



STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP ALIGNMENT: RETHINKING THE APPROACH TO BUSINESS PLAN AND VISION

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Abstract

The achievement of organizational objectives relies on fitting a leadership style to the business plan. Each business plan requires a specific leadership style based on the business's specific situations. Leaders should adopt different styles based on the situation, as the situational approach emphasizes that the leader's style is crucial in today's business environment. Therefore, the style adopted by the leader is crucial for the success of the business. A leader's style should align with the business goal; to do this, the leader needs to be well-versed in the various leadership philosophies. Following their knowledge of styles, executives ought to examine the business strategy and ensure that the style and the plan coincide. The leader should investigate situational leadership to get the greatest outcome. Identifying tactics for leadership development helps determine how well a leadership style matches the business plan. A company plan's requirements and dynamics must be thoroughly evaluated to determine the best leadership strategy. This is known as fitting leadership style to the plan. For instance, an authoritarian leadership style could work better when making decisions quickly and decisively. On the other hand, a democratic or transformational leadership style that promotes involvement and innovation can be more appropriate in a cooperative and creative business model.

Keywords: Approaches to leadership, autocratic leadership, Business plan, Leadership style, and Situational leadership.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic business environment, effective leadership plays a crucial role in driving organizational success. A key aspect of effective leadership is the ability to adapt one's leadership style to align with the goals and objectives of the business plan. Fitting leadership style to the business plan involves understanding the unique characteristics and requirements of the plan and leveraging appropriate leadership approaches to achieve desired outcomes. A business plan serves as a roadmap that outlines the strategic direction, goals, and objectives of an organization. It encompasses various aspects such as market analysis, financial projections, operational strategies, and resource allocation. The success of a business plan depends not only on its content but also on the leadership approach employed to implement and execute the plan. Leadership style refers to how a leader interacts with and influences their team members to achieve organizational goals. Different leadership styles, such as autocratic, democratic, transformational, transactional, and situational, have distinct characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages. Each style can be more effective in specific situations and contexts.

Fitting leadership style to the business plan involves carefully assessing the requirements and dynamics of the plan and selecting the most appropriate leadership approach. For example, in a situation where quick and decisive decision-making is crucial, an autocratic leadership style may be more effective. Conversely, in a collaborative and innovative business plan, a democratic or transformational leadership style that encourages participation and creativity may be more suitable. By aligning leadership style with the business plan, leaders can enhance employee motivation, engagement, and performance. It creates a cohesive and goal-oriented work environment, where employees feel supported and empowered to contribute to the success of the plan. Additionally, it enables leaders to effectively address the challenges and opportunities presented by the plan, leading to improved organizational outcomes.

This study aims to explore the theoretical framework and practical implications of fitting leadership style to the business plan. It will delve into the different leadership styles and their characteristics, advantages, disadvantages, and potential applications in various business contexts. The study will provide valuable insights into how leaders can adapt their leadership styles to maximize the effectiveness of business plans and drive organizational success.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To summarize how the leadership style can be fit to the business plan.

3.0 DISCUSSION

Through a comprehensive examination of existing literature, case studies, and real-world examples, this study seeks to enhance our understanding of the relationship between leadership style and the business plan. By identifying best practices and strategies for fitting leadership style to the business plan, organizations and leaders can develop a more strategic and informed approach to leadership, ultimately leading to improved business

performance and outcomes. Following are the steps to be taken while thinking about how to fit the leadership style for the business plan.

3.1 UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP STYLES

Gain a comprehensive understanding of different leadership styles, such as autocratic, democratic, transformational, transactional, and situational leadership. Explore their characteristics, advantages, disadvantages, and potential applications in different business contexts. By understanding different leadership styles, researchers can assess their suitability for specific business plans and identify which styles may be more effective in achieving the desired outcomes.

