



Leadership Influence and the Formation of Organizations

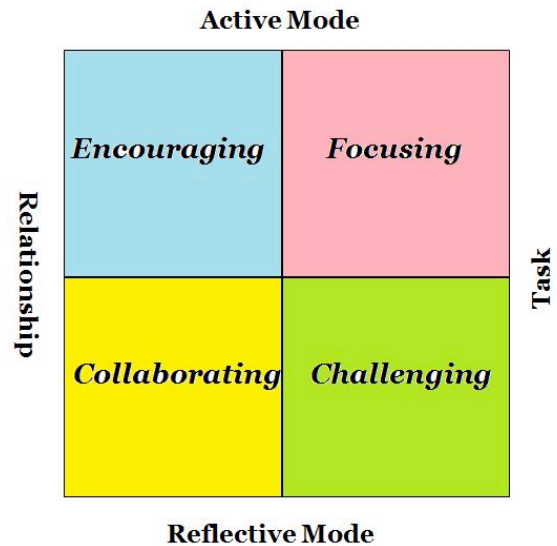
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Tyrants, Hermits and Mature Leaders

The Relationship Impact Model shows how different types of leaders influence the development of organizations. The three organizational types – Hierarchical, Organic, and Collaborative – correspond to three types of leaders: the Tyrant, The Hermit, and the Mature Leader.

The Relationship Impact Model predicts the behavior of people in relationship. First, determine whether a person manages risk in the Active or Reflective mode? Second determine how a person prioritizes Tasks and Relationships. Insofar as leadership involves relationship, the Relationship Impact Model provides a means of understanding the behavior of leaders.

Each quadrant represents one of four leadership practices: Focusing, Collaborating, Challenging, and Encouraging.



The Tyrant

Immature leaders who function in the Active Mode are “Tyrants.” They establish order through “conquest” of one form or another. Even polite bureaucratic processes have a tyrannical quality all their own. A “Tyrant” is anyone who seeks to overwhelm others by the power of their personal will.

Valuing Autonomy, they have no qualms about pushing their initiatives through whatever resistance lies before them. Individuals that tend toward the Focusing/Controlling quadrants play the dominant role compared to those in the Encouraging/Rescuing. The value of People partners with Autonomy in the Encouraging/Rescuing quadrant to moderate the excessive zeal we see when the value of Autonomy partners with Commitment in the Focusing/Controlling.

Tyrants tend to establish hierarchical organizations. Their style is authoritarian and power tends to be concentrated in the single leader. The Tyrant’s goal is control. The Tyrant’s priority is personal success. The role of the Tyrant is Director. The Director defines goals, objectives, and metrics, and meets out resources and rewards. The leader’s source of power is the self. In conflict the Tyrant is aggressive and demanding. The Tyrant seeks service and obedience from others. Communication is direct and unilateral, coming down from above.

The hierarchical structure assures power flows down from the top in very clear lines of accountability. Organizational structure maintains a well-ordered unity and is sustained through the over-powering will of the Tyrant-leader. Dissent is not tolerated. This style replicates throughout the organization. The system elevates Tyrants to positions of formal authority. Focusing/Controlling behavior comes to define the leadership norm. The Tyrant is “the leader.” All others are “followers.” Hierarchical organizations value efficiency and stability at the expense of creativity and adaptability. The most valued norm is explicit obedience to authority. “To learn to lead, you must first learn to obey.”

By contrast immature leaders who function in the Reflective Mode tend to allow order to emerge organically in their organizations. They have a more hands-off approach. We characterize Southern leaders as Hermits. They value Truth and have a contemplative frame of mind. In conflict they tend to turn inward, vacating the field of action to others.

The Hermit

The dominant leader from the South tends to the Challenging/Manipulating quadrant. The value of Truth partners with Commitment to solidify this leader’s sense of purpose. Although this tends to be more conceptual than actual, once the mind of those that tend toward Challenging/Manipulating clamp down on an idea, they can be very hard to move. In their immaturity they will work in the shadows to accomplish their idealized goal. They will enhance the influence of more Active leaders who share their perspective, although they may never know what the true goal is in individuals with this Challenging/Manipulating tendency. In individuals with Waffling/Collaborating behavior, Truth partners with the value of People which renders these leaders much less decisive.

When led by immature leaders from the South, an organization takes on structure and direction reactively rather than proactively. Southern leaders tend to observe situations as they develop and ponder meaning rather than act to control outcomes. This creates a void in the social context. More action-oriented leaders step in to fill the void.

Hermits found organic organizations. Though it may be more accurate to say, organic organizations form around Hermit leaders. The Hermit’s goal is to avoid conflict. This leader above all else seeks escape and will yield power to get away. The role of the primary leader is that of Spectator. The leader’s source of power tends to be institutional inertia. What is tends to remain. The status quo is defended by secondary leaders. Otherwise, in the absence of explicit direction from the Hermit, chaos reigns. Secondary leaders, however, will challenge other secondary leaders when it is in their best interest to do so.

In conflict Hermits tend to yield, or at least appear to do so. They give ground rather easily compared to their Tyrant counter-parts. They desire acquiescence from partner-leaders, although they would never make that expectation explicit. Hermits will elevate weaker personalities rather than risk confrontation with stronger leaders. Avoidance describes this leader best. The organizational culture is defined by tradition. Finally, communication from this leader is indirect.

Lines of accountability are implicit and can be difficult to follow. The formal “org-chart” does not accurately reflect the genuine flow of influence. Fiefdoms headed by secondary Tyrant-leaders dominate most processes and compete for resources. They carve out territories and turf that come to define the organization. In the absence of a collaborative environment, competition and conflict define the culture. The structure and processes emerge haphazardly as make-do solutions in moments of crisis. They come into being in reaction to external events or as a result of in-fighting.

