

## **Leadership—New Adaptive Methods**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is focused on the meaning of the competitive advantage, utilizing leadership, knowledge, and the importance of creativity. At present, creativity is becoming the most important instrument of successful leaders, whereas knowledge is a fundamental economic source and production instrument. Therefore, the people who dispose of knowledge that can be deepened and shared are the crucial leaders for every enterprise. Education (learning) is one of the ways to acquire a competitive advantage, but under one basic condition: one must be quicker to learn and educate faster than competitors. The need for education with minimum time investment and maximum knowledge utilization is derived directly from the practice.

The fact that the leaders are inwardly motivated to learn presents a competitive advantage for an organization. It is possible to naturally increase the motivation in teaching made to measure, since the theory and practice are directly interconnected. To become the creator of curriculum, a developer needs to learn the tools for adaptive methods to analyze the knowledge needs of a particular student using mind maps and analyzing mental processes (by neurolinguistic programming).

### **Introduction**

What gives a competitive advantage? Knowledge is one of the crucial competitive advantages. The people who dispose of knowledge that can be deepened and shared offer an important competitive advantage for every organization.

In gaining knowledge, it is very important to explain the whole content of the term *knowledge*, where, from the point of knowledge management, knowledge is divided into explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge is structured and can be easily expressed in

words or symbols. Its communication and sharing in formal language is also easy, as well as its capture and representation in documents, databases, or information systems.

Tacit knowledge can be characterized by the words of the philosopher M. Polanyi (1966): “We know more than we can express.” The ability to come up with new ideas, creative solutions of problems, or the ability to ask the right questions belongs among the tacit knowledge.

### **Creative Leadership, Creative Organizations**

Future leaders need to be innovators and pioneers, all in one. They will need to adopt an attitude toward such concepts as think big, inspire innovation, support sharing, take the adventure, develop creativity, challenge status quo, create together, and make positive change. The difference between traditional leadership and innovative leadership is in the creativity.

Traditional leadership can be characterized as concerned with being right, following the manual, loves to avoid mistakes, and open to limited feedback. In contrast, creative leadership can be characterized as interactive, concerned with being real, improvises when appropriate, loves to learn from mistakes, hopes to be right, and open to unlimited critique.

One of the objectives of knowledge management is to support education and performance in an organization. An organization is a place where people improve their abilities to achieve required results, where people continuously learn how to learn with others, where people realize how they can participate in the creation of reality and how they can change it. This type of organization is called a learning organization. From an organization defined in such a manner, an organization can be considered as an ideal, target, desired, or dreamed organization. In such organizations people are brought to the fore. The main aim is to create an inspiring working environment where the central key is progress; success is the creativity and uniqueness of every person. Such organization creates strong creativity culture and in its daily practice (e.g., at business meetings, company meetings), it uses the methods of thinking such as mind

mapping and neurolinguistic programming. It stimulates its employees by teaching them how to learn effectively by a correctly selected style of education.

### **Tools for the Adaptive Methods of Education**

An old Chinese proverb says: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime. “To prepare future leaders, their ability to learn on their own must be enhanced. Students can use the tools such as mind maps and neurolinguistic programming during study, as well as during performance of work studies.”

What are mind maps? Mind maps are an excellent organizational instrument of our brain. They represent a creative and effective way of taking notes in our mind, which is word for word “mapping” of our reflections. They act as a simple tool for penetrating the information into or from our brain, allowing us to see a global view of a subject or field. Further, mind maps enable a plan of educational progress, i.e., we know where we are and where we would like to be.

The goal of mind mapping is for a student, a future leader, to learn to plan time better by mental mapping (as, for example, time spent on education), improve organizational abilities, develop the ability to communicate, be more creative, be able to collect himself, remember more information, and learn more effectively.

What is neurolinguistic programming (NLP)? This technique provides practical knowledge and practices of self-improvement. NLP techniques can maximize human potential and provide a complex of knowledge, skills, and habits, under which an individual is responding to inner and outer impulses of the environment, in which she lives. NLP teaches one the recognition of responses to reality, segregation of out-of-date and inefficient reactions from the new ones. The efficient reactions are helpful in performing the expected results. It thus fosters the possibility for personality change. NLP facilitates analyzing the successful models (of people): “learning by success of the best” (models of people who have learned and mastered some knowledge in a fast and thorough manner, elaborating their ways and forms of education).

The goal of neurolinguistic programming: a student can obtain valuable knowledge by analyzing mental processes and then modifying them into a higher level of activity that can be used in the most effective way in several areas, including education. Under the title of the workshop “Effective Negotiation Skills,” participants were exposed to using mind maps. Instead of giving students direct tips on how to negotiate effectively, the first step is to draw their own mind map about themselves. Using NLP programming, real situations were created, analyzing the successful models of real people, excellent negotiators. Participants were asked to analyze their knowledge and find the pattern and imitate it. Using tacit knowledge-oriented coaching, participants were instructed to create their own questions and their own answers without evaluating them. The following step process is used in creating a mind map and neurolinguistic programming. There is a procedure for how to create a mind map. A series of questions are internally asked, for example:

- Who? (boss, colleague, supplier, children, partner)
- What? (work position, money, time, price and amount of goods, free time, cooking)
- Where? (office, meeting room, corridor, coffee machine, desk, home, shop)
- Why? (I do not agree, I need to persuade others about my point of view)
- How? (clear arguments, calm tone of voice, shouting, persuading by giving examples, pointing at mistakes of counter party, pointing at good points of counter party, listening more, expressing my point of view more)
- When? (morning, afternoon, evening, Mondays–Wednesdays, weekends)

Then a series of additional questions are asked about the topic, for example, negotiation:

- If I want to influence something, first I need to know some details about it.
- If I want to influence my negotiating skills, first I need to know about me.

