Importance of Change and Leadership in the 21st Century
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Introduction

Change in the 21st century is a concept that dominates our era. The change faced by today’s leaders is greater and wider than ever. Globalization, rapidly evolving technology, changes in the structure of society and the increasing expectations also has affected management styles. In other words, elimination of time and space differences have made it mandatory for the organizations to reorganize their structures.

Today, leadership has become more complex than a simple leader-follower relationship in the environment which competition has become a part of the life, employee morale and satisfaction contributes to organization's efficiency and effectiveness and benefitting from the knowledge, skills and abilities has become the precious resource.

Leaders in the information age are faced with complex and comprehensive demands. Until today, leaders had the power to shape the organizations according to their personal values, attitudes and their styles. The incremental developments in technology, increase of the awareness about people’s key role for organizational effectiveness and the understanding the role of organizations in terms of social and economic parameters have led to transformations in leadership.

Key Words: 21st Century, Information Age, Change, Leader, Leadership

Information Age and Its Characteristics

Along with recent developments in the construction of integrated circuits, the first communication via electricity by Samuel Morse’s invention of telegraph in 1837 (Proakis, 2001: 13), brought incredible ease access to large-scale size and speed. These developments in communication system have introduced the Information Age. In the information age, organizations are dependent largely on information technology to carry out their activities. In the information age, information technology has intertwined with many goods and services.

According to Daniel Bell; modern institution is an initiative of post-industrial society where information plays a role in strategy and change. The structure, in which values related with change and strategy come to the forefront, is not only perceived as knowledge-based organizations but also the employees are transformed into information professionals (Bell, 1968: 12). Accordingly, the force on the community structure will change. While in the agricultural society landowners and in the industrial society the owners of capital have the power, in the information society the power will belong to the wise men. (Barutçugil, 2004: 20).

According to Peter Drucker, the concept of knowledge work and knowledge workers have emerged in the information society. Information society people will have advantages in terms of having real leaders and the reduction of the need for them. However, according to Daniel Bell, the emergence of the information society has increased the pace of development in the so-called post-industrial society.

Drucker implies that the quality and function with type and speed of technology mandates a different structure in the society. Drucker sees communication and information technologies as the utmost important area for economic development.

Information has played important roles in history of humankind. Now the information is more important than ever. Globalization, information, spread of technology ve exponential growth of networking boundaries and elimination of multi-stage corporate hierarchy resulted in new markets and inevitably extraordinary number of new competitors. Therefore all these developments have led to the emergence of economy of information age (Stewart 1997:6).

Increase in the quality and quantity of information, which leads to changes in people's way of thinking and their vision, is an aspect of the information age. In the information society, there is a decrease in number of leaders’ distinct characteristics considering the developments in power of thought and visionary leadership. Another result of this is the probable increase in leaders who are powerful in thought. These two results will affect the process and requirements of leadership. In organizations, continuous learning and self-improvement type of qualified people is getting important.

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1 Peter Drucker, “Değişim Çağının Yönetimi”, p.2
2 Hüseyin Başar, “Bilgi Çağında Liderlik ”, p.64

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The information age and technology together has revealed new professions and skills. Knowledge labor is becoming a career. Change and diversity of the profession does not fit on a single career. In the global environment, the unity of space and time in production has disappeared. For example, part-time and temporary contract work has become widespread.

Along with information, communication technologies and the internet, virtual enterprise and e-commerce have emerged. Technological change increases the importance of the human factor who create knowledge, inventions and innovations. Employees' individual skills come to the forefront. Within the framework of these developments, "work, workplace and overtime" are losing their meaning, standard operating procedures become obsolete and telework appears to be a new way of working.

With the information age, flexible working concept began to be an issue and definitions of work, workplace and overtime have varied. People can participate in management processes even when they are not at office by using technology and communication facilities.

Change of the Organization

Change in the 21st century is a concept that dominates our era. Accordingly, the change is carried out in two dimensions. First, it is the technological dimension. In other words, it includes constant renewal of technology and adaptation of it according to the needs of users. The second dimension, the most important component, is human and organization that uses technology.

The following differences arise when new organizations brought about by the new global economy compared with traditional organizations about the differences between these findings arises (Akgemci, 2009:4):

- Focus more on personal development,
- focus more on innovation and change,
- greater emphasis on the integration of the talent in the organization.