Where power in Hierarchical organizations is through domination, power in Organic organizations is through manipulation. The structure is concentric. At the center is a void. Around the void, power-wielders circle in constant struggle with one another. Some Organic organizations value the appearance of concord so much that the conflict remains passive, erupting periodically in crisis resulting in significant change. The most valued norm is compliance to the culture. “Don’t make waves.”

Types of Influence

To appreciate how the Tyrant and the Hermit influence their organizations, consider how change motors work in both hierarchical and organic organizations. Andrew van de Ven and Marshall Poole have identified two “constructive change motors” that drive change in organizations under the influence of leaders. A change motor describes a specific process that results in new structures, relationships or outcomes. The habitual behaviors of Tyrants or Hermits empower different change motors in their organizations.

Consider first the Teleologic change motor. An Active leader drives a Teleologic change motor. It assumes 1) a unified entity (be it individual, group or organization), and 2) an intentional goal. (The Greek word *telos* means, goal.)

Some one or group plans, executes, assesses progress, and makes adjustments to action plans as circumstances require in pursuit of a clearly defined goal. Focuser/Controllers are Teleologic change agents. Valuing Autonomy and Commitment, they identify very quickly challenges to be addressed. They identify goals and pursue them. In their immaturity, Controllers can sometimes browbeat “followers” into conforming to their Teleologic action plan.

Contrast this dynamic with the Dialectical change motor. It assumes 1) multiply entities, and 2) competition. (The Greek word *dialektike* means controversy or argument.)

Opposing forces engage one another until one is defeated, or a new entity rises and surpasses previous contenders. Stability comes about through a balance of power. Change occurs when an oppositional force gathers enough energy to challenge and overcome the equilibrium of the status quo.

While the Teleologic change motor requires a single entity driving change, the Dialectical change motor takes effect when more than one entity competes for scarce resources to pursue different goals. The Dialectical change motor drives a conflicted environment.

As we have seen Hermit leaders function in the Reflective Mode. When they recede into their interior worlds, active secondary Tyrant-leaders fill the void. With no explicit direction or structure comes from the Hermit leader (Challenging/Manipulating or Waffling/Collaborating) secondary leaders engage in turf wars. An oligarchy of secondary leaders emerge as they achieve a tenuous balance of power.

Individuals with Focusing/Controlling behavior find a leadership void intolerable. They take charge within their field of influence. Those with Encouraging/Rescuing behavior struggle to endure the potential “harm” experienced by others in what they perceive to be organizational chaos. Wanting to protect “the weak” they step into the void to establish order.

In the absence of explicit action from the Hermit leader this oligarchy of competing interests establishes lesser hierarchies. (It is also possible that mature leaders in the mix establish lesser collaborative organizations as well.) Competition between petty Tyrants drives the Dialectical change motor.

Opposing forces result in randomness in the development of the structure and processes of organizations. Order emerges “organically” as an outgrowth of struggle. It lacks intentional design. The outcome is a “hodge-podge” of make-do solutions that become institutionalized over time and resistant to change. Change comes only episodically and through traumatic conflict.

The Mature Leader in Organization

Contrasted with both hierarchies led by Tyrants and organic organizations led by Hermits, are collaborative organizations led by mature leaders. Mature leaders, whether they are anchored in the North or the South, have humility, self-awareness and a willingness to learn.

Neither Tyrants nor Hermits, they are Partners. They call on the strengths of all four leadership types: The Focuser, the Collaborator, the Challenger, and the Encourager. They apply the practices

associated with each type and call on others who bring their own corresponding strength to the leadership challenge.

When leadership maturity spreads throughout the organization, leaders throughout the organization address problems that arise before them. They take authority while also respecting the autonomy of others. This flattens the organization that then becomes a self-regulating institution.

Mature leaders have competency in all four leadership practice: focusing, collaborating, challenging and encouraging. They welcome the participation of partners who are anchored in each of the four domains. Appreciating each leadership type brings all Five Root Values into the organization assuring balance.

The Mature leader may be anchored in the North or the South. The difference between a Mature leader and a Tyrant or a Hermit is in one's capacity to act non-habitually, that is, to act with greater intention.

The goal of the Mature leaders is engagement. Their priority is the shared success of everyone in the organization. The role of this type of leader is that of a Contributor. The leader's source of power is the team.

These leaders are responsive in conflict. They constantly explore with others alternative points of view. They seek participation from others. Their communication style is direct and multilateral. Communication flows in all directions without guile or subtlety, but rather with respect and an openness to allow the best ideas, perspective and insight to come to the surface.

The Collaborative Organization

If the Hierarchical organization comes about through force of will, and the Organic organization comes about as competing interests fill a leadership void, the Collaborative organization comes about through intention and invitation. People come together by way of informed choice. The Collaborative organization is the outcome of a call to commitment by leaders working together in pursuit of common goals.

Like the hierarchical organization, the collaborative organization is a unified entity. But the Mature leader does not bring about unity by force. Power is distributed among all participants. The primary leader serves as a steward of the culture and a gate-keeper of behavioral norms. The leader continually models and calls others to more mature leadership behavior.

Thus, leadership rises up from whichever partner possesses the technical competence and the leadership maturity to lead others in addressing a particular problem. Because power is shared, the structure of such organizations is networked. Nodules of competency link in a matrixed communication grid that allows ad-hoc teams to form around specific problems in a spirit of mutual support. Bonds of affection endure as teams disband as easily and informally as they form. After a specific task is completed, relationships endure. Collaborative organizations value partnership. Their most valued norm is trust.