to followers' self-interest contributed to team effectiveness. Lafasto and Larson (2001), in research conducted with a sample of 600 team members, found that teams were effective when leaders kept the team focused, helped create a clear structure where all group members understood their roles, and had a good communication system that allowed the easy flow of information.

Decision-Making Style

The particular style a leader uses in decision making also contributes to team effectiveness. Lewin et al. (1939) developed three leadership styles around how leaders use power in decision making. The first leadership style was *autocratic*, where leaders relied on positional power and were authoritarian. The second style was *participative*, where leaders involved followers in the decision-making process but maintained the final decision-making authority. The third style was *laissez-faire*, where the leader provided little or no direction and allowed followers freedom to determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems on their own without any support. The autocratic style caused the highest level of discontent, causing a greater threat to team stability than either democratic or *laissez-faire*. The autocratic style also resulted in more exits from the team (36.7%, as compared to less than 10% for either democratic or *laissez-faire* styles, or a combination of democratic and *laissez-faire* styles; Van Vugt et al. 2004).

A fourth decision-making style that can be used and that might be more appropriate for leadership in multicultural teams is to give the decision-making responsibility to the team, with the designated leader facilitating decision making among team members. In Chapter 9, Gobbo describes decision-making steps in a synergistic model and provides insights on how decision making can proceed in a self-managed team. In this model, consensus building is described as being best for facilitating shared leadership.

Team Characteristics

To build an effective team, leaders also need to take into consideration the characteristics of the particular teams. Multicultural teams, with members from different cultural backgrounds and representing a variety of identities, present particular challenges for leadership. Leading multicultural teams requires a willingness to

learn and the ability to be receptive to the different experiences brought to the team by various members.

Cultural Issues

Research has shown that followers resist leadership initiatives when the leadership approach clashes with their cultural values (Kirkman and Shapiro 2001). Members from high power distance cultures tend to accept leaders' authority more readily and may prefer authoritarian leadership, while members from low power distance cultures may prefer participatory styles (Connerley and Pedersen 2005). Participative approaches are considered to be desirable in much of North America and Western Europe but are not so desired in Asia and Latin America (Adler 2002; Hofstede 2005). In a global study it was found that participative leadership received the highest score in Germanic Europe and the lowest score in Middle Eastern countries. (Javidan et al. 2004). Leadership needs to critically assess the cultural make-up of teams before deciding on whether to use participative or authoritarian approaches or a combination of the two.

Leaders may display behaviors that are consistent with their own cultural orientation that can leave some members dissatisfied. One solution is for leaders to adopt approaches that appeal to members from both high and low power distance cultures at various times. For this to be successful, leaders would need to point out the benefits and challenges of having members from different cultural backgrounds on the team (see Chapter 2 for more discussion on this).

In the forming stage of team development, members from individualistic cultures tend to concentrate on tasks, while members from collectivist cultures stress interdependence and connectedness (see Chapter 4). Leadership needs to reconcile all of these divergent approaches without devaluing any member. The African concept of *Ubuntu*, which focuses on creating harmony among individuals, may provide lessons for leadership. In explaining the relevance of *Ubuntu*, Mbigi (1995a, b) developed the notion of the African tree. According to the African tree concept, there are three main branches that are important to leadership, leadership legitimacy, communal enterprise, and value sharing (Van der Colff 2003; Lessem and Nussbaum 1996).

Leadership legitimacy requires leadership to intentionally establish a personal connection with all team members and get to know their needs, being flexible and adaptable to them. *Communal enterprise* refers to the ability of the leader to help followers see the connection between their individual direction and the collective direction of the team. This can result in developing a vision that is inclusive of all needs. It is important that this vision be communicated in a manner to show that it grew out of the needs of the entire group. This requires leadership to become engaged in *value sharing*, where the critical values of the group are articulated verbally as well as lived out by the leadership.

The concept of *Ubuntu* can help develop harmony among members from different cultures as leadership gets to understand the needs and cultural backgrounds of

members. According to Kirk and Bolden(2006), Ubuntu envisages individuals and community as a relational entity, with each giving value, purpose and identity to the other. Leadership needs to get all team members to see the connection between their individual directions and where the team needs to go as a whole. It is important for leadership to value the individual experiences brought by each member, whether they are from universalistic or particularistic, specific or diffuse cultures (see Chapter 2). The following example shows how difficult this can be in multicultural teams, but yet rewarding if leadership is able to effectively implement the concept of *Ubuntu*.

Case Study: Implementing Ubuntu in a Multicultural Team

As you read the case study below, consider the following questions:

- *What are the cultural dimensions that appear relevant to how the team functions together? Justify your response with specific reference to members' behaviors or statements.*
- *What issues other than culture seem to be relevant in this case?*
- *How effective was the facilitator's attempt to implement the concept of Ubuntu?*
- *What do you recommend as the next steps for the team in order to fully realize Ubuntu?*

In teaching the concept of Ubuntu in her graduate classes, Professor Gordo requested that members of her course on Team Effectiveness work in teams of five, and meet on five occasions after the first formal class session. In each of these sessions there was supposed to be a facilitator/leader, and a recorder, with these roles being rotated for each session, with everyone getting an opportunity to function in both roles. The aim of these sessions was for team members to get to know each other's style of leading meetings and any cultural backgrounds associated with their styles, and to discuss ways they would like to work together.

The following is an account of the interactions of one team comprising a West African female, a Central Asian female, an Eastern European male, a Midwestern American male, and a South American male. In the first meeting, the West African female was assigned to be facilitator. The facilitator arrived 15 minutes after scheduled time for the meeting, which was perceived by the European and the Asian as disrespectful. The facilitator greeted everyone with a hug and encouraged them to eat the food she had brought. The European and Asian commented on the late start and urged all to eat quickly so they could get to work. The facilitator smiled and asked people not to worry about the time, explaining that meetings in her culture involved ceremony. She introduced a song to the team, teaching the chorus to everyone and having them repeat it, although all team members did not do it enthusiastically.

After the team had eaten, the facilitator then explained the values that were important in her culture and invited members to describe how meetings in their cultures differed from how she conducted the meeting and to identify the most important values associated with these meetings. The European began by stating appreciation for the food, but indicated the importance of beginning meetings on time. The American expressed gratitude for the song, but stated that he was uncomfortable with the expressions of affection. The South American expressed comfort with affection, which he stated was part of his culture. The Asian female stated that in her culture, the facilitator would have been more assertive.

