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## **MANAGEMENT TYPES AND STYLES ADAPTED TO REMOTE MANAGEMENT**

**Emiliana Ștefania DOVAN, Larisa Florina MACOVEI, Eugen Teodor SFÎRLOS**

Romanian-American University

### **Abstract**

Considering the Sars-Cov-2 pandemic, managers should strive to improve themselves and adapt to their current situation. No company should accept or promote authoritative and controlling managers, even more so in the current climate. In the context of remote work, managers should focus more on their teams, focusing on how they can improve their employees' satisfaction and what drives them and what the employees require in terms of career prospects, work-life balance, company benefits, and others. In the following pages, we will examine a series of articles written by industry specialists and share our insights into what managers should do to adapt to the current situation.

*Keywords:* management, managers, remote, leadership, Covid

## Introduction

The context we find ourselves in has put a lot of stress in both personal and professional lives. We consider that adopting an empathetic view of management with one's people at the center of work is the proper way of moving forward. Thus, in the following pages we will dive into Management Types and Styles Adapted to Remote Management.

Given the current economic situation and how companies are reacting to the Covid-19 pandemic and the premise of a financial crisis, managers have to assume a role higher than would have been required of them while working from the office. Since people now lack face to face interactions, they are becoming less confident in their work. They need to be reminded of their importance in the company more often while also being provided with steps to improving themselves in ways that can help both personally and the company overall.

We decided to approach the theme at hand by dividing it into three main chapters:

- *Management Styles* will focus on the wide variety of styles used within numerous industries and highlight the ones that are appreciated by employees and companies at the same time
- *Types of Managers* where we dive into information found in a variety of sources, analyze it, and provide our insights into which types of managers are best fit for managing teams remotely
- *Remote Management* pointing the tools used within the industry, employee expectations, and how these changed once people started working remotely

Since the current phenomenon is still new, there is limited specialty literature on remote management. However, management literature has been suggesting changes in how managers should treat their roles for more than 20 years. Hence, we will make use of various information sources: books, journal articles and online sources.

## **Management Styles**

According to Indeed.com, the following are 10 of the most common leadership styles (10 Common Leadership Styles, 2020):

1. Coach
2. Visionary
3. Servant
4. Autocratic
5. Hands-Off
6. Democratic
7. Pacesetter
8. Transformational
9. Transactional
10. Bureaucratic

Considering these, we will dive further into details regarding the highlighted types as we believe these to be the most relevant for the current context and, in general, for the future of management.

### **Coach**

These are managers able to correctly recognize individual team members' strengths and weaknesses. They help their employees set reasonable goals and while this creates an overall positive working environment, it is also incredibly time-consuming.

### **Visionary**

With a drive to implement their vision for the company, these managers can inspire people and earn their trust. One of the minuses of this style of management, cited by Indeed, is that, a relentless focus on the future and big picture might come at the cost of day-to-day priorities.

### **Servant**

This style focuses on people first, with a firm belief that if employees are personally and professionally satisfied, it will show in their work through higher productivity, more creative ideas and a better ability to adapt. The only possible negative to this style of management

is the fact that, in some cases, it may put objectives or goals at risk if the manager is unable to be authoritative when needed.

### **Transformational**

Focusing on clear goals, open communication and employee satisfaction, this management style, while similar to the Coach, differs through a focus on the bigger picture, instead of individual 'employees' goals.

### **Types of Managers**

For the past couple of years, literature has tended to differentiate between managers and leaders in many ways, painting them in colors of black & white. Simon Sinek expresses this feeling very openly, saying that: "a manager is someone who has a title while a leader is someone who has the people" (Sinek, 2017). Of course, in its broader context, the sentence attempts to emphasize that all managers should focus their attention on their shortcomings and do all they can to become leaders.

At the beginning of the industrial era, companies realized they needed a lot more structure and systems to ensure completion for bigger, more complex projects. In doing so, they enabled managers as those with power to decide who is efficient and who is not, and fire employees in turn (Levitin, 2014). Unfortunately, the adverse effects of offering this much power to an individual was often not prepared for the role they were supposed to fit still follow us, albeit in isolated cases. Psychology Today, a magazine, suggests there are 4 types of 'bad' managers to work for (Riggio, 2014):

1. Incompetent bosses – lacking any skills in their area of competence and that often make bad decisions
2. Laissez-faire bosses – which rarely intervene, letting people manage themselves and providing no guidance or correction whatsoever
3. Bully bosses – hopefully, a category that is becoming less and less active, these managers are known for continually criticizing or even shaming their employees

4. Toxic leaders – these are people that are very often selfish, and more often than not, leave their companies and employees worse than when they started in the new role

The authors of this paper consider that the above manager types should not even be mentioned as they are deemed to be relics of older times. And if they still exist, we take re-assurance that the current context will pressure companies to correct this type of behavior or replace them completely.

