Destructive Leadership: "Boss From Hell", How Not To Be One?

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ABSTRACT

Leaders should motivate and inspire employees at the same time mitigating their discrepancies and creating synergy for the organizational goals. On the other hand, bosses and employees come and go but the negative effects of the destructive- toxic leadership will still remain in the organization. Destructive leadership might be regarded as positive if the organization is observed and evaluated as peaceful when all the works done in the nick of time, associated with the rules and the regulations of the organization. However, if the individuals reach a consensus that they are mistreated at workplace, they begin to sit on pins and needles and feel themselves unsecure and stressed. When the employees realize that they experience unacceptable, unfair and uncivil behaviors from the leaders or coworkers, then they feel worthless and disrespected, and begin to think about leaving and it leads to employee turnover. So, such negative outcomes may cause huge hidden costs like the organization will lose its reputation and its business contacts because of the leaving, offended employees. In this conceptual study, toxic, destructive leadership will be identified in detail through a literature overview and its consequences and countermeasures will be explained and major solutions will be offered.

Keywords: Leader, destructive leadership, narcissistic leader.

Yıkıcı Liderlik: "Cehennemden Gelen Yöneticiler", Nasıl Onlardan Birisi Olunmaz?

ÖZET

Liderler çalışanları motive edip ilham kaynağı olurken, aynı zamanda onların farklılıklarını dengelerken örgütsel hedefler için aralarında sinerji oluştururlar. Öte yandan, yöneticiler ve çalışanlar gelir giderler ama geriye, yıkıcı-zehirli liderliğin olumsuz sonuçları örgütte varlığını sürdürür. Yıkıcı liderlik, işler örgütün kuralları dâhilinde, zamanında yapıldığında, örgüt huzurlu olarak gözlemlendiğinde ve değerlendirildiğinde, olumlu olarak düşünülebilir. Ancak, bireyler iş yerinde kendilerine kötü davranıldığı konusunda hem fikir olduklarında, kendilerini diken üstünde hissetmeye başlarlar ve örgütte kendilerini güvensiz ve stresli olarak hissederler. Çalışanlar yöneticilerinden veya iş arkadaşları tarafından kabul edilemez, haksız ve saygısız davranışlar gördüklerini anladıklarında, o zaman kendilerini değersiz ve kendilerine saygı gösterilmediğini düşünürler ve işten ayrılmayı düşünürler ve bu da işgücü devrine yol açar. Böylelikle, örgütler itibarını kaybetme, küskün olarak ayrılan çalışanlarla birlikte kaybolan iş bağlantıları gibi gizli büyük zararlara yol açan olumsuz sonuçlara yol açabilir. Bu çalışmada, yıkıcı liderlik tanımlanarak literatür araştırmasıyla açıklamalar desteklenecek ve yıkıcı liderliğe karşı alınacak tedbirler açıklanarak, detaylı çözüm önerilerinde bulunulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Lider, yıkıcı liderlik, narsist lider.

Introduction

Employees, as community-residing persons, often have problems from minor to major ones in their personal lives. They usually consist of family, financial, emotional or psychological problems. Sometimes they cannot leave these at the door. Moreover, employees may stressful or frustrated with daily routine at work because of the duties they are assigned fixed at a deadline, when the organizational resources are scarce or they feel themselves as victims when they confront workplace incivility from the coworkers or leaders. In addition to them, the victims of the "boss from hell" also have in common that at least one leader (sometimes a couple of leaders) who makes/has made their lives hell. There is a common saying that, you cannot forget the things you have learnt from the strict teachers while you were at school or university easily. And, it's regarded that, the strict bosses who make employees' lives hell, have helped them to be more successful in the long term and to make fewer mistakes, that is to say, by mobbing or torturing them at workplace. In fact, these kinds of

expressions might not reflect the truth as well. Because, destructive leaders cause dissatisfaction followers, create stress in employees and de-motivate them in the organization. Oğlak and Durmaz (2018) highlighted that stress is often caused by psychological, social, cultural, or physical agents and since work life directly affects individuals' physical and mental health, work stress may affect work efficiency and job satisfaction negatively by affecting the health of individuals especially when it is experienced at an intense level. According to Lange, Borman and Rowold (2018), destructive leaders often engage in behaviors such as humiliating their subordinates, displaying anger and hostility, showing favoritism and acting differently towards different people or breaking promises that have destructive effects on employees' attitudes and behaviors at workplace. For example, Schyns and Schilling (2013) stated in their study that since destructive leadership affected nearly 13.6% of U.S. employees negatively and led to employee absenteeism, employee turnover and lowered effectiveness, it also led to huge burden at a cost of $ 23.8 billion annually for US-companies consequently. Besides, destructive leadership mainly results in interpersonal deviance on work teams and negative view in the job and organization on the whole. Schyns and Schilling (2013) stated in their study that since destructive leadership affected nearly 13.6% of U.S. employees negatively and led to employee absenteeism, employee turnover and lowered effectiveness, it also led to huge burden at a cost of $ 23.8 billion annually for US-companies. More than any organizational structure, it's clear that military based structures highly rely on the effective leadership at all. Furthermore, as Pradhan and Jena (2017) stated in their study, certain organizations in military and healthcare sectors are more susceptible to bad leadership than other sectors since they are characterized by extremely high job pressure, risk involved, and higher costs associated with failure as a matter of life or death. In addition, Reiter and Wagstaff (2018) emphasized that the importance of positive and effective leadership in determining military effectiveness is the key element in obtaining the organizational goals. However, Erickson, Shaw, Murray and Branch (2015) reported that, nearly 30 the United States (U.S) soldiers committed suicide because of their leaders in Iraq. It's hard to maintain that they committed suicide only because of the toxic leaders but plus the tension and the pressure for securing people's lives, destructive leadership's toxic behaviors led to this disaster. In addition, it can be inferred from the horrific experience that the case of toxic leadership in the U.S army is just like a classic triangle of destructive leaders, susceptible followers and a conducive environment and likely to appear in every organization as well. According to Padilla, Hogan and Kaiser (2007), the concept of the toxic triangle consists of a confluence of leader, follower, and environmental factors that make destructive leadership possible in organizations and when they all have become together, problematic or even disastrous outcomes will certainly be experienced at workplaces. Within this concept, this study focuses on the destructive leadership that can be very toxic and its major antecedents and outcomes in organizations. Moreover, solutions will be offered dealing with the ways for not being one of the destructive leaders and recommendations will be made for preserving the work climate, organizational identity and culture from the negative effects of the destructive leadership in the end of the paper. First, leader and leadership will be defined, and then destructive leader and destructive leadership will be examined through definitions and the methods the destructive leaders apply will be described.