Gender Identity Issues

Social identities impact leadership of multicultural teams in a number of ways, with members from one-ups groups more likely to emerge as leaders (see Chapter 3). The effects of gender on leadership are seen all across the globe, with men in charge of the most important activities. This may be related to how women and men are perceived to lead. Some literature on gender and leadership promotes the view that men and women differ significantly in how they lead (Helgesen 1990). Earlier theories suggested that leadership was biologically determined, being innate for men and unattainable for women (Appelbaum et al. 2003). Another view is that women are fundamentally different from men in behavior, feelings, and thought, with women's way of leading claimed as superior (Gilligan 1982; Rosener 1990).

Table 6.5 shows that the stereotypical leadership qualities ascribed to women are more nurturing, while those ascribed to men are less so. Evidence for sex differences in leadership behavior is mixed. Earlier meta-analysis studies in laboratories found women manifested more interpersonally oriented and democratic styles of leadership while men demonstrated more task-oriented and autocratic styles (Van Engen and Willemsen 2001). Recent studies in actual organizations showed that women were more participative and less autocratic (Van Engen and Willemsen 2001). Assertiveness and abrasive behavior are associated with autocratic behavior and may be related to why men are dominant in teams, with women's participative styles seen as weaknesses. Members from more masculine-oriented cultures may prefer the strong autocratic style that is typical of men.

Table 6.5 Stereotypical gender leadership qualities

Female	Male
Transformational	Transactional
Participative	Autocratic
Relationship-oriented	Task-oriented
Use more referent and reward power	Use more coercive power
More team-oriented caring	More individualistic-oriented aggressive

When women exhibit autocratic behavior they are evaluated more negatively than men for the same behaviors. A meta-analysis of studies examining the evaluation of men and women leaders, found that women received lower evaluations than men for exhibiting autocratic behavior (Eagly and Carli 2004). Men are also more likely than women to give negative reactions to and deny women's leadership, and even competent women often receive less favorable evaluations than competent men (Eagly and Carli 2004). This can result in women's devaluing of their own leadership and in some instances may lead to their seeking to adopt what is perceived as male characteristics in order to lead teams.

Further research on the evaluation of men and women leaders has shown that as long as women leaders adopt a leadership style congruent with gender expectations, they were evaluated favorably (Klenke 2003). For example, when women's leadership was based on relationships, cooperation, sharing, and inclusion, they received positive evaluations (Eagly and Johnson 1990). On the other hand, when they adopted stereotypic masculine styles, such as being domineering and aggressive, they were perceived as ineffective leaders. This means that women will be more accepted if they adopt decision-making styles more congruent with socially accepted gender expectations.

Androgynous leadership, which integrates the effective skills that are associated with both masculine and feminine leadership, may be an effective approach to sharing leadership in multicultural teams. Effective leadership is not the restricted realm of either gender, and therefore men and women can learn from each other. One bright spot for leading multicultural teams is that gender appears to play a more important role in country-specific groups than in multicultural teams (House et al. 2004; Roffey 2000). This means that leaders might be able to utilize the different cultural perspectives on gender in the team to challenge stereotypes and create an inclusive atmosphere.

The next section looks at various leadership approaches that might be appropriate for guiding leadership in teams.

Approaches to Leadership

There have been various approaches to leadership through the years, and several of these theories can provide insights on effective leadership of multicultural teams.

Trait Theory

Traits are classified as stable patterns of behavior that are relatively immune to situational contingencies (Antonakis et al. 2004). Early research on leadership traits concentrated on physical characteristics but more recent research found that certain cognitive capacities, personality traits, problem-solving skills, and social

Table 6.6 Key leader attributes (Adapted from Zaccaro et al. 2004)

Cognitive capacities	Personality	Social capabilities	Problem-solving skills
General intelligence	Extroversion	Self-monitoring	Problem construction
Creative thinking	Conscientiousness	Social intelligence	Solution generation
Metacognition			

capabilities contribute more to effective team leadership (see Table 6.6). It was also found that high leader cognitive ability was positively associated with the accuracy of team decisions, but the effects were moderated by the degree of cognitive ability held by team members and the divergent thinking of team members (LePine et al. 1997).

Of the traits in the Big Five personality model presented in Chapter 3, it was found that extroversion had strongest relationship to leadership, followed by conscientiousness, with agreeableness having the weakest relationship (Judge et al. 2002). Ployhart et al. (2002), in a study of leadership growth and development, found that agreeableness was associated with increased displays of adaptability by leaders toward followers. However, analysis of leadership in working contexts has shown that it is not a static condition, but results from relationships between leaders and followers (Wheatley 2006).

In trait theory, there is an assumption that one leader possesses key characteristics that are necessary for leadership, with little thought given to the characteristics possessed by followers. Expecting one person to possess such a variety of characteristics is unrealistic, but it is possible that many of these characteristics may exist among team members. If a team allows sharing of leadership, it may be able to benefit from the multiple characteristics possessed by different team members, which can help to reduce some of the differences due to the different cultural orientations. For example, members with self-monitoring skills can help the team monitor social cues, which might help to reduce conflicts and misinterpretations that can occur as result of having members with different cultural orientations. Members with problem-solving skills can help the team generate a range of appropriate solutions to help solve difficulties encountered.

Transactional and Transformational Leadership

These two leadership approaches are discussed here together because of recent academic leadership research that suggests that they are two ends of a continuum (Yukl 1998). *Transactional leadership* motivates followers by appealing to their self-interest, using contingent rewards and management by exception. Contingent rewards influence followers with the use of strategic reinforcements such as praise and material rewards. Transactional leadership behaviors can be useful in the forming stage of team development, where expectations for team behaviors and success can be elicited and utilized in distributing rewards to gain compliance. For example, at the first meeting leaders can

ask team members for expectations on how the team will work together and team rewards such as going to dinner can be given as incentives for accomplishments.