Considering the overall theme of this paper, an issue from 2018 of Harvard Business Review, cites researchers at Gardner have gathered four profiles for existing managers (Managers Can't Be Great Coaches All by Themselves , 2018):

1. Teachers – prepare employees based on their own individual strengths and experiences. They offer feedback in the way of advice.
2. “Always-On” - These managers are always trying to pay attention and help their employees develop more skills offering feedback across varied topics.
3. Connectors focus on offering feedback in their area of expertise while connecting employees with other, more experienced colleagues from the company for different areas of expertise.
4. Cheerleaders – mostly offer positive feedback and want their employees to be responsible for their development. They are available but not as proactive as the other types mentioned here.

The profiles highlighted above are more in line with our beliefs on how managers should act and where their focus must be – their employees.

Looking once again at the traits that the new types of manager share, we feel compelled to recount Daniel Goleman's notable mention, suggesting that leaders are "emotional magnets, gathering talented people to work around them, awakening our passions and stimulating everything good in us."

In the end, the difference between managers and leaders is a linguistic one, and we feel that any manager can and should strive to be a leader and, unfortunately, many leaders

can also be toxic. To be a good leader and/or manager, you need a right mix of common sense, emotional intelligence as well as grit (Duckworth , 2017).

Due to the ease of access to information, in the past couple of years, we were all able to learn from many managers' experience and decide for ourselves which of them we should respect, strive to imitate and follow. In this sense, we would like to highlight several managers who made an impact on the authors of this paper:

**Robert Iger.** In his book, the former Disney CEO, highlights several principles that he considers have helped shape his legacy. Out of them, we would like to focus on five that we feel are the most relevant in the current context (Iger, 2019):

1. Always look for perfection – helping people refuse mediocrity and continually striving to improve oneself and those around you
2. Be responsible for your mistakes – people will respect you more when you own your mistakes
3. Be fair to people and offer clarity – it is impossible not to make mistakes when you have a management position but if your employees trust you and are aware of what you want to do, they will help implement your vision
4. Real integrity – having a strong moral compass
5. Be humble – it is easy to think your ideas are better than those of anyone else, but it is essential to listen to your employees and respect the fact that you hired intelligent people to come with new ideas and make decisions

**Jeff Weiner.** Currently acting as an executive chairman (previously CEO) of LinkedIn published an article on the platform in 2012 regarding what he feels, the most important values of a company should be (Weiner, 2012):

1. Members first
2. Relationships matter
3. Be open, honest and constructive
4. Demand excellence
5. Take intelligent risks
6. Act like an owner

However, in his recent course titled "On Leadership" (Weiner, 2020), he presents that at some point, after writing the above article, they realized that the word demand has to be replaced with inspire, the reason being that it spoke a lot of the company's values.

**Sir Richard Branson.** The founder of the Virgin Group mentioned in an interview for Forbes that he has three leadership principles that he finds most important (Schawbel , 2014):

- Listen
- Learn
- Laugh

Considering the number of common leadership qualities shared by these successful managers, we believe that the three most essential qualities for an amazing leader are:

1. Integrity
2. Inspire excellence
3. Never stop learning

## **Remote Management**

### *The reality of 2020 in business and management*

The Coronavirus crisis has determined that work needs to be done from home in more and more fields. Also, newly available technology drives humanity further away from the office every day. This new reality has its ups and downs and many entities, both public and private, have started to analyze the phenomenon.

According to experts from Harvard Business Review: "As we look to the future, it is time to unleash these new ways of working for the long-term, with a focus on well-being, equality, and productivity that can work for both employers and employees long after this crisis ends. It is time to embrace the truly global talent pool that is available to drive growth, regardless of where people call home" (Frankiewicz & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2020).

### *Changes caused by the pandemic in numbers*

MKOR, a consulting company, recently published a study analyzing the Impact of COVID-19 in the Romanian business environment. The study "How is the Impact of the COVID-19 Epidemic felt in the Romanian Business Environment" (MKOR Research , 2020), quoted by Patria Bank, presents the complex situation of private organizations in our country and reflects the image of the business environment in the uncertain context we find ourselves in.