The face of this new organization reveals that leadership should change anyway. The main changes occur with the development of the organization can be summarized in the Table-1 (Koçel, 2010:371-372).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Large and diverse production centers</th>
<th>Small production units</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From vertical integration (integration)</td>
<td>Working with Subcontractors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Size of Economy</td>
<td>Flexibility</td>
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<td>High and sharp Hierarchical Organizations</td>
<td>Flattened and Lean Organizations</td>
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<td>From Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship</td>
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<td>From increase in market share</td>
<td>New Markets</td>
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<td>Mass Marketing</td>
<td>Niche Marketing</td>
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<td>Quantity</td>
<td>Quality</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table-1

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3 Aygül Çolak ve Ayhan Gençler, “Bilgi Çağında Çalışma Şekilleri”, p.2
5 Cengiz Tavukçuoğlu, “Değişen Dünya ve İnsan Kaynakları Yönetimi, s.43
The development of science and technology, changing the organizational structure and relationships, have affected the upper and lower systems. Change surrounds communities. Indeed, it can be said that change is the only non-variable in an organization. Therefore, managers who want to implement effective management must understand change and peoples’ reactions to change (Pearce ve Robinson, 1989:378).

Institutions in the global environment can compete as a learning organization; namely they can survive by renewing their knowledge capital. Institutions must learn to adapt to changes occurring both internally, namely management of the processes, structures, systems and externally. For example, a change occurring in the art (external) will affect the internal processes and operations.

Types of Change

There are basically two kinds of type of change in organizations. Reactive change is a change caused by sudden or unplanned event. Probably the most striking example to reactive change is the use of computers for stock trading and layoff of thousands of workers in order to reorganize stock market’s operations. The second type of change occurring in organizations is Planned Changes. They are intentional changes affecting systematic and organizational functions in a portion or all (Pearce ve Robinson, 1989:378).

Leadership

People from ancient times to the present day have been associated with perceptions of leadership and leadership. Leadership is constantly being discussed and researched. Described as a mysterious phenomenon, leadership did not lost its importance despite the time. However, despite all this interest and research in organizations all over the world, organizations are complaining of being deprived of adequate leadership: As Miller stated ”People all over the world are longing for leadership; they want leaders who are capable of carrying out credible, reliable, and constructive changes.”

Then, we should look for answers to the following questions (Goff and Jones, 2002: 179 Erten, Kantos, 2011: 137); Why do we need leaders and do we know leadership phenomenon well enough?

Showing the distinction of being a social phenomenon, “leadership” like all other social elements are affected and renewed by the change. Extensively studied, researched in experimental settings and quite popular, it is evaluated fairly normal that leadership shows development and helps gain new approaches in the literature. The works done to create leadership approach, in harmony with the characteristics of the information age, has led to the emergence of new leadership approaches.

Rapid changes in today’s organizations are creating value. The future of the organizations, depend on their ability to adapt to developing conditions. This can be done with management which supports the flow of information. (Altıntaş, 2001:7).

One of the problems of the information age managers is information management. How knowledge and experience of each individual within the organization can be maintained and offered for the use of others? How can someone who works in a far corner of the institution benefit from others who found solutions to the similar/same problems before? There are two methods:

- Knowledge Customizing (Personalization), a kind of master-apprentice relationship, with the interpersonal interaction of experience and knowledge between generations to be shared, so wandering knowledge is kept in the institution.
- Knowledge Codification (Codification), the knowledge and experience is written (with intensive use of information systems) and kept within the organization. Web sites, forums, and etc. technological tools should be used.

Manager, Leadership and Leader in Literature

Leaders are not managers. Considering the continuity of change and America’s economic leadership faced by the international controversy, it is seen that the key to take the right decisions lie in having and understanding leadership qualities especially in the ever-changing global economic order. To survive in the 21st century, we will not need managers, but a new generation created by leaders. The difference between these two concepts is important. Leaders discover inconsistent, ambiguous situations encountered while managers submit to such situations. There are other important and comprehensive differences between these two (Bennis 1991:1-2).

The differences between leaders and managers from various angles are indicated below (Koçel, 1998: 274):

6 Kırım Arman, “Yeni Dünyada Strateji ve Yönetim”,s.79-80
Managers;
• Achieve organization’s objectives,
• Authority resulting from owned position,
• Delegate authority to the extent the position permits,
• Always give importance to be liable to business.
Leaders;
• Achieve followers’ goals,
• Get support from the authority that followers provide,
• Do not comply with legal requirements of chain of command,
• Always be responsible to followers.
Leadership, under certain circumstances, can be defined as a process that an individual influences and orients activities of others in order to realize some individual or group objectives7.
Leadership is one of the features that military personnel should have. Leader do not get power only from legal authority, namely the leader motivates staff with the knowledge, honesty, courage, patience and tolerance.

Roman playwright Plautus was saying : "Ergometer sum mihi imperetor", namely I am the commander of myself ... "In our age , each of us have to be a strategic leader of ourselves"8

The duration of leadership may be limited to the initiator leadership. Information society will reduce the need for leaders. In this process, leader will be in a position to guide.

The profile of information age leadership is valid as a team leadership. This leadership is based on partnership with leaders from different departments of the institution9.