➤ **Autocratic Leadership**

Autocratic leadership is characterized by leaders making decisions independently without involving subordinates in the decision-making process. This style is often directive and task-oriented, with a focus on maintaining control and authority. It can be effective in situations that require quick decision-making and clear direction, such as during emergencies or in highly structured environments (Squires, 2018)

However, autocratic leadership can lead to low employee satisfaction and limited creativity, as it may discourage participation and collaboration (Hassan et al., 2013). Leaders must understand when and how to utilize autocratic leadership appropriately within the business plan's objectives and organizational context.

➤ **Democratic Leadership**

Democratic leadership emphasizes involving subordinates in decision-making, promoting participation, and considering their input and perspectives. It fosters a collaborative and inclusive environment where employees feel valued and engaged. This style can enhance employee satisfaction, creativity, and commitment (Islam et al., 2018)

Research suggests that democratic leadership can lead to improved team performance, problem-solving capabilities, and innovation (Hassan et al., 2013). However, it may not be suitable for situations that require quick decision-making or when there is a lack of expertise among team members (Bhardwaj, 2019). Leaders need to assess the context and team dynamics to determine the appropriate level of involvement and decision-making authority.

➤ **Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to go beyond their self-interests and work towards achieving a shared vision. It involves creating a positive work environment, fostering intellectual stimulation, and promoting individual growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006a).

Research has shown that transformational leadership can lead to higher employee satisfaction, increased commitment, and improved performance (Northouse, 2018). It is particularly effective in situations that require organizational change, innovation, and employee development. However, it may not be suitable in highly

structured and task-oriented environments where efficiency and adherence to established procedures are critical (Robbins et al., 2017)

➤ **Transactional Leadership**

Transactional leadership focuses on setting clear expectations, providing rewards and punishments based on performance, and maintaining routine operations. It involves a transactional relationship between the leader and the followers, where tasks are exchanged for rewards or corrective actions (Bass & Riggio, 2006b). Transactional leadership can be effective in situations that require clear role expectations, performance monitoring, and routine tasks. It provides a structured framework for managing performance and ensuring accountability. However, it may not foster intrinsic motivation or encourage creativity and innovation among employees (Yukl, 2013).

➤ **Situational Leadership**

Situational leadership suggests that effective leadership depends on matching the leadership style to the maturity level of the followers and the specific situation. Leaders need to adapt their style and behaviors based on the readiness and development level of their subordinates (Blanchard & Hersey, 1996). This approach recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all leadership style and emphasizes the importance of flexibility and situational awareness. Leaders must assess the competence and commitment of their team members and adjust their leadership style accordingly.

3.2 ANALYZING BUSINESS PLANS

Analyze various business plans and examine their goals, strategies, and organizational culture. Understand the unique challenges, opportunities, and requirements presented by each plan. A thorough analysis of the business plan provides insights into its objectives, operational focus, and expected outcomes. This analysis helps in identifying the leadership style that best fits the plan's vision, values, and strategic priorities. Analyzing business plans involves a thorough examination of different plans to understand their goals, strategies, and organizational culture. It involves assessing the unique challenges, opportunities, and requirements presented by each plan. Here's an explanation of this concept:

➤ **Goals and Objectives**

Analyzing business plans involves examining the goals and objectives outlined within them. This includes identifying the desired outcomes, targets, and milestones that the organization aims to achieve. By understanding these goals, leaders can align their leadership style and approach to support the plan's objectives effectively.

➤ **Strategies and Action Plans**

Business plans outline the strategies and action plans designed to achieve the stated goals. Analyzing these strategies involves assessing the proposed approaches, initiatives, and tactics. It helps leaders understand the

specific actions required to implement the plan successfully. By aligning their leadership style with the chosen strategies, leaders can provide guidance and direction to their teams in executing the plan effectively.

➤ **Organizational Culture**

Examining the organizational culture outlined in the business plan is crucial for understanding the values, norms, and beliefs that shape the organization's behavior. Organizational culture plays a significant role in determining the leadership style and practices that are accepted and effective within the organization. By understanding the culture, leaders can adapt their leadership style to resonate with the values and expectations of the organization.

➤ **Unique Challenges and Opportunities**

Each business plan presents unique challenges and opportunities. Analyzing the plan involves identifying these factors and understanding how they impact the organization's operations and strategic direction. Leaders need to assess the challenges and opportunities presented by the plan to make informed decisions and develop appropriate leadership strategies.

