
Leadership and Communication

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Concepts, Contexts, and Tools

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Preface

In this book, we use the term leadership to refer to management, control and communication in social systems. The leadership perspective is related to information processes, visions, objectives, deviations and the re-establishment of the system's course. In this book, we define communication by means of the following statement: Who says what to whom, through which channels and with what effect? Moreover, we describe, analyse and explore in depth the place of communication in leadership.

A manager uses a great deal of time on communication, was one of the findings in Henry Mintzberg's 1973 book *The Nature of Managerial Work*. A follow-up study 30 years later found that aspects of Mintzberg's findings concerning managerial work were no longer relevant, but the level of communication had not diminished to any appreciable extent.

We also use Mintzberg's term case letters to exemplify some points in a description, analysis or to bring out a practical perspective. Case letter is a term Mintzberg uses for short reports, analyses and discussion of organizations, but which cannot be considered a full-fledged case study. Case letters can be understood as a case example, where you show different sides of a problem, a problem statement or a research question. A case letter elaborates on some aspects of a problem that you want to have illuminated from a certain point of view.

With regard to a leader's communications, it seems reasonable to say that information is the 'glue' that holds communication together. However, if too much 'glue' is used, the consequence is information overload, which hampers effective communication. If there is too little glue, individuals and entire organizations may find themselves in a pathological state of disorder, with people filling the information vacuum with rumours and gossip. Leadership communication can be involving and participatory, motivating colleagues to be creative and put in as much extra effort as is necessary. Leadership communication can also be power-based and patronizing. Such a style of communication will cause tensions and conflicts within an organization.

In this book, we are interested in information and communication as part of a special type of interaction, namely situations where one wants to generate trust or influence.

We have developed 26 case letters (case examples) and 17 practical exercises in Part I of the book. These case letters and exercises are directly linked to the topics

in the respective chapters. Both case letters and exercises are developed so that the reader (student) can deepen their understanding of the concepts and contexts that are elaborated in the chapter.

In Part II, we develop six personal communication tools, and six personal coaching tools, with assignment to each of the coaching tools. In addition, we have developed 66 exercises to the six personal communication tools.

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