



THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEXT GENERATION LEADER 5.0

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Abstract: *The expectations of the organization regarding the leader's competence are the same, primarily effectiveness and achievement of goals. The article focuses on the issues of new generation leadership, its role and challenges. The challenges of a modern leader are primarily dealing with difficulties related to the VUCA environment, the space created by modern technologies, or the future outlined by Industry 5.0. These challenges can create both difficulties, constraints and opportunities.*

Keywords: leadership, competencies, leader

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organizational reality is a time of change and revolution. The environment in which we live is increasingly referred to by the acronym VUCA derived from the words: volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. This term was first used by the US Army (SLP 1998) to describe the war environment. This term is not surprising. In recent times, as a society, we are experiencing situations that threaten our security. First, the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, and now the war abroad. The changes should be accompanied by the rolling vision of Industry 5.0, and 4.0 has not yet arrived.

Undoubtedly, the existing leadership paradigms need to be reviewed. Perhaps update, expand, or designate new ones. From a psychosocial perspective, constant change is not conducive to individual development. From an economic perspective, the biggest changes bring the biggest losses, but also the biggest gains. It is probably a reality in which new challenges are faced by the leader.

1 THE ESSENCE OF LEADERSHIP

The term leadership, although quite common, is interpreted ambiguously. However, the analysis of leadership theoretical considerations reveals both differences and common threads in approaches. Leadership can be considered as a process, relationships, but also as a certain property, feature.



The word leader comes from the English "lead", which in free translation means to lead, direct, be the first, as well as lead a specific group and set the rules in your own way. Although the word "leader" is almost a calque of the English word "leader", in society it very well defines the position or function that a person who leads others can perform.

R.W. Griffin (2000, p. 554) defines the term leadership quite broadly. He defines leadership first as the use of non-coercive influence to shape the goals of a group or organization, to motivate behaviors aimed at achieving those goals, and to help establish the culture of the group or organization. Secondly, he believes that leadership can be considered as a set of characteristics attributed to individuals who are perceived as leaders. Assuming that leaders are people who can influence the behavior of others without the need to resort to the use of force, but also people accepted by others as leaders. In conclusion, **R.W. Griffin** (2000) describes leadership as the totality of processes used to get members of an organization to work together in the interests of the organization.

Not everyone can be a leader. Performing the role of a leader requires the candidate to have special features and predispositions (Adair 2007, Balcerzyk 2021, Kirkpatrick and Locke 1991). In the literature on the subject, there are many different configurations of features that, according to researchers, a leader should have. Undoubtedly, research conducted by **D. Balcerzyk** (2021, p. 238) confirms their importance (Table No. 1).

Table 1 The importance of having leadership qualities by the superior in the opinion of the respondents

no	Response categories	N	Percentage [%]
1.	Necessary	178	52.35
2.	Important	118	34.71
3.	Less important than predispositions and skills	26	7.65
4.	redundant	18	5.29
	Together	340	100

Source: D. Balcerzyk (2021, p. 238)

More than half of the respondents, 52.35%, believe that they are essential in a leader. 34.71% of the respondents assessed the possession of certain leadership qualities as important. Only 8% of the respondents consider them less important than other predispositions and skills. On the other hand, 5% of the respondents consider having leadership qualities in a leader as unnecessary. An important result of the conducted research was the confirmation of the importance of having leadership qualities by the superior. In addition, the then results indicated the key behaviors and characteristics that a leader should have. These include: consistency in action, the ability to set priorities, courage in taking risks and difficult decisions, passion and commitment, as well as being factual and concrete.



Maxwell (2003), taking up the issue of leadership, notes that this term should be considered not as a noun, but as a verb. Leadership is an action, not a position. You cannot talk about leadership if it is static, if there is no forward movement. Leaders always lead people in a certain direction. In his considerations, Maxwell emphasizes that leadership is related to people and constantly changing dynamics. Proposing the concept of five levels (Maxwell 2013), he emphasizes that the key in creating changes by a leader is to go through their levels.

While reviewing the theory of leadership, one can also notice the problem of interchangeable use of the terms of leadership and management in the literature. This issue is raised by **W.G. Bennis** (1989), followed by **F. Luthans** (2011), and **B. Kožusznik** (2005), who indicate fundamental differences in defining them. The analysis of the concept of leadership requires three assumptions to be taken into account (B. Kožusznik 2005, p.104). The first is that it is a relationship of influence, not a relationship of power. The second assumes that leadership is about followers and leaders - not subordinates and managers. Third - in leadership, intended changes reflect common goals, while in management they are the result of coordinated actions.

