

Fostering Innovations through Authentic Leadership

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KEY WORDS: *innovations, creativity, authentic leadership, organizational change*

ABSTRACT - *The modern world has become a small global village where the unpredictable situations and constant changes are demand of the day. High customer expectations, ever changing market situations and rapid innovative advancements, have compelled organizations to incessantly re-evaluate how they work and to adopt and implement changes in their business model in response of the changing trends. In such dynamic environment, leaders are challenged to find new ways to achieve lasting success, higher productivity and employee satisfaction. Modern leaders know that the full engagement of employees to the philosophy of the organization and the proper delegation of responsibilities will allow the organization to grow in the desired innovative direction. The intent of this paper is to examine the authentic management style that makes the organization promote the innovations as the main philosophy and core of its strategic development. By fostering the innovation process, a significant change of the typical company hierarchy might be observed, which further allows engagement and increased creativity of the employees, sustainable effectiveness and success of the organization in a long term perspective.*

Strokovni članek

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KLJUČNE BESEDE: *inovacije, kreativnost, avtentično vodenje, organizacijske spremembe*

POVZETEK - *Sodobni svet je postal majhna globalna vas, kjer so nepredvidljive situacije in neprestane spremembe del vsakdana. Visoka pričakovanja kupcev, spreminjajoči se trgi in bliskoviti inovativni napredek zahtevajo od organizacij, da nenehno vrednotijo svoje delo ter sprejemajo in uvajajo spremembe v svojih poslovnih modelih v odgovor spreminjajočim se trendom. V takšnem dinamičnem okolju so vodje izzvani, da najdejo nove načine za doseganje trajnih uspehov, višje produktivnosti in zadovoljstva zaposlenih. Sodobni vodje vedo, da le popolna vpetost zaposlenih v filozofijo organizacije in pravičen način prenosa odgovornosti omogoča organizaciji, da se razvija v želeno inovativno smer. Namen prispevka je preučiti stil avtentičnega vodenja, ki narekuje, da organizacije spodbujajo k inovacijam kot temeljni filozofiji in jedru strateškega razvoja. S spodbujanjem inovacijskega procesa se lahko opazi pomembna sprememba tipične hierarhije v podjetju, ki omogoča vpetost in večjo ustvarjalnost zaposlenih, trajnostno učinkovitost in dolgoročno uspešnost organizacije.*

1 Introduction

In a world in which markets, products, technologies, competitors, laws, and even the whole societies change rapidly, continuous innovation, the knowledge and organizational learning processes, which sustain such innovation, have become major sources of competitive advantage (Nonaka, 1991; Nonaka et al., 2003; Wang and Ahmed, 2003).

The ongoing globalization of economic activities and markets accelerates innovation processes. Drivers of innovation, such as the global availability of knowledge, technology fusion and shorter innovation cycles have become truly important for companies. To develop and maintain their competitiveness and ensure economic success, companies must steadily improve their innovation performance, strive for more innovations and seek new opportunities for commercialization. One way to approach

these aims is to introduce open innovation into R&D management. Open innovation moves beyond traditional business models and helps to open up firm boundaries. The focus shifts from the innovation itself to the search for novel knowledge (exploration) and to the means of applying knowledge (exploitation) (Gobbo and Olsson, 2010).

Assuming that the capacity of organizations to innovate lies in their capacity to generate new knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Nonaka et al., 2003), social interaction among individuals and groups constitutes a key element in this process. In accordance with the aforementioned authors, organizational knowledge is generated dynamically by means of social interaction among individuals and groups, among those belonging to the same or different organizations. For Nonaka et al. (1998) and Nonaka et al. (2003), the dynamic creation of knowledge is the result of the integration of three elements:

- the different processes of interaction between explicit and tacit knowledge – socialization, externalization, combination and internalization;
- the platforms or areas in which knowledge is created (Nonaka et al., 1998); and
- the knowledge assets existing in the organization.

On the basis of the existing knowledge assets, the organization generates new knowledge through processes of socialization, externalization, combination and internalization which take place in the areas created for exchange of knowledge among individuals or groups (Aramburu et al., 2006). The new generated knowledge afterwards becomes part of the knowledge assets of the organization and the basis for a new cycle of knowledge creation. The key for promoting and feeding this dynamic process lies in suitably and effectively managing the three elements involved.