On the other end of the continuum is *transformational leadership*, where followers and leaders raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation by appealing to ideals such as commitment, emotional engagement, or fulfillment of higher-order needs. Transformational leadership can use inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and individualized consideration to motivate team members. In a multicultural team a member can use inspirational motivation by communicating a compelling vision of what the team process or other outcomes could look like, incorporating symbols or music if appropriate. Idealized influence can be used to paint this picture by leaders modeling the behaviors desired. For example, if one of the visions of the team is to be inclusive, the leader needs to show that s/he is inclusive by being tolerant of the views and perspectives of all members. In individualized consideration, the leader acknowledges the individual needs, abilities, and aspirations of followers and uses these needs, strengths, and aspirations to help members become more integrated into the team.

Research has shown that both approaches are effective, although transactional behaviors showed relatively smaller effects on team outcomes when compared with transformational behaviors (House et al. 2004). The transactional dimension of contingent rewards is most positively related to team effectiveness and commitment of members (Davis and Bryant 2004). With transformational leadership, individualized consideration has the strongest effect on team satisfaction (House et al. 2004).

Servant Leadership

The servant leadership approach postulates that an individual emerges as a leader by first becoming a servant (Greenleaf 1977). Servant leaders focus on the needs of followers and help them to become more autonomous, shifting power to those being led. Servant leaders value all team members' involvement, and encourage respect, trust, and the utilization of individual strengths, with emphasis being placed on listening, empathy, and the unconditional acceptance of others. For example, if a team member begins to devalue another member because of gender status, the servant leader would seek to understand the cultural background of the member that is doing the devaluing as well as trying to understand the feelings of the member being devalued.

Servant leadership is an approach that can help to produce a climate that is needed for multicultural teams. At the heart of servant leadership is an ethic of caring, which is intended to protect followers and is an important ingredient in building trust and cooperative relationships which would help to provide the type of team climate described by Tirmizi in Chapter 1. Leadership of multicultural teams can use this approach throughout the stages of team development, which can result in the building of trusting relationships that can enhance team performance.

In a study of the impact of servant leadership on team effectiveness, Irving and Longbotham (2007) found that the servant leadership themes of providing accountability, providing support and resources, engaging in honest self-evaluation, fostering collaboration, communicating with clarity, and valuing and appreciating were strong predictors of team effectiveness. The focus of servant leadership on stewardship can help to provide accountability, and can help to foster ownership and responsibility, ensuring that leaders and followers are accountable for matters for which they are responsible.

Situational Approach

According to the situational leadership approach, effective leadership requires an individual to be able to adapt his or her leadership style to the demands of different situations (Hersey and Blanchard 1988). This approach emphasizes that leadership is made up of both directive and supportive dimensions, and each need to be applied appropriately in situations in order to be effective. Directive behaviors assist workers in task and goal accomplishment. Directive behaviors are more a one-way type of communication, with the leader focusing on clarifying and identifying what needs to be done, how it is to be done and who is responsible for doing it. Supportive behaviors, on the other hand, are two-way communication through which the leader shows social and emotional support and facilitates accomplishment of tasks.

The two dimensions of directive and supportive are further categorized into four styles: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. With this approach a leader must evaluate followers and assess how competent and committed they are to perform a given task, and then adopt the most appropriate of the four styles (see Fig. 6.1). The choice of style to be used is also affected by the workers' level of maturity, with the least matured teams receiving the most directive leadership behavior and the most matured workers given more control and responsibility over the work they do. In Fig. 6.1, the workers' maturity level proceeds from least matured in Style 1 to most matured in Style 4.

The leadership styles in this approach can be related to the stages of team development presented in Chapter 4. Leadership Style 1, *directing*, would be most appropriate for the forming stage, where leadership is needed to help the team clarify tasks and roles and set attainable goals. Style 2, *coaching*, would be used in the storming stage, where leadership is needed to help the team develop task-related and group-maintenance skills. Style 3, *supporting*, would be used in the norming stage, where team members are beginning to take on responsibilities previously carried out by the leader. Style 4, *delegating*, would be used in the performing stage, where there is less dependence on the leader. In the final stage of team development, adjourning, where a sense of loss and sadness can lead to stress and some regression to earlier stages of team development, the leader may need to increase both directive and supportive behavior and return to Style 3.

↑ Supportive Behavior	High Supportive and low Directive Behavior SUPPORTING Style 3	High Directive and High Supportive Behavior COACHING Style 2
Supportive Behavior ↓	Low Supportive and Low Directive Behavior DELEGATING Style 4	High Directive and Low Supportive Behavior DIRECTING Style 1
	← Directive Behavior	Directive Behavior →

Fig. 6.1 (Blanchard K., Zigarmi, P., and Zigarmi, D., 1985)

A small number of studies have been conducted to test situational leadership’s use of maturity to divide workers into the four quadrants in the model and to see if the relationship between leader behavior and worker performance illustrated in the model held up. A few of these studies found that directive, structuring behavior was correlated more strongly with performance for low-maturity workers, but little support has been found for the model’s overall prescriptions for leadership behavior in the four quadrants (Yukl 1998). A weakness of the theory is that it uses only one situational variable, when in reality there are many variables besides follower maturity that influence leadership behavior. However, the underlying idea is certainly generally useful, and its emphasis on the need for a supportive work environment is important for multicultural teams.

Shared Leadership

A critical factor addressed only to a limited extent in the approaches described above is helping to move team members from focusing on their own needs to concentrating on the good of the team and sharing leadership. In these approaches,

leadership is in the hands of only a few individuals, which can lead to competition and fragmentation as members focus on their own self-interest, rely on their own cultural orientations to guide them, and compete for power. There is a need for an approach that provides a central role for followers within a multicultural context. When team members have a central role, they feel valued and are more apt to work well together and develop a sense of ownership.

Traditionally, approaches to leadership focused on individual leaders and concentrated on vertical or hierarchical approaches to organizing work tasks, where followers depend on a leader to direct activities and guide them in implementing decisions in which they were not involved (Pearce and Conger 2003). *Shared leadership* is the antithesis of this approach, focusing on leadership as a team-level phenomenon (Pearce and Conger 2003). Shared leadership has a number of predecessors that include *empowerment and self-leadership* (Conger and Kanungo 1988; Manz and Sims 1989), *great groups* (Bennis and Biederman 1997), and *hot groups* - (LipmanBlumen and Leavitt 1999). Shared leadership as advocated in this chapter borrows from these concepts.

An ultimate aim of shared leadership is to get team members to share leadership functions, with no one person being designated as the leader and with decisions being made through consensus (Levi 2001). In order to get to this ultimate aim, teams may begin with a designated leader but then move towards a team structure where there is no designated leader but the leadership functions are shared, or they may decide to rotate leadership so that no one person retains the title of leader.