Taking into account the above considerations related to the concept and essence of leadership, it is proposed to define a leader as a person who is voluntarily followed by others, because he or she is characterized by such features, skills and behavior that inspire trust and a desire to follow him. It should be emphasized that a leader is a person who builds a specific relationship with his followers, who, based on influence, persuasion, and trust, allows to achieve long-term goals regardless of the context of the environment and possible difficulties (Balcerzyk and Karczewski 2021).

2 LEADER COMPETENCES

In the literature on the subject, there are two concepts of competence: "*competency*" and "*competence*". These terms are often used interchangeably, and the difference in their meanings can lead to numerous misunderstandings. "*Competency*" stands for "soft" competencies. **C. Woodruffe** (1991) defined them as the skills of employees related to their conduct, emphasizing that behavior is the foundation of competent action. They are referred to as behavioral characteristics. "*Competence*" means "hard" competencies, which **C. Woodruffe** associated with areas of work in which an employee's skills are adequate to a given position. **C. Woodruffe** also assumed that a competent person is one who meets expectations related to the effects of their work.



Competences define the abilities of employees that determine the fact of being effective. In addition, they mean the ability to use the resources of one's knowledge on various levels of the tasks performed, so as to achieve the intended goals of work. Competencies can also be defined as the employee's knowledge necessary to perform the prescribed tasks (Furmanek, 1997).

The issue of the manager's competence was also raised by V. Robinson. He believes that the structure of the competency model must be assigned to a specific leadership model. Thanks to this, there is a combination of all skills, broadly understood knowledge and openness to ideas. All these elements are components of the competences of not only leaders, but also employees, and their final effect is to increase the quality of work of the entire organization (Robinson, 2010).

S. Whiddett and S. Hollyford claim that competencies are a set of personality traits characteristic of a particular employee (manager). These include skills, knowledge, motivation and self-assessment (Whiddett, Hollyforde, 2003).

In the literature, researchers classify competencies based on various criteria. Starting from the source of their acquisition, purpose, availability, substantive scope, scale of impact and many others (Walkowiak, 2007).

However, the approach taken by **F. Delamare, Le Deist and J. Winterton** (2005) is most appealing, as they proposed a holistic model of competences, dividing them into four groups. This model includes the initial competencies at the base of the tetrahedron: cognitive competencies, functional competencies and social competencies, and metacompetencies above them.

By making a critical analysis of the literature on managerial, command and leadership competencies, **D. Balcerzyk and M. Zapala** (2020 p.72) proposed a competency model of a leader in a military organization. Adapting it to the specific role of a soldier - commander - leader. According to the authors, this model should include five groups of competences. The competency model of a leader in a military organization can be successfully implemented in a civilian organization. It should be noted that every leader functioning in the modern reality must be able to meet the challenges of the VUCA environment and the upcoming technological changes.

The competency model of the new generation leader is shown in Figure 1. It is assumed that the base of the pentahedron (a pyramid with a square base) consists of four groups of competencies: conceptual competencies, cognitive competencies, social competencies and functional competencies. They are crowned and joined together by the metacompetences at the top.