2 Creativity in organizations

As organizations struggle to establish or maintain prosperity in turbulent and competitive environments, creativity becomes increasingly important for innovations. Creation of new products, services, or procedures of high quality, satisfying old and new customers and clients, seems to be required in both the private and public sector. Reflecting this situation, there is a strong interest in studying determinants and correlations of creativity within organizations (for reviews see Hammond et al., 2011; Mumford, 2000; Shalley et al., 2004). Creativity is a predisposition for innovations, so the leaders must encourage creativity among the group and the organization.

Creativity is often conceptualized as the development of ideas about products, services, practices, or procedures that are novel and innovative, and potentially valuable to a department or organization (see Amabile, 1996; Shalley et al., 2004). While creativity is often conceptualized as an outcome (e.g. Amabile, 1996; Torrance, 1969), we may also consider creativity as a process or behavior involving the generation, evaluation, and selection of ideas (e.g. Drazin et al., 1999; Ancona and Caldwell, 1993). Thus, creative behavior may be considered important in its own right since it can be conceptualized as a necessary precondition for creative outcomes, such as innovations.

Several studies have addressed possible relationships between leadership behavior and creativity at either the employee or organizational level (for reviews see Mumford et al., 2002; Shalley et al., 2004). For instance, Oldham and Cummings (1996) and Wang et al. (2010) found that leader support for ideas was positively related to employee creativity, and Zhang and Bartol (2010) concluded that empowering leadership was an important antecedent to employee creativity. On the other hand, George and Zhou (2001) concluded that close supervision by the group leader was negatively related to employee creativity. Zhou's finding was mirrored in a recent study where a main finding was that employees, who experienced increased requirements for creativity in their jobs, actually reported a decreased sense of efficaciousness for creative work (Tierney and Farmer, 2011). Transformational leadership behavior, which is characterized by charisma, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation, has also been linked to employee creativity (e.g. Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009; Hirst et al., 2009; Shin and Zhou, 2003; Wang et al., 2011). Furthermore, the quality of the relationship between leaders and their subordinates should influence creative performance of employees. The leader-member exchange model (LMX) positions leadership as a two-way relationship between leaders and subordinates, and a high-quality LMX relationship is characterized by trust, mutual liking, and respect (Graen and Scandura, 1987). High-quality LMX relationships have been linked to creative performance (Atwater and Carmeli, 2009; Scott and Bruce, 1994; Mathisen, 2011; Tierney et al., 1999). A recent meta-analysis of numerous predictors of the individual innovation at work level found that supervisor support and LMX quality was positively related to innovation whereas transformational leadership exhibited a weaker, though still positive, relationship with individual innovation (Hammond et al., 2011).

3 Authentic leadership

A general conclusion based on studies is that supportive, inspirational, and non-controlling leadership promotes employee creativity. In addition to these creativity supportive leadership behaviors, we suggest that authentic leaders, who directly expose their creativity among their employees, will inspire their employees and thus promote creativity and innovations in their organization. Social cognitive theory and related empirical research suggest that observing creative role models allows people to learn acknowledged creative behavior and, in turn, behave more creatively (Bandura, 1986; Shalley and Perry-Smith, 2001).

Thus, leaders' thought patterns, preferences, work standards, and creative activities may facilitate followers' acquisition of those skills and work strategies that might enhance their creativity. On the basis of such a role model perspective, one may argue that leaders need to be creative in order to promote creativity within their own organization (see Mumford et al., 2002). A couple of studies have supported such an idea. Tierney et al. (1999) found that a leader's creative problem-solving skills were positively related to the creative performance of group members.

For instance, if we take the example of the article “Discovering your authentic leadership” by Bill George, Peter Sims, Andrew N. McLean and Diana Mayer, published firstly in “On Leadership”, p. 163-177, edition of Harvard Business Review, in February 2007, we find a suitable case of a qualitative method used by this team of researchers, namely the interview. Moreover, it pays a special attention on the authentic leadership. That particular article is original and different from other studies, because of the in-depth study and diverse background of interviewees, underlining the importance of the article. Additionally, it is well-systemized and gives examples of questions, which are suitable for further research in the domain of leadership. The useful lessons for leaders, which could be applied in the practice, is also an important criterion, which made us analyze that article.

Leadership scholars have been conducting numerous studies trying to define style, personality and behavior of a great leader. The authors of the analyzed article stated that “None of these studies have produced a clear profile of the ideal leader...If scholars had produced a cookie-cutter leadership style, individuals would be forever trying to imitate it.”