➤ **Requirements and Resources**

Business plans outline the requirements and resources needed to implement the proposed strategies successfully. Analyzing the plan involves assessing the necessary resources, such as financial, human, and technological resources, and determining their availability. Understanding the resource constraints and requirements allows leaders to make informed decisions about resource allocation and utilization.

3.3 ASSESSING LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS

Evaluate the impact of leadership styles on employee motivation, engagement, performance, and overall organizational success. By assessing leadership effectiveness, researchers can determine which leadership styles are most suitable for driving the desired outcomes of a business plan. This evaluation allows for the identification of leadership behaviors and traits that positively influence employee and organizational performance. Assessing leadership effectiveness involves evaluating the impact of leadership styles on various aspects of employee and organizational performance. It includes measuring the influence of leadership on employee motivation, engagement, performance, and overall organizational success.

➤ **Employee Motivation**

Leadership styles can significantly impact employee motivation. Different styles, such as transformational leadership, which inspires and motivates employees to reach their full potential, can positively influence motivation levels. On the other hand, autocratic leadership, which relies on control and authority, may have a different effect on motivation. Assessing leadership effectiveness involves examining how different styles impact employee motivation and understanding which styles are most effective in driving high levels of motivation.

➤ **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement refers to the level of commitment, involvement, and enthusiasm employees have toward their work and the organization. Leadership styles can either foster or hinder employee engagement. For example, leaders who practice democratic leadership by involving employees in decision-making and valuing their input can contribute to higher levels of engagement.

➤ **Employee Performance**

Leadership styles can have a significant impact on employee performance. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiring and empowering employees, has been associated with improved individual and team performance. Transactional leadership, which relies on rewards and punishments, can also impact performance to some extent.

➤ **Organizational Success**

Leadership effectiveness is closely linked to overall organizational success. Effective leadership can shape organizational culture, align employees with the vision and goals of the organization, and drive performance at all levels.

By assessing the impact of leadership styles on employee motivation, engagement, performance, and overall organizational success, organizations can identify effective leadership practices and make informed decisions about leadership development and succession planning. Understanding the relationship between leadership and these key outcomes allows organizations to optimize leadership practices to drive employee and organizational performance.

3.4 MATCHING LEADERSHIP STYLES TO BUSINESS PLANS

Develop a framework for aligning leadership styles with specific business plans. Consider the nature of the plan, its goals, the organization's culture, and the external environment when determining the most appropriate leadership style. By matching leadership styles to business plans, leaders can effectively motivate and guide their teams toward achieving the desired outcomes. The alignment ensures that leadership practices are in sync with the strategic direction of the organization. Matching leadership styles to business plans involves developing a framework for aligning the appropriate leadership style with the specific objectives, nature, and requirements of a given business plan.

➤ **Nature of the Business Plan**

Different business plans have varying objectives, strategies, and characteristics. Some plans may focus on innovation and growth, while others may emphasize cost reduction and efficiency. The nature of the business plan influences the leadership style that is most suitable for its successful implementation. For example, a plan that

requires fostering creativity and risk-taking may benefit from transformational leadership, while a plan focused on strict adherence to procedures may require a more transactional leadership approach.

➤ **Goals of the Business Plan**

Understanding the goals of the business plan is crucial for matching the leadership style. Leaders need to align their approach with the desired outcomes of the plan. For instance, if the goal is to increase employee engagement and collaboration, a democratic or participative leadership style may be more effective. On the other hand, if the goal is to streamline operations and achieve short-term targets, a more directive or autocratic style may be appropriate.

➤ **Organizational Culture**

The organization's culture plays a significant role in determining the most suitable leadership style for a business plan. Organizational culture includes shared values, norms, and beliefs that guide employee behavior and decision-making. Matching the leadership style to the organization's culture ensures alignment and fosters acceptance and effectiveness. For example, in an organization that values employee empowerment and autonomy, a transformational or servant leadership style may be well-suited.

