Leading change

Leadership is a key enabler of change.
The role of leadership

There is marked difference in the orientation between management and leadership.
Both involve:

- deciding what needs to be done
- developing the capacity to do it
- ensuring that it is done

However, while management is concerned with order and consistency, leadership is concerned with change.
Deciding what needs to be done

- Management involves deciding what needs to be done through a process of goal setting, establishing detailed steps for achieving these goals and identifying and allocating the resources necessary for their achievement (through planning and budgeting).

- Leadership focuses on creating a vision and setting a direction, and developing the strategies necessary to move in that direction.
Deciding what needs to be done: **Quality of the vision**

A strong vision can make a valuable contribution to the success of a change initiative

But unless the leader:

- makes a realistic assessment of the situation
- and responds to the concerns of others

the vision may not be fit for purpose.
Deciding what needs to be done: **The leader’s assessment of the situation**

Sometimes leaders fail to make a realistic assessment of the situation because:

- **Their diagnosis is unsound**
  - They may be so committed to a project that they only attend to information which supports their own position.
  - A history of past successes can contribute to this condition.

- **Nobody challenges their vision**
  - Subordinates may fear repercussions
  - They may be too dependent and trusting of the leader’s judgement.
Deciding what needs to be done: The leader’s attention to stakeholder interests

- It is also essential that those exercising leadership are sensitive to the needs and priorities of key stakeholders.
- Visions that ignore the legitimate needs and rights of some stakeholders may never be achieved because disadvantaged stakeholders act to undermine any attempt to introduce change.
Developing the capacity to do it

• Management involves developing the capacity to accomplish the organization’s agenda by organising and staffing.

• Leadership focuses on aligning people, communicating the new direction and creating coalitions committed to getting there.
Developing the capacity to do it: Aligning people to achieve the vision

- Developing capacity involves communicating in a way that aligns people to achieve the vision.
Developing the capacity to do it: **Building coalitions**

Sometimes leaders fail to create the capacity to get things done because they fail to build coalitions committed to achieving the vision

- A feature of modern organizations is interdependence, where no one has complete autonomy, and where most members of the organization are tied to many others by their work, technology, management systems and hierarchy.

- These interdependencies point to a need for ‘lateral leadership’ to create commitment to a shared understanding of what needs to be done.
In those situations where there is a clear (and shared) sense of direction, committed stakeholders, including subordinates, are more likely to feel able to take action without encountering undue conflict with others or being reprimanded by superiors.

But sometimes this shared sense of direction is lacking because the vision is poorly communicated.
Ensuring that it is done

• Management involves ensuring that people accomplish plans by controlling and problem solving.

• Leadership is more concerned with motivating and inspiring.
Ensuring that it is done: Kotter identifies four ways in which leaders can do this.

• Articulating the vision in ways that are in accord with peoples’ values
• Involving people in deciding how to achieve the vision, thereby giving them some sense of control.
• Supporting others' efforts to realise the vision by providing coaching, feedback and role modelling.
• Recognising and rewarding success.

While management and leadership are distinct activities they are necessary and complementary.
What leaders do

A lot of attention has been paid to what leaders do (the behavioural view) and how circumstances affects what they do (situational leadership)

Some of the things that leaders need to do include
- Recognise the need for change
- Identify change goals
- Communicate a sense of direction
- Formulate a change strategy
- Involve others
- Build coalitions
- Motivate people
- Provide support
- Create an organisational context conducive to change
How they do it: leadership style.

- The assumptions leaders make about others has a powerful affect on their leadership style.
How they do it: leadership style.

McGregor’s theory X

• The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if s/he can

• Because of the human characteristic dislike of work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort towards the achievement of organizational objectives.

• The average human being prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition and wants security above all.

Managers who hold these assumptions adopt a more directive and controlling leadership style.
McGregor’s theory Y

- The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest.
- People will exercise self direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which they are committed.
- Commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement.
- The average human being learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility.
- The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in the solution of organisational problems is widely distributed in the population.

Managers who hold these assumptions adopt a leadership style which involves promoting commitment.

Early work on leadership styles suggested that some styles were superior to others.
The effect of leadership style

- A leader’s style can have both positive and negative effects
Situational leadership

• Situational leadership challenges the notion that there is one leadership style that will be best for every manager in all circumstances.
• The most effective style depends on situational factors

Charismatic leadership

The charismatic leaders are those have the ability to inspire others.

This requires two distinct skills:

- Framing
- Rhetorical crafting
Distributed leadership

• Leadership is not the exclusive preserve of senior managers
• Managers, throughout the system, have to accept that they have a leadership role to play.
• The network of leaders need to share a common vision that is clear, consistent and inspiring.
The collective nature of leadership

Collective leadership is required in those circumstances where a single individual is unable to formulate and implement a vision that is acceptable to a sufficient body of powerful stakeholders.

Two factors determine whether it will be effective:

- Coherence
- Fragility

Fragility can be defined in terms of three types of ‘coupling’.

Strategic coupling: The internal harmony between members of the leadership constellation

Organisational coupling: The relationship between members of the leadership constellation and their organizational constituencies

Environmental coupling: The degree of coherence between the leadership constellation’s vision and aspirations and the demands and constraints imposed by powerful external stakeholders
A checklist for leading change

Kotter argues that leaders need to:
• Establish a sense of urgency.
• Form a powerful coalition.
• Create a vision.
• Communicate the vision.
• Empower others to act on the vision.
• Plan for short-term wins.
• Consolidate improvements and producing still more change.
• Institutionalise new approaches.
Summary

This tutorial has considered:

• The role of leadership in terms of
  ▪ creating a vision,
  ▪ aligning relationships around the vision
  ▪ inspiring others to achieve the vision.
• Leadership styles
• The effect of situational factors
• The nature of charismatic leadership
• Distributed leadership
• Collective leadership
• The tutorial ended with Kotter’s eight point checklist of what leaders can do to promote change