Shared leadership in this chapter emphasizes having a designated leader or leaders in the initial stages, but also draws on the concept of rotating leadership, which can be decided by the team at the outset. In the early stage of team development, the designated leader(s) might act as a coach and help team members to develop the necessary leadership skills. In this early stage of team development, leadership can be rotated, so that various team members get the opportunity to share some of the leadership functions. As team members develop their skill in team leadership, more responsibility can be turned over to them. Different multicultural teams might use different approaches, depending upon the situation, the characteristics of the members, and the tasks the team has been assigned, but the ultimate goal is for team members to share leadership, with all members feeling empowered, and the team being self-governed, with members having control over the team's work processes and major decisions.

Conditions Promoting Shared Leadership in a Multicultural Team

Certain conditions need to be present within a team for shared leadership to be implemented. These are illustrated in Fig. 6.2. Generally, it works better for teams not to embark upon shared leadership in the forming stages of development (see Chapter 4). It is best to wait until a later stage, when the necessary conditions are more apt to be in place.

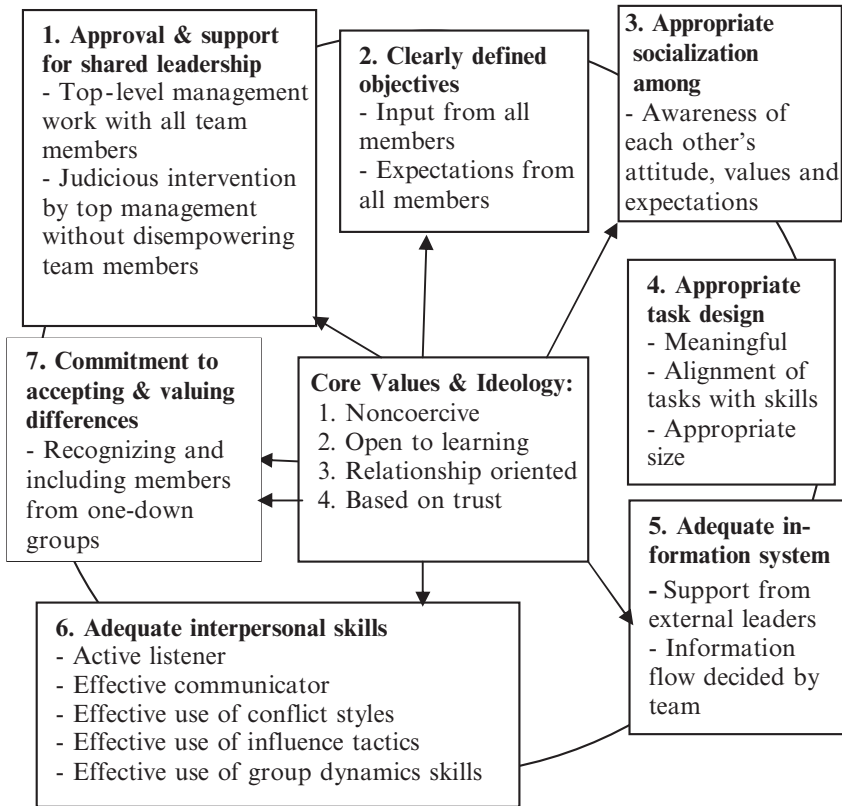


Fig. 6.2 Conditions promoting shared leadership (© Ken Williams)

Approval and Support from Top Management

A critical condition that needs to be in place for shared leadership to occur within a team is for top management to approve and support the practice of shared leadership in teams. Top-level management usually works with one or two members of a team, but for shared leadership to be successfully implemented, top-level leaders would need to be willing to work with all team members and this would impact the manner in which they relate to teams within the organization. The manner in which the team is structured would help to facilitate or limit the implementation of shared leadership and therefore it is important that top-level management endorse and support shared leadership. Top-level management's early team design decisions and expectations for team interaction and performance can contribute to the emergence of shared leadership. Although shared leadership as envisioned in this chapter would reduce dependence on top-level management, it

is important that in the early stages of the team's development top-level management provide sparing, judicious intervention on an as-needed basis. This support could include providing varying resources for the team such as funding. The challenge for top-level leadership is to negotiate a gap-filling balance between abdication of leadership by team members on one hand; and disempowering seizure of control on the other.

Clearly Defined Objectives

The second condition promoting shared leadership is having clearly defined objectives for the team that are developed by the team. Initially, these objectives can be loosely developed by top-level management, after meeting with the team if appropriate, but as the team develops it should develop its own objectives (see Fig. 6.2). These objectives can include how team members would work together with regards to functional roles related to both tasks and maintenance behavior (see Chapter 5). Within the context of shared leadership, the team would need to be clear about how task and maintenance roles will be utilized, encouraging all members to function in roles according to their skills and preferences and not allowing one or two persons to dominate these roles. Shared objectives and priorities that are clearly defined and accepted, help to direct decisions about tasks to be done and also help with the coordination of efforts among team members. However, members from more particularist-oriented cultures may not be too comfortable with clearly defined objectives. This can also be exacerbated in the forming stage where team members do not know each other very well and lack of trust among members can derail the team. In order for the team to develop clearly defined objectives for themselves, sufficient time would need to have elapsed for team members to feel comfortable with expressing their feelings. The approach here would also depend on the maturity of team members.

Appropriate Socialization

The third condition is appropriate socialization, where team members become aware of each other's attitudes, values, and expectations. This awareness can help members build closer relationships, creating an atmosphere that leads to open communication. This condition doesn't usually come about until the later stages of team development (storming and performing), when members are more familiar with each other's strengths and challenges. As Halverson indicates in Chapter 4, leadership is usually challenged in the storming stage, and thus this may be an appropriate stage for members to begin to examine the possibility of shared leadership. However, it is recommended that leader and manager roles (see Table 6.4) be the main methods used in the forming stage, where hierarchical leadership is more easily accepted.