In the information age, life cycle change will reduce dependence on the leader – environment and as a result a type of random leadership will not be an issue.

The information age provides leaders the opportunity for development and change of themselves and their groups. Information sharing among management will reduce the errors and facilitate the emergence of a true leader.

It is crucial that leaders should understand their roles within three rings. They are to accomplish the task, create and maintain teams and develop individuals.10

Leader is interested in mobility, interactivity, vitality and charisma while a manager is interested in hierarchial balance and control. The statement of Bennis "In 21st century, we will need new generation leaders to sustain our lives, not managers” reveals how the leaders will be effective in an irregular and uncertain environment. (Ülker, 1997:197).

How Leaders Change

The challenges leaders face vary by time. While Alexander the Great leaded his army by waving his sword and colliding with the enemy, Duke of Wellington, leadeed his army against Napoleon by writing and delivering his orders behind the army in another age.

Today's leaders apply different methods. Technology has changed many things. Organizations have become more horizontal and messages transmitted to their addresses very quickly by their enriched versions, graphs, links, and etc. Social media networks connect people within and outside the company together and provide the opportunity to find answers to problems. (Burnison, 2008:3)

Another thing is that leader should use data from now on. Even though decisions are thoroughly dwelt on and based on experience, they mean nothing if they are not based on analyzed data. Leaders should be able to transform data into a form which will take attention and mobilize people. Data hasn’t been as important as it is today until now for decisions at the level of leadership. In this context, technology, openness (transparency), and the increasing importance of data-driven decision-making process determine who can be leaders and determine what they should do. Continuous learning has become one of the most basic requirements of leadership.

Along with diversity and increase of knowledge, the dissemination of art and creativity will change the type of leader in the information age. A part of the functions of a leader in the management process will supersede with "actual knowledge".

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier descriptive studies on leadership defined leadership as observed behaviours in a particular period and environment with "features, according to the behavior and condition variables",

7 Tamer Koçel, "a.g.e", s.445.
8 Adair John, Etkili Stratejik Liderlik, s.10.
9 Hüseyin Başar, "Bilgi Çağında Liderlik ", s.64
10 Adair John, Etkili Liderlik, s.64.
thus these works lacked in comprehending the whole. However, emerging technologies, changing environmental conditions, heightened awareness of the phenomenon of socio-cultural and economic revolution have led to the change of leadership concept and formation of leadership roles and behaviors, according to requirements of our age.

You need to have leadership qualities and understand these features in order to be successful in an environment that continuity of change exists. To survive in the 21st century, we will need not only managers but also a new structure with human resources (a new generation).

In order to follow changes in the 21st century, leadership approaches which do not provide innovation should not be adopted. Most importantly, the information age leaders must have the ability to communicate. Leaders should use new creative ways and tools in order to convey their messages. In addition, effective leaders should rely on their staff, thus they should be talented in delegating and setting goals. The type of the new century’s administrator is not satisfied with only physical properties or professional knowledge, they can evaluate the opportunities and offer new solutions to emerging new threats.

In our age, leaders should be talented in their fields in terms of technical and professional aspects. Thus, with effective leadership, individuals will be able to dominate the institutions. For successful management, effective communication is becoming important. Leaders using written and visual communication tools well will be able to lead a wide audience.

Technological advances of the information age will may reduce the requirement to use the same environment with leaders of organizations. The effect of the work environment will have a positive impact on the strength of leadership. In addition, reduction of dependence on the leader - environment, institutional commitment, effective communication, initiative and mutual trust will increase in importance.

Increased exchange of scientific knowledge and changes in vision will speed up changes in corporate leadership. With the increased knowledge, accelerating change would not enable long-term leadership of managers. In other words, society and institutions that can prevent adhesion of the leaders will be able to accelerate change and social development.

Information society people will be lucky in terms of both meeting leader requirements with real leaders and reduction of the need for them. In other words, the emergence of a real leader will have a catalytic effect on communities to the information society.

In societies did not exceed the age of information in society, the classic type of leadership will not change. These kind of leaders will lack in changing their environment and guiding others. In addition, there can resistance to change and conflict. In a global environment, management of change will be important for future managers, institutions and societies.

Organizations should be created which can manage change, open to development and self-renewing, and hold their people in the foreground to create corporate culture. In this context, institutions with effective leadership will be able to adapt to technology as well as produce future technologies.

In our country, creativity is not yet given sufficient value. In underdeveloped entrepreneurship culture, young talent should not be crushed by classic/bureaucratic style of management. We need a creative generation of young managers who followed technolog, so do not hesitate to apply them to their institutions which can be applied in all cases.

In this process; it is vital that managers will be able cope with structural, technological and individual changes which interact with each other. In addition, change and life-long learning are emerging as as important parameters for personal and national success.

Resources

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