

Running Head: COMPARE AND CONTRAST ESSAY

The Manager vs. the Leader

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Many people think that a manager obligatory is a leader. This would be perfect if it were true. Unfortunately, it is not, and since not every manager is a leader, this can be the source of failure or conflict. However, once the roles are understood, then the correct distinguishing of the manager's and leader's roles can lead to a powerful combination. Harvard Business Review says, "This doesn't mean a leader can't be a manager, or vice versa. But to excel at one or both, one must be aware of the very different skills each role requires." (Buckingham, 2005, n.p.). This paper will compare the two roles and their differences.

A leader is defined as "the person who leads or commands a group, organization" (Business Dictionary). The essential part of a leader lies in his/her ability to motivate people to follow his or her lead. Goleman in "What Makes a Leader?" says, "They all have a high degree of what has come to be known as emotional intelligence" (2004, n.p.). They get the group moving and command them. The leader innovates and develops trust with the people. Further, the leader takes a long-range view and sees the end at the beginning. Then a leader sets goals for the whole company, depending on his or her own personal qualities and commands authority.

Managers, by contrast, have different characteristics. A manager is defined as, "an individual who is in charge of a certain group of tasks" (Business Dictionary). Whilst the leader innovates, the manager – seeks to maintain. A manager develops systems and structures and administers through them. The manager exercises control, while leaders inspire. Managers have a short-range vision and keep their eye on the bottom line. The leader would let the manager run the department, ensuring he or she follows the company system. However, in the new economy, a manager also needs leadership skills, as the new dynamics at work requires adhering to

systems, but also it demands the ability to innovate where necessary.

The classic conflict situation arises when the manager in a group is not its leader. The manager is the appointed boss, but he/she commands no respect and inspires no confidence among the staff. However, in the group of subordinates a leader may not be the manager, possessing no organizational position of authority. When the appointed superior speaks, the staff members look at the leader, who has no organizational authority, but is the 'de facto' leader. The solution to leader-manager conflicts is reasonably strait forward. Often, the natural leader does not have the development which the managers have been given. Organizations should note the natural leaders among their staff, and push them forward for skills and managerial development. That way the managers will also be the natural leaders as well as appointed managers. Likewise, managers need exposure to leadership development.

References

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