Appropriate Task Design

The fourth condition for sharing leadership is having an appropriate task design for the team. The task to be done should be meaningful, allowing members to have a vested interest in the work since it would have significance for stakeholders. Top-level management may design the task to be done, but once the team is in place, all members should have some input in making alterations to the task. Also, the work to be done should be such that needs the cooperation and interdependence of team members for its successful completion. This means that the task should be complex and require a variety of skills and knowledge, making shared leadership one of the most suitable and logical options for the team to pursue. The number of team members should also be appropriate to the tasks to be performed, with the optimum size being the smallest amount needed to do the task. Having too many members can be just as problematic as having too few.

Adequate Information Systems

The fifth condition is for there to be an adequate information system in place. It is important that all team members have access to the information that is necessary to help them regulate the team's activities and monitor its performance in relation to the organization's goals and mission. Top-level management should seek to provide equal access to information for all members and not seek to use one member as a conduit for passing information to the team unless the team requests that this be the case. In traditional teams, information is usually relayed through one person who is in a hierarchical position. Once leadership is shared, the team would have authority to make its own decisions about how information would flow (see Fig. 6.2). For example, the team could have a central location for information to be received rather than it being sent to one person repeatedly, and this information can be dispersed by various members as they take leadership, facilitation, or managerial roles.

Adequate Interpersonal Skills

Sharing leadership in multicultural teams involves coordinating activities and facilitating meetings, which requires members to possess adequate interpersonal skills. All members do not need to necessarily possess these skills initially but can be coached by a member who has them, who may or may not be the leader that is designated in the early stage of team development. These tasks require team members to be able to develop high levels of trust and cooperation with their teammates, which would require them to be able to listen actively and communicate effectively, use influence tactics appropriately, manage conflicts, and appropriately manage the various aspects of individual behavior, including their own.

As Halverson points out in Chapter 4, the performance stage of team development is when there is the highest degree of interdependence, and this is where shared leadership may be at its optimum.

However, before this level of shared leadership can be reached, team members would need to be able to receive and give feedback in a way that enhances cooperation, builds trust, and creates cohesion (see Chapter 7). Members would also need to be able to use the different influence tactics appropriately in facilitating and coordinating roles of leadership. In terms of managing conflict, members would need to become more adept at using collaboration and accommodation styles, and be able to recognize and counter other conflict styles (see Chapter 8).

Commitment to Valuing Differences

The seventh condition promoting shared leadership is the ability to value differences. Members from one-up groups tend to dominate leadership positions within teams in the forming and storming stages, and there is a tendency to challenge members from one-down groups if they become involved in leadership (see Chapter 3). Issues of differences in personality, identity, and culture may reach a zenith in the storming stage, and can severely affect how the team functions. In order for members to share leadership, there is a need for commitment to accept and value the differences among members, which would include recognizing and including women, ethnic/racial minorities, and members of other one-down groups, as equal partners in team processes. This may involve training on how to function effectively in a multicultural context.

Core Values of Shared Leadership

At the heart of shared leadership, as shown in Fig. 6.2, is an overarching mindset or ideology that relies on noncoercion, that is open to learning, that is relationship-oriented, and that is based on building trust. Establishing a noncoercive atmosphere is a very important element of shared leadership. This can come from developing a caring relationship among team members, which can result in members getting to know each other better. Team members need to discuss what the core values of the team are, which can include the four core values shown in Fig. 6.2. When team members are aware of the various conflict styles and influence tactics and can use them appropriately within a team context, this can help to create a relaxed atmosphere in which members develop trust with each other and become more willing to share their true feelings on issues. This kind of atmosphere, which engenders open and honest interaction, takes time to develop and may not be quite apparent in teams until the storming, norming, and performing stages of team development. This type of approach to team building can encourage members to be open to learning more about each other and to new ways to

function within the team. With a relationship-oriented approach being at the heart of this method of shared leadership, members would be more inclined to develop trust of each other.

The core values should be the driving forces underlying the conditions that promote shared leadership, and the mindset behind all of the conditions. Top-level management must first possess this mindset as they put the teams in place, and need to help transmit the core values to team members. Their support for shared leadership must be rooted in these core values, which can help translate into the other conditions as they attempt to model these values in their interactions with team members. Team members need to have a commitment to these core values and efforts should be made by top-level management and by the team members in the initial stages to establish these core values as their overarching mindset.

Core Processes for Shared Leadership

The core processes for shared leadership will vary depending on the stage of team development. In the early stages of a team's development the core processes are focused on providing some structure around which leadership can function in the light of the multicultural nature of the team. These core processes include ensuring that the roles of facilitator, timekeeper, and scribe become a part of the meetings in the early stages of the team's development. This gives the team a regular structure by which to function, helps to resolve the issue of who is in charge, and reduces hierarchy, since more than one team member would have a critical role to play. At the same time, a process for rotating these roles needs to be developed. Systematic rotation of roles can help maintain equity and fairness, giving all members the opportunity to facilitate discussions and providing an inclusive atmosphere. Members can institute a method such as pulling straws of various lengths and members with the three shortest straws can serve the three roles in the first meeting, with the member holding the shortest straw being the facilitator, and the member with the second shortest straw serving as the timekeeper, while the member with next shortest serving as the scribe. Another suggestion is to institute a policy of rotating roles.

In addition, in recognition of the different cultural orientations that may be present in the team, different meeting formats can be utilized. For example, there may be members who are from particularistic-oriented cultures (see Chapter 2). These individuals would consider building relationships more important than getting tasks completed, and would prefer their meetings to be less structured, without formal roles. In this case, some meetings could be conducted without facilitators. Team members can utilize the tools of inquiry and advocacy, described in Chapter 7, to find out more about what teammates want and to state their own preferences.

In the later stages of team development the core processes could be less structured and team members could take more active roles in deciding how they want

the team to function. During these later stages, learning will be directed through the relationships that have developed so tools such as inquiry and advocacy will not need to be relied upon, although they could still be utilized. The influence tactics used in these stages would mainly be noncoercive (see Table 6.2), indicating that the team is relying more on relationships and personal power to influence each other.

Steps for Developing Shared Leadership

Discuss Implications of Shared Leadership

Top-level management needs to discuss the implications of having a model of shared leadership in teams. Promoting shared leadership has implications for top-level management in terms of the resources that are needed to help it to be implemented successfully. Top-level management would need to recognize the time commitment and the need to shift the way in which they relate to the team. In the early stage of the team's development, the top-level management would need to meet with all team members rather than meeting with just one or a few team members (who may be the designated leaders), which is what is traditionally done. Once the team gets the opportunity to discuss their norms, they should have further meetings with top-level management in order to inform them about how the team will be operating and to let them know how they can provide assistance to members and to the team as a whole.