➤ **External Environment**

The external environment, including factors such as industry dynamics, market conditions, and competitive landscape, can influence the choice of leadership style. Leaders need to consider external pressures and challenges when determining the appropriate style for a business plan. For instance, in a rapidly changing and unpredictable industry, a more adaptive and flexible leadership style, such as situational leadership, may be necessary.

3.5 EXPLORING SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

Investigate the applicability of situational leadership theories, such as Hersey-Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model or Fiedler's Contingency Theory, in adapting leadership styles to fit the requirements of different business plans. Situational leadership approaches recognize that the effectiveness of a particular leadership style depends on the specific circumstances and the needs of the followers. By exploring these approaches, researchers can provide insights into adapting leadership styles to suit different situations within a business plan.

Exploring situational leadership approaches involves investigating the applicability of theories such as Hersey-Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model and Fiedler's Contingency Theory in adapting leadership styles to fit the requirements of different business plans. Here's an explanation of these theories and their relevance:

➤ **Hersey Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model**

Hersey-Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model suggests that effective leadership depends on matching the leadership style to the maturity level of the followers and the specific situation. The model identifies four leadership styles: directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. The appropriate leadership style is determined

by the readiness or maturity level of the followers, which includes their ability and willingness to take responsibility for tasks. In the context of different business plans, situational leadership theories like the Hersey-Blanchard model can be valuable. Different plans may involve teams or individuals at various levels of readiness or maturity. By assessing the readiness of followers and considering the specific requirements of the plan, leaders can adapt their leadership style accordingly. For instance, in a plan that requires significant guidance and direction, leaders may adopt a more directive style, while in a plan where followers are more mature and capable, a delegating style may be more appropriate.

➤ **Fiedler's Contingency Theory**

Fiedler's Contingency Theory suggests that the effectiveness of a leadership style depends on the match between the leader's style and the favorableness of the situation. The theory identifies two leadership styles: task-oriented and relationship-oriented. It also introduces three situational factors: leader-member relations, task structure, and positional power. The interaction between these factors determines the most effective leadership style for a particular situation.

By assessing these situational factors, leaders can determine whether a task-oriented or relationship-oriented style is more appropriate. For example, in a plan with a highly structured task and favorable leader-member relations, a relationship-oriented style may be more effective in fostering collaboration and teamwork.

3.6 IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Identify strategies for developing leaders who can adapt their leadership styles to fit the requirements of business plans. Explore training, mentoring, coaching, and other development interventions that promote leadership versatility. Developing leaders who can flexibly adjust their leadership styles enhances their effectiveness in aligning with and executing business plans. Identifying suitable development strategies ensures that leaders have the necessary skills and competencies to adapt their style accordingly.

Identifying leadership development strategies involves identifying effective approaches to develop leaders who can adapt their leadership styles to fit the requirements of different business plans. This includes exploring various interventions such as training, mentoring, coaching, and other development initiatives that promote leadership versatility.

➤ **Training Programs**

Implementing training programs is a common strategy for developing leaders with adaptable leadership styles. These programs can focus on enhancing leadership competencies, such as communication, decision-making, and problem-solving, which are essential for effective leadership in diverse business contexts. Training sessions can provide leaders with knowledge and skills to assess situational demands, understand different leadership styles, and apply them appropriately in alignment with business plans.

➤ **Mentoring and Coaching**

Mentoring and coaching are powerful strategies for leadership development. Pairing emerging leaders with experienced mentors or coaches allows them to receive personalized guidance and support in developing their leadership versatility. Mentors and coaches can provide feedback, share their own experiences, and challenge emerging leaders to expand their perspectives and adapt their styles to fit different business plans. This one-on-one guidance helps leaders gain insights and develop the skills necessary for flexible leadership.

➤ **Job Rotations and Cross-Functional Assignments**

Providing leaders with opportunities for job rotations and cross-functional assignments can foster their adaptability and versatility. By exposing leaders to different roles, teams, and business functions, organizations enable them to gain diverse experiences and understand the complexities of various business plans. These experiences broaden their skill sets, enhance their understanding of different organizational contexts, and enable them to adapt their leadership styles to effectively address the requirements of different plans.