For that reason, the research team challenged those studies by trying to find the authenticity of the leaders by asking “How can people become and remain authentic leaders?” They interviewed 125 leaders from different backgrounds, age range from 23 to 93, women and men, diverse range of racial, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds and nationalities, in order to learn how they developed their leadership abilities and how they realized their potential. As the authors declared themselves “these interviews constitute the largest in-depth study of leadership development ever undertaken.”

After analyzing about 3000 pages of transcripts from the interviews, the research team found out that they cannot “identify any universal characteristics, traits, skills, or styles that led to their success” and they realized that “a profile of an ideal leader” cannot be produced. However, they found something more important, that “their leadership emerged from their life stories.” The authors came to that conclusion through the leaders’ life stories, personal struggles, failures and triumphs, from which their authentic leadership style had actually emerged.

It could be assumed that in the interviews authors asked questions, related to the development as an authentic leader, as charted in the article. Those questions actually cover all the major aspects, included in the article. The answers of the questions are the summarized lessons for future leaders, which form different parts of the text.

For instance, question number 1 - “Which people and experiences in your early life had the greatest impact on you?” refers to the difficult experience in the life of the CEO of Novartis, Daniel Vasella, whose youth years “were filled with medical problems”, however he managed to reach the top of the global pharmaceutical industry. Vasella’s motivation for being an authentic leader was inspired directly from the difficult experiences in his life. When “asked what empowered them to lead”, that kind of “leaders consistently replied that they found their strength through transformative experiences.”

Question number 2 - "What tools do you use to become self-aware?" ("What is your authentic self?") refers to the story of CEO of Charles Schwab, David Pottruck, who "had one of the most persistent journeys to self-awareness". He was successful, precise and hardworking leader, however he found out that his colleagues do not trust him. Suddenly, he realized that he had not been prepared to take criticism, either at work or at home. Nowadays, he listens carefully to a constructive feedback from both his wife and colleagues, because "authentic leaders realize that they have to be willing to listen to feedback."

Question number 3 - "What are your most deeply held values?" is about practicing personal values and principles, as it is in the case with Jon Huntsman, founder and chairman of Huntsman Corporation, whose "moral values were deeply challenged when he worked for the Nixon administration in 1972." After being asked by his direct supervisor to gather embarrassing information, which will entrap a congressman from California, who had been opposing a White House initiative, Huntsman realized that this amoral atmosphere is not for him. He states further "my inner moral compass made itself noticed and enabled me to recognize this wasn't the right thing to do."

The answer of question number 4 - "What motivates you extrinsically?" can be found in the part of the article, which explains the balancing between the extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The authors defined the two types of motivation, on one hand, the extrinsic - "they enjoy the recognition and status that come with promotions and financial rewards" and on the other hand, the intrinsic motivation, that is "derived from their sense of meaning of their life." By giving examples from the interviewed leaders, a major conclusion could be drafted that the balance between the both types of motivation is to understand "where you find happiness and fulfilment."

The next question, asked by the authors - "What kind of support team do you have?" is about the support, which the authentic leaders get by their team. "Most authentic leaders have a multifaceted support structure that includes their spouses or significant others, families, mentors, close friends, and colleagues." With at least one person they are completely themselves, and "most leaders have their closest relationships with their spouses." Some might develop a special bond with a mentor or close friend, however, when they can rely on the unconditional support, "they are more likely to accept themselves for who they really are."

Logically, the next question is regarding the integrated life of authentic leaders, answering the important question "Are you able to be the same person in all aspects of your life - personal, family, work and community?" In fact, "integrating their lives is one of the greatest challenges leaders face." When being responsible for family, people, organization and changes, authentic leaders must stay grounded with "steady and confident presence" in order to survive through crises and unpredicted events.

The answer of question number 7 - "What does being authentic mean in your life?" could be traced through the whole article, however, "authentic leaders recognize that leadership is not about their success or about getting loyal subordinates to follow them. They know the key to a successful organization is having empowered leaders at all levels...they empower those individuals to step up and lead."

The last question “What steps can you take today, tomorrow, and over the next year to develop your authentic leadership?” along with all the other questions, mentioned above, is a suitable food for thought for future leaders, who would prefer to stay authentic and genuine in their style and behavior.