Establish a Process for Identifying Purpose and Goals

One of the first steps to be pursued is for the team to establish a process for identifying the purpose and goals of the team. When teams discuss their purposes and goals, the discussion usually centers around task-related issues. Since the heart of shared leadership is building lasting relationships, teams are encouraged to also include relationships as part of their purposes and goals. For example, teams can decide to have developing trusting relationships as one of the goals of the team along with specific task outcomes such as having an excellent team presentation. Including relationship-oriented purposes and goals can also help to stimulate discussion about the process for identifying these purposes and goals. For example, the team can include a relationship goal such as developing humor and identifying the purposes and goals of the team would be directed by the core processes identified above. Team members who score high on conscientiousness, low on neuroticism, high on agreeableness, and either high or low on extraversion in the Big Five personality model (see Chapter 3), can be encouraged to take active roles based on their personality traits, but this must be tempered with the inspirational motivation dimension of transformational leadership which could help to provide a vision for processes that will be pursued in the team.

Establish Norms for Multicultural Feedback and Communication

The third step is establishing channels for and methods of giving and receiving feedback that honor members from all cultural backgrounds, and establish communication norms for the team. As Griffin points out in Chapter 7, direct and indirect feedback are products of one's culture, and room must be provided for different forms of feedback to be given and received. Utilizing the tools of inquiry and advocacy can help teammates give and receive feedback interculturally. Griffin also identifies a number of overarching mindsets for enhancing competence as an intercultural communicator that can be utilized in establishing norms for team communication (see Chapter 7).

Identify the Skills and Work Experiences of Each Team Member

A fourth step is seeking to become familiar with the strengths and expertise of the various team members. Team members can accomplish this by sharing their skills and expertise at one of the early team meetings. It is critical for the team to know what skills members have that are well developed so that it can benefit from their expertise when sharing the functions associated with the leadership of the team. For example, there may be team members that are good at resolving disputes and conflict, while others may be better at motivating the team, and others may have strength in communicating a vision or using systems and procedures. It is critical for the team to know the skills that are possessed by members that are well developed so that the team can benefit from their expertise. The leadership assessment instrument at the end of this chapter provides an opportunity for members to examine their strengths and some of their areas of challenges.

Establish Norms for Team Culture

A fifth important step in the development of shared leadership is establishing general team norms for the kind of atmosphere that the team wants to function in. In this step the team collectively envisions the type of culture they want for their team. Allowing the core processes to influence the manner in which the vision is determined becomes very important since it can limit the influence of one member. Facilitators need to focus on building cohesion through consensus, ensuring that opposing views are discussed and clarified and that the team's norms are inclusive of all team members' input, with an emphasis on a noncoercive atmosphere.

Probably the most important norm a multicultural team can adopt is a *noncoercive atmosphere* that allows all team members to feel accepted, that is not based on "agreeableness," that allows members to be honest and trusting of each other and yet able to challenge each other's assumptions, can contribute to the kind of team culture that would promote shared leadership. A noncoercive atmosphere can

encourage members to participate more readily in team activities and can promote greater connectedness and relationship-oriented interactions among members.

An important ingredient of a noncoercive atmosphere is the use of *influence tactics that are nonhierarchical* and cooperative (see Table 6.2). Challenges may arise when there are members from ascription-oriented cultures who might prefer to use hierarchical influence tactics, which might be perceived as coercive by members from achievement-oriented cultures. Establishing a norm where members agree to engage in *mutual learning* can help to reduce tensions and foster connectedness. Mutual learning occurs when team members develop a shared understanding of each other's background. For mutual learning to occur, team members need to be open to new perspectives, willing to learn, question assumptions, and understand concepts such as the ladder of inference, described in Chapter 7.

Another important norm teams need to establish is a *multicultural perspective on ethics*. Team members need to recognize that what may be perceived as right in one culture is not necessarily right in another culture. For example, a team member from an ascription-oriented culture may believe that it is wrong to challenge a leader, while a member from an achievement-oriented culture might have the opposite view. It is important to be able to value both perspectives. The team needs to draw on the experiences of members who have lived in different cultures and utilize some kind of inventory for storing ways of dealing with multicultural ethical dilemmas.

Provide Coaching for Members in Interpersonal Skills

A sixth step in developing shared leadership is to provide coaching for team members in using practices that promote shared leadership. In the initial stages of the team's development members may rely on approaches to leading teams that are more hierarchical, and this may especially be true of members from ascription-oriented cultures. In order to ensure that shared leadership practices become the heart of how the team functions, the team needs to identify members who are skilled in coaching who would provide feedback and insights on how members could more effectively use behaviors that promote shared leadership. These coaches should be skilled in intercultural communication (including giving and receiving feedback interculturally, and listening actively—described in Chapter 7—and be able to use various approaches to conflict, discussed in Chapter 8). It is important that the coaches not perceive themselves as the leaders of the team, and that as other members become more skilled in shared leadership, they also be given the chance to become coaches.

The coaching should take place predominantly in reflective meetings or in one-on-one situations which can be set up formally for evaluative purposes or can occur informally. In these meetings, members would have the opportunity to reflect on areas in which they think they need improvement and coaches would provide feedback on areas of shared leadership that are working well and areas where improvement is needed. Coaches would also receive feedback from team members.

An important element of this coaching would be empowering team members to participate more fully than they might have been accustomed to doing. The leadership approach that would be most appropriate would be a facilitative style (see Table 6.4). Team members who are facilitating need to place emphasis on listening, supporting, coaching, teaching, collaborating, and striving for consensus. This kind of approach is more likely to put the power into all team members' hands, with facilitators serving more as guides and catalysts, which helps with the power sharing. This can help motivate team members to support decisions made because they feel the decisions are theirs since they have significant input in discussions.

Establish a Process for Decision Making

In Chapter 9, Gobbo describes the various types of decision-making approaches available to self-managed teams which appears to be the type of decision-making most appropriate for the shared leadership emphasized in this chapter. In the shared leadership model, there might be a few individuals who might carry out most of the responsibility for leadership in the early stages of the team's development, and in this circumstance, it is best for the decision-making process to be more democratic. In this participatory model, all team members are consulted before any decision is made.