➤ **Action Learning Projects**

Action learning projects involve leaders working on real-world business challenges and projects. This approach provides leaders with hands-on experience in managing complex situations and making critical decisions. Action learning projects encourage leaders to assess the specific demands of the project and adjust their leadership styles accordingly. This process promotes adaptability, strategic thinking, and the application of different leadership approaches based on the needs of the business plan.

➤ **Continuous Feedback and Reflection**

Creating a culture of continuous feedback and reflection is crucial for leadership development. Encouraging leaders to seek feedback from peers, superiors, and subordinates helps them understand how their leadership styles impact others and the outcomes of different business plans. Reflection exercises and self-assessment tools can also support leaders in gaining self-awareness and identifying areas for growth and improvement. This feedback-driven approach allows leaders to continuously refine and adapt their leadership styles.

By implementing strategies such as training programs, mentoring/coaching, job rotations, action learning projects, and fostering a feedback culture, organizations can promote leadership development that emphasizes versatility and adaptability. These strategies help leaders develop the skills, knowledge, and mindset necessary to align their leadership styles with the specific requirements of different business plans. Ultimately, this supports the organization's ability to effectively execute diverse strategies and drive success across various contexts.

3.7 ASSESSING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Investigate how organizational culture influences the choice and effectiveness of leadership styles. Organizational culture shapes employee expectations and norms, which, in turn, affect the suitability and acceptance of specific leadership styles. Examining the role of culture helps leaders understand the cultural context and adapt their leadership style to the prevailing organizational norms. By pursuing these theoretical objectives, researchers can provide valuable insights into the alignment of leadership styles with business plans, leading to more effective leadership practices and improved organizational outcomes.

➤ **Influence on Leadership Styles**

Organizational culture plays a significant role in shaping the choice and adoption of leadership styles within an organization. Culture encompasses shared values, beliefs, norms, and assumptions that guide employee behavior and interactions. Different cultures may prioritize different leadership qualities and approaches. For example, a culture that values collaboration and empowerment may be more receptive to transformational or participative leadership styles, while a culture emphasizing efficiency and hierarchy may lean towards transactional or autocratic styles.

➤ **Employee Behavior**

Organizational culture strongly influences employee behavior. It sets expectations for how employees should act, communicate, and collaborate. This behavioral aspect of culture has a direct impact on the leadership styles that are deemed acceptable and effective within the organization. Leaders must adapt their styles to align with cultural expectations and norms. Failure to do so may lead to resistance, disengagement, or reduced effectiveness.

➤ **Decision-Making Processes**

Culture significantly influences decision-making processes within an organization. Some cultures may value consensus-building and collective decision-making, while others may prioritize individual decision-making or rely on hierarchical structures. Leadership styles must be compatible with the prevailing decision-making processes to be effective. Leaders need to understand and adapt their decision-making approaches to fit the cultural context. This ensures that decisions are accepted, understood, and implemented by employees.

➤ **Leadership Practices**

Organizational culture shapes leadership practices and defines the behaviors and actions that are encouraged or discouraged among leaders. Leaders who align their practices with cultural expectations are more likely to be viewed as effective and influential. Cultural norms may impact the way leaders communicate, motivate, mentor, and empower their teams. Leaders must be attuned to the cultural nuances and adapt their practices accordingly to establish credibility and foster positive relationships with employees.

4.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study emphasizes the significance of fitting leadership styles to the requirements of business plans. Adapting leadership styles based on the characteristics, goals, and cultural context of the plans contributes to organizational success. Understanding the various leadership styles, their advantages, disadvantages, and potential applications in different business contexts provides leaders with valuable insights into how to effectively lead and execute business plans. By aligning their leadership styles with specific business plans, leaders can enhance employee motivation, engagement, and performance, leading to overall organizational success. The study suggests that developing a framework for matching leadership styles to business plans can help leaders make informed decisions and optimize their leadership approaches. Strategies for developing leaders who can adapt their styles, such as training, mentoring, coaching, and action learning projects, are explored as effective approaches to foster leadership versatility.

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