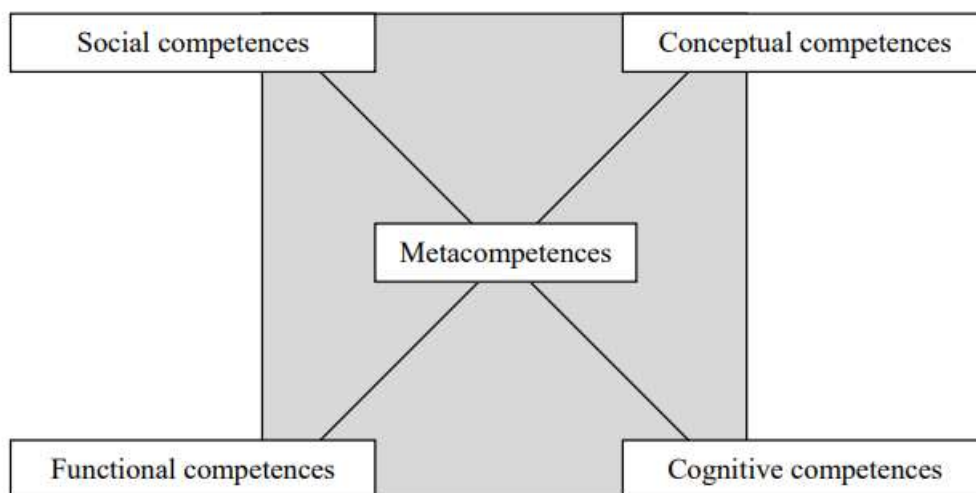


Figure 1 Competency model of a new generation leader

Source: Own elaboration

1. The conceptual competencies of a leader, which are considered by many leadership theorists as crucial. They are related to the ability to create a captivating vision and formulate goals in such a way that they trigger commitment and enthusiasm in action in followers. It is also the ability to forecast and create a strategy that takes into account the capabilities and goals of the organization, its potential, taking into account the situational nature and variability of the environment.
2. Cognitive competences can be described as predispositions, abilities to learn. Both knowledge and self-development opportunities, willingness and raising one's own standards of requirements are important. Cognitive competence is also the ability to build intellectual capital, which is necessary for the development of other competences.
3. Functional competences – which include: specialist, professional or position skills. Possession of technical, military knowledge, etc.
4. Social competences include the skills of: cooperation, team building, motivating it and, above all, skilful use of the potential of one's followers or subordinates. The leader's social competence not only allows for team building, but also makes the team develop, and its members want to share their knowledge with each other. Social competences are often underestimated, which is a pity because they shape the sense of trust and responsibility, and thus constitute the strength of empowerment.



5. Meta-competences that bind the others, and at the same time so different. Metacompetences refer to the ability to reflect, to look from a broader perspective than others can and to identify the essence of a matter, project or plan. They involve broadening horizons through their planned experiences, as well as learning in situations of uncertainty, volatility, complexity and ambiguity. Metacompetencies make it easier to develop conceptual, cognitive, functional and social competences.

It is assumed that the competence groups that build the proposed leader model are universal. It is enough to develop, enrich and adapt each of them. Then they will be up to date and independent of the reality that surrounds the leader and the challenges he will have to face.

3 LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

The spectrum of competences and roles of managers and leaders cited in the literature largely depends on the perspective of the authors' research (Balcerzyk D. 2021, Balcerzyk R. 2018, Czainska 2021, Simerson and Venn 2010). This diversity of approaches results from the specificity of research areas, but also from the extensiveness of management sciences, which allows us to adopt various perspectives on this issue.

It is indisputable, however, that the expectations of the organization towards the leader's competence are the same, primarily the effectiveness and implementation of the organization's goals. The challenges of a modern leader are primarily dealing with the difficulties associated with the VUCA environment, i.e. in the environment of turbulent reality.

The acronym VUCA describes an environment characterized by: volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (Strategic Leadership Primer, 1998). Metacompetences are of particular importance at the present time.

The challenge for the next generation of leaders is to fulfill their role in the digital age. A leader must be a leader both in the real world and on social platforms. Traditional ways of exerting influence and building relationships with supporters and subordinates are no longer enough. The leader must build his position, image, spread an aura in all spheres.

Due to the space created by modern technologies, which are digital platforms, the leader is required to develop new skills. It should be noted that digital platforms are very often used to exchange opinions and freely express one's thoughts (Van Dijck, 2013), as well as to conduct discussions between employees (Huang, Baptista and Galliers, 2013).



Platform users expect the ability to comment on events, places and people related to their private and professional lives (Korzyński 2018). The modern generation is called *connected* or *instant for a reason*. Therefore, he expects to receive prompt and constructive feedback.

The literature on the subject suggests limitations that may appear in the digital age. These include: informational, emotional, motivational, communication, ethical, cultural, or political limitations, etc. (Korzyński 2018). The task of the leader of the new generation is to overcome them, solve any difficulties and problems associated with them.

The social platforms cited as an example can be challenging or limiting. However, as a modern tool, they provide opportunities to use a new space to build relationships between the leader and his followers.

Another challenge faced by the leaders of the new generation is finding themselves in the reality of Industry 5.0. Technological leaders herald a new era, it will be the time of artificial intelligence. Although in our latitude we are waiting for Industry 4.0, we must prepare for these visions.

About Industry 5.0 when its three main elements: intelligent devices, intelligent systems and intelligent automation, connect with the physical world in cooperation with human intelligence (Nahavandi 2019). Functioning in the reality of Industry 5.0 will require a new approach from the leadership. First of all, taking into account the need for self-development, updating your spectrum of competences and taking into account the contexts.

CONCLUSION

Considerations on competences allow us to see that competences do not only mean comprehensive and complete knowledge in a given field. In shaping competencies, it is important to take into account all the listed elements of the proposed competency model of a new generation leader, i.e. groups of conceptual, cognitive, social, functional and metacompetence competencies. It is worth emphasizing that if we want to talk about the success of the organization and the positive impact of the leader, one cannot omit the factor of his competence.

The challenges faced by the leader of the new generation are all the difficulties associated with the VUCA environment. Uncertainty, instability threat. The answer to these limitations is stability, which will be ensured by responsibility, flexibility, courage in making decisions and bearing their consequences.



Further challenges are brought by technological evolution and its progressive development. The digital age is only the first stage of the challenges that Industry 4.0 will bring, followed by Industry 5.0.

Only a leader who is focused on constant adaptation, self-development and shaping competences in accordance with the proposed model can meet all challenges. At the same time, it would be worth remembering to take into account the contexts of the leadership ecosystem.

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