The consensus approach to problem solving and decision making might not be the most appropriate method for the team in the early stages of team development because not all members may be prepared to be fully involved in decision making, especially members who are from cultures that are ascription-oriented. However, as members begin to develop a team culture and as they become more familiar with the tasks the team is pursuing, the consensus approach to problem solving and decision making might become more appropriate.

Leadership of Virtual Teams

The concept of shared leadership as described in this chapter has significant application to virtual teams (VTs). Very few studies have examined how leadership roles are duplicated, substituted, eliminated, or shared on virtual teams, given that they are widely dispersed in time and geography (Balthazard et al. 2004). Research has suggested that leadership in VTs may be shared by team members, and may not be the domain of one assigned or emergent leader (Shamir and Ben-Ari 1999). A key challenge for leadership in VTs is to determine how leadership functions such as coaching, mentoring, team development, and envisioning can be accomplished in a shared leadership model.

Some scholars believe that physical distance makes it more challenging for leaders to engage in relational and task behaviors with team members (Napier and Ferris 1993; O'Hara-Devereaux and Johansen 1994). Other scholars contend that distance does not cripple team processes (Connaughton and Daly 2005; Kirkman and

Mathieu 2005). Not only is leadership in general more challenging for VTs, but when compared to face-to-face teams, VTs have showed lower levels of shared leadership (Balthazard et al. 2004). The separation in time and space can certainly present challenges to shared leadership, as VTs have fewer opportunities to recognize problems and are not able to anticipate them occurring the way they could if meeting face-to-face, which makes misunderstandings more likely to occur. In addition, most VTs use e-mail as their main method of communication, and it requires greater skill to use e-mails to foster trust or repair trust once it is broken. It can therefore become a significant challenge for leadership to foster cohesion and trust.

Leaders need to develop special skills for leading in cyberspace. First of all, they need to be aware of the time and space issues, which means becoming familiar with the time zones and national and religious holidays of team members and ensuring that all members take these factors into consideration when communicating. For example, teleconferences would need to be scheduled at times that do not disadvantage members from particular nations consistently. Leaders need to also lead the team as a whole and focus on building trust and cohesion early in the team's development. If possible, there should be a face-to-face meeting in the early portion of the team's forming stage, and if this is not possible, then the use of synchronous communication (which requires all parties involved in the communication to be present at the same time, and includes teleconference and telephone) should be encouraged. Whether meetings are face-to-face, using synchronous or asynchronous communication (asynchronous communication does not require all parties involved being present at the same time and includes use of e-mail), leadership needs to get team members to agree on expectations and clarify the roles for all team members, which can help with the development of a shared vision and the fostering of a new culture.

The underlying assumption of the shared leadership approach developed in this chapter is that the teams will be meeting face-to-face, but there are several aspects of the model that can be adapted and applied to leadership on VTs. Many of the conditions promoting shared leadership described in Fig. 6.2, although intended for face-to-face meetings, can also be adapted and applied to shared leadership in VTs. For example, conditions 1, 2, 4, 5, and 7 can be developed for VTs with little adaptation. However, conditions 3 and 6 require a good deal of adaptation. In order to develop appropriate socialization among team members in VTs, leadership needs to aim for more intentional integration of the core values and ideology and the conditions promoting shared leadership. There is a need for leadership to really work towards openness and providing an atmosphere where team members would feel comfortable presenting their viewpoints; the tendency not to speak readily in multicultural teams is exacerbated in VTs, where there is limited opportunity to learn about members' feelings through their body language.

Leadership needs to have a global mindset that recognizes how cultural differences can positively influence the team. Having first-hand experience of team members' culture might be helpful in helping to bridge the cultural differences. Leaders can encourage team members to augment text-only communication with charts and pictures which can help to provide deeper context, especially for those from diffuse-oriented cultures. Emoticons can be used to help provide clearer indicators of

communicators' feelings and intentions, which can be useful for members from diffuse-oriented cultures. Leaders should also acknowledge seniority and titles of members, and celebrate their competencies and performance; this can be honoring for members both from achievement-oriented and ascription-oriented cultures.

Relevant Competencies

- Differentiate among the roles of leadership, management, and facilitation, and recognize when each is needed
- Collaborate with others to develop a vision
- Possess good interpersonal skills
- Understand the importance of, and be able to demonstrate, effective intercultural communication
- Listen actively
- Demonstrate trust in others
- Manage stress well
- Motivate and encourage others
- Demonstrate a clear perception of own strengths and weaknesses, and know how to utilize them
- Recognize the importance of empowering others, and know how to do it
- Value and respect varying perspectives

Summary

Leadership of multicultural teams presents a number of challenges, as identified in Chapter 2, with members having differing perspectives on power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, and gender egalitarianism. A definition of leadership that perceives it as an influence relationship that is multidirectional, with followers and leaders both having significant influence in the relationship, and where purposes and goals are mutually pursued, provides an atmosphere wherein leadership of multicultural teams can be effective. In this definition, there is no one central leader; the key players are the entire group. The main sources of power are soft sources of power, using influence tactics that are predominantly cooperative, but may be both direct and indirect.

It should be noted, however, that providing an environment of shared leadership in a multicultural team presents a number of challenges that have not been completely resolved in this chapter. Shared leadership requires team members to be appreciative of low power distance and low uncertainty avoidance and to be more collectivist-oriented than individualistic. This is not easily attained in a multicultural group in which each member's culture is fully valued. There is a need for more research into this to ascertain the actual impact of using leadership approaches that are low on these cultural dimensions in multicultural teams.

Case Study: Safe and Productive Relocation of Refugees

As you read the case study below, consider the following questions:

- *What were the core processes used by the executive director to show that he was willing to share leadership?*
- *What leadership roles were utilized, and how successful were they?*
- *What influence tactics were utilized by the Asian director to influence team members to become fully involved?*
- *How could the executive director have shared leadership more effectively?*

Rescue Humanity (RH) is a human rights organization working in the Asian region to save the lives of people who are at risk for human rights abuses by their governments. It is also involved in providing vital information to policy makers in Washington D.C. on the state of human rights violations in several Asian countries. RH's headquarters is located in the United States, with a subsidiary office in Southern Asia. Recently, citizens have been complaining about the problems caused by immigrants being brought into their countries. Staff members from the Asian office have been complaining for years about the need for RH headquarters to give more autonomy to the Asian office so that they can respond to issues arising in Asia more quickly.