The positive aspects of the article are indeed the summarization of major lessons learned from the life stories of the interviewed leaders. Authentic leaders practice their own values and principles, they “can develop self-awareness from their experiences”, “they are careful to balance their motivation” as they “keep a strong support team around them, ensuring that they live integrated, grounded lives” and they have a “deep inner satisfaction that ... has empowered others and thus made the world a better place.” Another positive outcome of the article is that it gives different point of view for studying leadership styles, not by focusing on a universal style, but by uncovering the unique life stories of the interviewed leaders, which are prerequisites for their authentic leadership.

4 Conclusion

The theory used in the article is mainly from the Bill George’s book “Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value”. Initially defining what authentic leadership is, the authors of the cited article also draw upon advices for future leaders, collected from the transcripts of the interviews, in order to describe how those people became really authentic leaders, not by imitating someone else, but by being genuine and original, not replica of someone else. Some people believe that leadership could be taught at school, university or by coaching sessions. It might definitely work for some cases, however, the truly great leaders become those who are grounded by their life experiences.

Every business has its unique specifications and challenges, which requires the right leaders and the right leadership styles to face those issues successfully. The most effective and smart leaders can move among the leadership palette of styles, adopting the one that meets the needs of the moment. They can all become part of the leader’s repertoire, however, the authenticity of the leader remains unique.

Momchil Stanishev

Spodbujanje inovativnosti z avtentičnim vodenjem

V svetu, kjer se trgi, izdelki, tehnologije, konkurenca, zakoni in celo družbe hitro spreminjajo, so postale stalne inovacije, znanje in procesi organizacijskega učenja, ki te inovacije ohranjajo, glavni vir konkurenčne prednosti (Nonaka, 1991; Nonaka et al., 2003; Wang in Ahmed, 2003). Ob predpostavki, da zmožnost organizacij za ino-

vacije izvira iz zmožnosti za ustvarjanje novega znanja (Nonaka in Takeuchi, 1995; Nonaka et al., 2003), ključni element v tem procesu predstavlja socialna interakcija med posamezniki in skupinami. V skladu s prej omenjenimi avtorji je organizacijsko znanje torej ustvarjeno dinamično, s pomočjo družbenih interakcij med posamezniki in skupinami, med tistimi, ki pripadajo enakim ali različnim organizacijam. Na podlagi obstoječega znanja organizacija pridobiva novo vrsto znanja s procesi socializacije, eksternalizacije/posunanjenja, kombinacije in internalizacije/ponotranjenja, ki se odvijajo na področjih, ustvarjenih za izmenjavo znanja med posamezniki ali skupinami (Aramburu et al., 2006). Novo pridobljeno znanje kasneje postane del zakladnice znanja v organizaciji in podlaga za nov cikel ustvarjanja znanja. Kontinuirana globalizacija gospodarskih dejavnosti in trgov pospešuje inovacijske procese. Gonilne sile inovacij, kot so globalna dostopnost znanja, sklop tehnologij in krajši inovacijski cikli, so postali za podjetja resnično pomembni. Za razvoj in ohranitev konkurenčnosti in zagotavljanje ekonomskega uspeha morajo podjetja stalno izboljševati svojo inovacijsko uspešnost, se truditi za več inovativnosti in iskati nove priložnosti za trženje.