According to the study, 91% of Romanian companies feel affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, with an average total impact of -10.2% for 2020. This figure is in line with European Commission estimates, with a decrease forecast of -7.5% at EU level. The most visible effects of the COVID-19 epidemic are the reduction in turnover and the impact produced by the suspension of the company's activities.

Simultaneously, 95% of companies took measures to survive the current crisis, and 90% took them immediately after the start of the emergency in March. The most common are financial measures, which protect cash flow in the short and medium-term, followed by efforts to protect employees and pivot the business.

Also, the companies that were on a downward trend on March 1, 2020, compared to March 1, 2019, estimate a business decrease for this year. The MKOR analysis also shows that representatives of the business environment have a low level of trust, of only 2.7 points out of 7 in what concerns state institutions.

### *Advantages and disadvantages of work from home*

While for some people, working from home seem to be all they wanted, for others this has easily given rise to new challenges. Researchers who have studied this phenomenon highlighted some of the trends discovered and how they influence employees' behavior.

According to a Humanyze study, a technology firm specializing in social sensing, quoted by Harvard Business Review (Frankiewicz & Chamorro-Premuzic, 2020), working from home has reduced work-related stress and negative emotions, increasing trust, well-being and communication with colleagues by 40%.

Also, the global ManpowerGroup analysis by Harvard Business Review shows that 8 out of 10 employees want to work remotely in the future to achieve a healthier work-life balance. According to the same source, the companies could finally discover and collaborate with talented people regardless of the country in which they live. Industries like IT were already doing this to some degree, but this global pandemic has made the opportunity visible in many more industries.

On the other side, the Humanyze's study showed that working from home increased people's working hours by an average of 10-20%, making it clear that working from home threatens the distinction between professional and home life.

In *Management Fundamentals*, Steven Cohen and William Eimicke mention that: "Technology and the global economy mean that for some, work is now possible twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. The internet, low-cost communication and information, and cloud computing mean that work can follow you wherever you go. You no longer need to commute to a workplace to do many of the tasks required to complete work...The larger problem is workaholism, where people are so obsessed with work, they become limited and one-dimensional. People must now self-consciously struggle to create boundaries between work and home" (Cohen, 2020).

The two authors also underline that the meetings through platforms are better than nothing. Still, they do not replace direct human contact and that the lack of face-to-face communication can reduce productivity and increase conflict. In their opinion, people have started to become more emotional than usual, partly due to the stress generated by the fear of illness and the breaking of daily routines. This is visible and has an impact on their activity.

### *To do for the managers*

Steven Cohen, Senior Vice Dean of Columbia's School of Professional Studies and a Professor in the Practice of Public Affairs at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, believes that managers should notice that some colleagues are more fragile than usual, and it is necessary to adapt communication in this regard. In his opinion,

leaders should make a habit from frequently asking about the well-being of their colleagues, about their work environment and their needs. The University's representative advices managers to ask their teams to postpone specific tasks if they are not necessarily urgent or even eliminate them if they do not prove relevant. Without a proper work-life balance, performance is likely to be exhausting and declining.

## **Conclusions**

A company's budget and strategy are generally based on history and prediction. Like many other activities, management operates today in an unprecedented environment, where the past is less useful in predicting the future. This is the central dilemma we now face in managing organizations in the midst of this global pandemic. Every decision made by management is a step forward towards a less predictable future than usual. However, management has always been and remains about overcoming obstacles.

While the technology has evolved considerably and the global workforce has proved capable of adapting to the current situation, people need more guidance and understanding than ever before. In this new context, managers find themselves in positions where their power is more significant than ever, this, in turn, can have 2 effects: going back to older, outdated styles of management and attempting to control all the actions of their employees or treating employees with empathy, striving to become a better manager and leader by taking inspiration from some of the most successful people in the world.

In our opinion, the first option is improbable as it is a time consuming and highly inefficient way of managing people resulting in low employee morale and lower productivity and quality of work. The second possible effect is the most likely – treating one's employees with empathy, concentrate their resources on improving the skills they lack, managers can become effective leaders and inspiring people to achieve greatness.

But connection is not the only thing that people require, and empathy does not mean always accepting what is being done regardless of the quality of work and deadlines. Another critical ability managers working in this new world is having difficult conversations

with their employees. In doing this, one of the most important things to remember is that "...it is best to keep your goals realistic. Eliminating fear and anxiety is an unrealistic goal. Reducing fear and anxiety and learning how to manage that which remains is more obtainable" (Stone et al., 2011).

In the end, the managers of today have all the resources needed to become proper leaders and adapt to any challenge; all they need is the will to do so.

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