Think and then answer the following questions:

- Do I like negotiating?
- How does it affect my life?
- What is my usual position when negotiating?
- What are my characteristics—what kind of negotiator am I?
- What are my feelings when negotiating?

Above-mentioned practices lead individuals to draw their own mind map. They could see what their real position was in relation to negotiation. Afterward there is a possibility to build on this information and extend the knowledge.

### **Procedure: How to Use NLP Programming**

Step 1. NLP is teaching and training how to reach the following:

- If you want to be successful in negotiation, what do you need?

Students are asked this question, and with the guidance of the lecturer answer the following:

- GOAL: we need to know what we want; we need to have clear imagination of the result in every situation.
- PERCEPTION: we need to be attentive to what we gain.
- ELASTICITY: we need to be elastic, flexible because we need to change our behavior until we gain a successful result.
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Step 2. Analyzing the principles of NLP:

*The map of the world.* Every person has his or her own imagination of the world, i.e., the map of the world. We expect that the other people have the same map of the world,

but every map is singular. If we do not want to get lost in the maze of communication with other people, we need to know our map deeply and learn how to use it correctly.

- Another series of activities help focus students on the creative use of mind maps: Think about your own map in connection to the work life.

*The right decision.* Life is directly connected to the activity. Plans and dreams come true when there is an actor who creates them. Just as realization can examine the factuality of our plans and the power of dreams, it uncovers our real abilities. The future is happening in this moment; there is only the need to make a first step.

- Task for students: Think of the plan or dream in your mind and then think of the first step that is needed in order to realize it (exactly and clearly).

*The same step means the same result.* People do the same things again and again even though these things might not work. When something does not work, try something new! The change is the answer.

- Task for students: Think about the situation in negotiation at work when you use the same strategy of negotiation, but it does not work properly. What can you change? What can you make different?

*Communication.* People communicate verbally and nonverbally. More than 90 percent of communication is nonverbal. Have you ever experienced the situation in which you were quiet but still received a response from the other person?

- Task for students: Think of your subliminal nonverbal way of communication, try to identify it.

*Positive approach.* Searching for the positive approach and looking at other people from the positive point of view brings people closer to one another.

- Tasks for students: Think of why it is good to understand and feel closer to the other people, e.g., at the negotiation meeting?

*Ability to influence everything.* History shows that the person who was able to orient quickly and adapt to changing surroundings was the one who became a leader. The person with the most flexible thinking reaches maximum success.

- Task for students: Is flexible thinking important when negotiating? Why?

*If somebody has reached something before you, you can reach it as well.* From the point of neurological fundament, every human being is the same. Therefore, you can reach everything that was reached before.

- Task for students: Think about this question—Do you believe that with the right manual, you can reach anything? Do you know any successful negotiators? Why are they successful?

*People can reach what they can imagine.* Every individual creates an assumption to imagine what he wants to realize. When you have an idea that has not been realized yet, somebody needs to be the first. Why not you?

- Task for students: Do you know anyone in the history who thought that his/her imagination was only sci-fi? And finally, few years later somebody made this imagination come true? Can you imagine yourself as an excellent negotiator? How do you feel about it? What clothes do you wear?

*The loss does not exist.* The loss does not exist, because every loss is just an experience. When we connect with this experience, we gain the overall context and the result is the lesson. We have learned something new. The most difficult thing to do is to learn from our own “mistakes.” The most efficient is to learn from the “success of the best.”

- Task for students: Have you ever imitated another person? Is there anyone who has reached something that you would like to reach? (success at work, private life, sport and similar)

In analyzing the successful models of how people learn, by “success of the best” (models of people who have learned objective skills and knowledge in fast and thorough manner, elaborating their ways and forms of education). Listening to the real

situations (real problem solving), participants could learn from observing, analyzing, and imitating practices of the best (the most successful). Coaching is a part of NLP as well. It is based on the structural talk that supports the participant's thinking, helps positive changes, and identifies inspirational goals and the ways to get them by stimulating thinking and learning. People usually know more than they think they know, e.g., in extreme situations, unknown human power can be found.

Participants work with their inner observer and learn a lot about themselves utilizing this approach. They could uncover their tacit knowledge and are able to solve difficult tasks they had in their professional life in an easier way. New tools, instruments, and knowledge about how to be successful in the future can be gained. This process is based on sustainable learning.

### **Summary**

It is inevitable that there will be creative ways developed to better educate future leaders. The speed of gaining new and right knowledge and the ability of leaders to learn represent a competitive advantage for every organization.

Various forms of adaptive methods of education in organizations help people to learn about themselves, maximize their potential, and allow learning professionally oriented knowledge, which can be used directly in practice. Such new methods may save time and can give a competitive advantage. The competitive advantage in this field means to learn something or to gain new knowledge quicker than a competitor.

By using tools such as mind maps and NLP programming, participants can realize what kind of knowledge they need at that real moment, and/or which kind of knowledge is relevant to their present work project or task. It is also legitimately used in the education of future leaders. In this way, the lecturer is able to structure the neurolinguistic programming and offer just that information which is sufficient for students. Students are creators of the amount of the information that is given by the lecturer. The amount and quality of offered information is equal to the real needs of

students. Some needs are obvious and conscious, but some are subliminal and hidden. To realize both, several tools are available for the adaptive methods of education.

Albert Einstein said: "The definition of madness is to do the same thing repeatedly and expecting different results." With the innovation of educational methods, a creative view and practical way of human potential development have become available. That is why it is necessary to research and test new methods of education (even though they may be known but only applied in other fields), because just the right mix of them can lead to improvement and progress.

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