Medtem ko se organizacije trudijo vzpostaviti in ohraniti blaginjo v turbulentnih in konkurenčnih okoljih, postaja vse bolj pomembna kreativnost. Ustvarjanje novih kvalitetnih izdelkov, storitev ali postopkov ter zadovoljstvo starih in novih potrošnikov in strank se zahteva tako v zasebnem kot tudi v javnem sektorju. Glede na omenjeno situacijo obstaja veliko zanimanje za preučevanje determinant in korelacij kreativnosti znotraj organizacij (Hammond et al., 2011; Mumford, 2000; Shalley et al., 2004). Kreativnost je tako predispozicija za inovacije, zato jo morajo vodje spodbujati znotraj skupin in same organizacije. Številne študije so preučevale možne odnose med vedenjem vodij in kreativnostjo na ravni zaposlenih ali na ravni organizacije (Hammond et al., 2011; Mumford, 2002; Shalley et al., 2004). Na primer: Oldham in Cummings (1996) in Wang et al. (2010) so ugotovili, da je podpora vodje pri idejah pozitivno povezana s kreativnostjo zaposlenih, Zhang in Bartol (2010) pa sta zaključila, da je spodbujanje vodstva pomemben predpogoj za kreativnost zaposlenih. Prilagodljivo vodstveno vedenje, ki ga zaznamuje karizma, navdihujoča motivacija in intelektualna stimulacija, je povezano z ustvarjalnostjo zaposlenih (Gumusluoglu in Ilsev, 2009; Hirst et al., 2009; Shin in Zhou, 2003; Wang et al., 2011). Kvaliteten odnos med vodjo in podrejenimi naj bi prav tako vplival na kreativnost zaposlenih. Model »leader-member exchange« oz. model LMX (izmenjava vodja-sledilec) postavlja vodenje kot dvosmerni odnos med vodjo in podrejenim. Za kakovosten LMX odnos je značilno zaupanje, vzajemna naklonjenost in spoštovanje (Graen in Scandura, 1987), kakovostni LMX odnosi pa so dokazano povezani s kreativnimi dosežki (Atwater in Carmeli, 2009; Scott in Bruce, 1994; Mathisen, 2011; Tierney et al., 1999).

Poleg vedenja vodstva, ki spodbuja kreativnost, menimo, da lahko avtentični vodje, ki neposredno izpostavljajo svojo kreativnost med zaposlenimi, slednje tudi navdihnejo in na ta način spodbudijo kreativnost in inovativnost znotraj svoje organizacije. Tako torej lahko miselni vzorci, preference, delovni standardi in kreativne dejavnosti vodje olajšajo pridobivanje tistih spretnosti in delovnih strategij sledilcev, ki bi lahko okrepili njihovo kreativnost. Za primer bomo navedli članek »Discovering your

authentic leadership» (George et al., 2007), kjer lahko najdemo ustrezen primer uporabe kvalitativne metode - intervjuja. V članku je posebna pozornost namenjena preučevanju avtentičnega vodenja. Članek je izviren in drugačen od ostalih ravno zaradi poglobljene študije in raznolike palete intervjuvancev. Prav tako je dobro sistemiziran in navaja primere vprašanj, ki lahko služijo za nadaljnje raziskave na področju vodenja.

Omenjena skupina raziskovalcev je poskušala odkriti avtentičnost vodij z vprašanjem »Kako lahko ljudje postanejo in ostanejo avtentični vodje?« Izvedli so intervjuje s 125 ljudmi, da bi izvedeli, kako so razvili vodstvene sposobnosti in svoj potencial; vsi sodelujoči so zavzemali vodilne položaje, prihajali so iz različnih okolij, starostni razpon je bil od 23 do 93 let, sodelovali so moški in ženske, ki so pripadali različnim rasam in veram, z različnim socialno-ekonomskim ozadjem in bili so različnih narodnosti. Po analizi približno 3000 strani zapisov intervjujev je skupina raziskovalcev ugotovila, da ne more »določiti univerzalnih lastnosti, sposobnosti, ali slogov, ki bi vodili k njihovem uspehu«, in so spoznali, da t. i. »profil idealnega vodje« ne more biti ustvarjen. Kljub temu pa so ugotovili nekaj bolj pomembnega, in sicer, da je »njihovo vodenje izviralo iz njihovih življenjskih zgodb«. Lahko domnevamo, da so pri intervjujih avtorji raziskave zastavljali vprašanja, ki so se nanašala na razvoj avtentičnega vodje. Ta vprašanja predstavljamo v nadaljevanju članka, saj dejansko pokrivajo vse glavne vidike, ki so bili vključeni v raziskavo. Odgovore na vprašanja lahko razumemo kot povzete lekcije za prihodnje vodje. V članku tako izpostavimo 8 različnih vprašanj in analiziramo odgovore. Najpomembnejše ugotovitve raziskave so bile:

Ko so jih vprašali, »kaj jim je dalo moč za vodenje«, so tovrstni »vodje dosledno odgovarjali, da so našli svojo moč skozi preobrazbene izkušnje«. Daniel Vasella, izvršni direktor Novartisa, je kot avtentični vodja črpal motivacijo iz neljubih izkušenj v svojem življenju. David Pottruck je bil uspešen, natančen in deloven vodja, a je ugotovil, da mu njegovi kolegi ne zaupajo. Danes pozorno posluša vsako konstruktivno povratno informacijo od svoje žene in kolegov, saj »avtentični vodje spoznajo, da morajo biti pripravljeni poslušati povratne informacije«. Prav tako je za avtentičnega vodjo pomembno imeti osebne vrednote in načela. Jon Huntsman, predsednik Huntsman Corporation, je tako v določenem trenutku ugotovil, da mu službeno okolje ne ustreza, ker je preveč nemoralno. V nadaljevanju je povedal, da »mu je notranji kompas pomagal uvideti, da to, kar počne, ni prav.« Izpostavijo tudi ravnovesje med zunanjo in notranjo motivacijo. Avtorji omenjajo dve vrsti motivacije, ki vpliva na avtentičnost vodij: zunanja: »pridobijo priznanje in status, ki pride z napredovanji in finančnimi nagradami«, in notranja motivacija, ki izhaja iz »občutka za smisel njihovega življenja«. Preko navedenih izjav intervjuvancev lahko pridemo do zaključka, da je ravnovesje med obema vrstama motivacije ravno tam, »kjer je sreča in občutek izpolnitve«.

Omeniti moramo še podporo, ki jo avtentičnim vodjem dajejo njihovi timi. »Večina avtentičnih vodij ima večplastno podporno strukturo, ki vključuje njihove zakonce ali partnerje, družine, mentorje, dobre prijatelje in kolege.« Pravzaprav je »največji izziv za vsakega vodjo, kako bo v svojo vlogo vključil osebno življenje«. Kadar so hkra-

ti odgovorni za družino, ljudi, organizacijo in spremembe, morajo avtentični vodje ostati trdni, biti »umirjeno in samozavestno prisotni«, da lahko premostijo krize in nepredvidljive dogodke. »Avtentični vodje priznavajo, da je vodenje več kot le njihov uspeh ali spretnost, kako svoje vdane podrejene prepričati, naj jim sledijo. Vedo, da je ključ do uspešne organizacije imeti močne vodje na vseh ravneh in da so prav oni tisti, ki dajejo moč drugim, da se postavijo in vodijo«. »Kakšne ukrepe lahko sprejmete danes, jutri in v naslednjem letu, da razvijete svoj avtentičen način vodenja?« je bilo ob ostalih vprašanjih dano v razmislek prihodnjim vodjem, ki želijo ostati pristni v svojem stilu in vedenju. Pozitivni vidiki analiziranega članka so torej resnično povzetki glavnih naukov iz življenjskih zgodb intervjuvanih vodij. Avtentični vodje imajo svoje lastne vrednote in načela, »lahko razvijajo samozavedanje iz lastnih izkušenj«, »skrbijo za uravnoteženost svoje motivacije«, medtem ko »imajo močan podporni tim okoli sebe, ki skrbi, da živijo integrirano in realno življenje«. Bogati jih »globoko notranje zadovoljstvo, ki daje moč drugim, in posledično dela svet lepši.« Dodaten pozitiven vidik članka je ta, da ponuja drugačen pogled na preučevanje stilov vodenja, ki se ne osredotoča zgolj na univerzalen stil, temveč na odkrivanje edinstvenih življenjskih zgodb intervjuvancev, ki so predpogoj za njihovo avtentično vodenje.

Če se torej vrnemo na začetek, kaj avtentično vodenje pravzaprav pomeni, avtorji obravnavanega članka navajajo tudi nasvete za prihodnje vodje, ki so jih zbrali iz zapisov intervjujev. Želijo opisati, kako so intervjuvanci dejansko postali avtentični vodje: ne z imitacijo nekoga drugega, pač pa z lastno pristnostjo in originalnostjo. Nekateri verjamejo, da se lahko vodenja naučimo preko izobraževanja v šoli, na univerzah ali preko coachinga. Morda lahko za nekatere res omenjeno drži, vendar resnično veliki vodje postanejo tisti, ki so obogateni z lastnimi življenjskimi izkušnjami. Vsako podjetje sestavljajo edinstvene lastnosti in izzivi, ki zahtevajo ustrezne vodje in vodstvene stile, da uspešno premostijo dane izzive. Najučinkovitejši in pametni vodje lahko ravnajo v skladu z različno paleto stilov, in zmeraj uporabijo tistega, ki izpolnjuje potrebe v danem trenutku. Vsi stili sicer lahko postanejo del vodje, ampak njegova avtentičnost ostaja edinstvena.

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