Rescue Humanity recently formulated a team to focus on addressing the issues related to immigrants whom they brought into these Asian countries, specifically looking at job opportunities, leadership issues, and the negative media attention RH was receiving.

The team that was formulated to look at the issues occurring in Asia consisted of the executive director, who is an American female (Tara); the Asian office manager, who is a Japanese male (Chi); the public relations officer, who is an Asian female; the organization's United States (male) lawyer; the female European human relations manager, and the chief program developer, who is a male refugee from the country with the worst human rights abuses, but recently became a legalized citizen after many years of petitioning the government. Tara was the only member of this newly formed team that was based in the United States; all of the other members were based in the Asian office.

Tara held a private meeting with Chi before meeting with all of the members of the team from the Asian office. The purpose of this meeting was to find out what might be the best way to conduct meetings with the members and how they should function as a team. During this meeting it was decided that Chi would take on the role of facilitator for the first meeting, while Tara would be the scribe. They felt that having the executive director performing the role of scribe would provide a symbolic gesture as to the manner in which she was intending to work with Chi and this new team. They also felt that it would give Tara the opportunity to understand and work with team members, since it would give her an opportunity to interact with team members but not dominate the meeting

In the first meeting, Chi asked team members to state their most important values and to describe how these values might impact the way that they work together. All team members except the American and the European, said that they wanted Chi as their spokesperson, stating that they wanted him to make final decisions, although they would like to be consulted about any decision. Chi stated that it was okay to have different views on how decisions were made, and encouraged anyone who had difficulty with the issue to speak openly about it or speak privately with him.

Tara requested that team members give her feedback about the way she interacted with them, emphasizing that she did not want to disrupt the way they did things. Chi informed team members that they were also welcomed to give feedback to anyone in the team, and that they could also do this through a third party rather than giving it to people directly. It was also requested that they state what they thought the goals and purpose of the team were and to identify ways in they would like to monitor their progress. Most of the goals that were stated by the members related to the way in which headquarters worked with the Asian office. Chi indicated that the other problems that arose, such as the escalating number of unemployed refugees brought into the border countries, were related to the limited authority and resources which the Asian office had, which resulted in their inability to respond appropriately to the developments within the Asian region. The American lawyer stated that the nature of the work in Asia was different than in America and the amount of networking needed to get the work done was much more complex than in the United States, and emphasized the need for more resources and expertise.

Chi asked the other team members who had not spoken if they had any special concerns that they would like to express, and he suggested that the team divide into pairs and talk about some of the issues and record them on sheets of paper and then present them to the team. During this time, the Asian team members were more candid about what they considered to be the issues related to employment and they also raised many issues related to internal relations within the Asian office. Some of the issues included the refusal of the non-Asian members of staff to contribute some of their salaries to help with providing jobs for the refugees; and the way they were talked to by some of the non-Asian staff.

Assessment Instrument¹

The following list contains the key skills and qualities of an effective leader. Use the list to analyze your own skill level by giving yourself a rating for each skill/quality.

¹Source: Elsevier Butterworth-Heineman (2005).

Next to each statement the ratings are marked one to four. These signify a sliding scale.

- 1 = totally underdeveloped
- 2 = significantly underdeveloped
- 3 = satisfactory
- 4 = fully developed

If you have no experience at all in any particular area, then leave the column blank. If you do not use these skills in your most recent job, you can draw on your experiences in other jobs and the activities you undertake outside work.

Once complete, ask a teammate to assess your skills by completing the chart in a different color, and then come together with that person to reach a consensus score of 1, 2, 3 or 4. Write this in as your overall score.

When you have agreed on an overall score with the same teammate, have a look at those items where you have a score of one or two and see if any patterns emerge: for example, are your scores more to do with communication, using systems and procedures, or managing difficult situations.

Discuss with the same teammate actions that you can take to improve the areas in which you are underdeveloped.

Differentiating among roles of leadership, management, and facilitation	1	2	3	4
Knowing when to use each of these roles	1	2	3	4
Working collaboratively with team members to develop a shared vision	1	2	3	4
Setting own goals and objectives	1	2	3	4
Working with team members to set their goals and objectives	1	2	3	4
Knowing what motivates different members of the team	1	2	3	4
Being flexible in dealing with different people	1	2	3	4
Managing time to set priorities and get tasks done	1	2	3	4
Providing feedback in multicultural setting effectively	1	2	3	4
Delegating tasks to others	1	2	3	4
Empowering others	1	2	3	4
Trusting others to complete a job properly	1	2	3	4
Expressing praise and giving constructive criticism	1	2	3	4
Sharing credit with team when things go well	1	2	3	4
Stimulating enthusiasm in colleagues and team members	1	2	3	4
Developing own skills and knowledge	1	2	3	4
Adapting to changes when necessary	1	2	3	4
Explaining difficult ideas to people	1	2	3	4
Putting own ideas forward assertively	1	2	3	4
Changing your mind in the light of new or better information	1	2	3	4
Using and interpreting body language effectively	1	2	3	4
Influencing the ideas and opinions of others	1	2	3	4
Facilitating meetings well	1	2	3	4
Respecting ways of doing things that are very different from yours	1	2	3	4
Providing the resources people need to do their jobs well	1	2	3	4
Helping individuals to plan their own development	1	2	3	4
Handling information in confidence and with tact	1	2	3	4

Listening actively to what others say	1 2 3 4
Asking open questions to obtain all of the information required	1 2 3 4
Solving arguments and disputes within the team	1 2 3 4
Sizing up a situation quickly to identify the source of the problem	1 2 3 4
Involving others in decision making	1 2 3 4
Negotiating with others to find the best way forward	1 2 3 4
Remaining calm and in control in a crisis	1 2 3 4
Communicating clearly to a group of people	1 2 3 4
Engendering enthusiasm and commitment in other people	1 2 3 4
Showing appreciation for other cultures	1 2 3 4
Managing stress well	1 2 3 4

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Resources and Web sites

http://www.shambhalainstitute.org/2004/2004_dialogue.html
<http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/survstyl.html>
<http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/4869.html>
<http://www.berkana.org/>; <http://www.ethicalleadership.org/>
<http://www.leadershiplearning.org/>; <http://wagner.nyu.edu/leadership>