Leadership and Destructive Leadership

In this section, first, leader and leadership will be defined, and then bad leader and destructive leadership will be examined through definitions and then, the methods the destructive leaders often apply will be described.

Leader and Leadership

Firstly, as a definition, a "leader is someone who defines the needs, concentrates on thinking and has an impact on others to form change by coordinating actions toward a common goal or number of shared purposes in a complicated work environment" (Clark and Gruber, 2017, p. 4). Sometimes, it might be assumed that good leaders are born, namely it is associated with the personality traits but that's not always true. Because "being an effective leadership can be learnt and developed by the experiences and a competent leader can achieve organizational goals by understanding the role of the

subordinates' role and enhancing their diverse gifts, abilities, and skills in the organization and flourishing their spiritual, emotional, and physical energy and drive them into one direction" (Gandolfi and Stone, 2018, p. 263). According to Caramela (2017), leaders are very important for the organizations because employees look for somebody to imitate or look to, learn from and thrive with good model behaviors. Leadership is unique for everybody because any leader has got their own style, ideas and strategy. Furthermore, it's stated in the study that leadership styles and methods may change depending upon outside influences, cultural codes and personal challenges of the individual.

Hougard (2019) interviewed with Dalai Lama and according to the well-known guru, leaders should be mindful, selfless and compassionate. Moreover, he added that leaders, whatever field they work in, have a considerable effect upon people's lives and on the way the world develops. Scott (2017) underlines that leaders' leader must be helpful, humble, offer guidance in person and quick, praises in front of other employees, criticize in private. Effective leaders build cohesion within the organization, achieve outcome that everybody can appreciate at workplace. Besides, Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm, and McKee (2014) maintained that, conscientiousness might be a powerful predictor of leader performance and a leader's level of experience plays a role in designating how much he/she will learn, but at the same time, because it's so natural that all leaders don't learn at the same level or in the same way. It's underlined that there are mainly six skills associated with creative problem solving of high-level leaders are as follows:

- General problem solving,

- Planning and implementation,

- Solution construction and evaluation,

- Social judgment,

- Metacognitive processing.

According to Kruse (2013), leadership is the process of social influence that boosts the efforts of the people towards a certain goal. Goleman (2000) underlined that there are six types of leadership; first one is coercive leaders who demand immediate compliance, second authoritative leaders who can mobilize people toward a vision, third one is affiliative leaders that create emotional bonds and harmony, fourth one is democratic leaders who can build consensus through participation, fifth is pacesetting leaders that expect excellence and self-direction, and the last one is coaching leaders who develop people for the future. The significant features of the leadership are displayed in Figure 1. below:

Figure 1. Significant Features of Leadership (Caramela, S. 2017, 4 Ways to Define Leadership. Business News Daily, p. 1).

"Leaders are influential in sealing the fate of their organizations with their decisions they make, strategies they form, and influence power on other people" (Dinh, Lord, Gardner, Meuser, Liden and Hu 2014, p. 55). On the other hand, every leader is not the desired, authentic one. Adolf Hitler might be regarded as a leader but he was not the one because he ruled Germany for years, he was a powerful man of being followed by millions of people but he abused the goodwill of many people, indeed he absolutely failed to start and develop "lasting, meaningful opportunities for the quest of happiness for the people" (Padilla, Hogan and Kaiser, 2007). However, welcoming and accepting and even promoting the ambiguity, surprise, conceivability, and open-endedness are the striking features of the leaders. "Mostly appreciated leadership occurs among group dynamics and in the spontaneously self-organizing political and organizational learning processes through that innovation forms flexible, rapid, thus real leaders are adaptive counteract to changes related to an unsteady and often imponderable world" (Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018, p. 95). In order "to define the term "leadership" effectively, following aspects should be taken into consideration:

- Leadership is a process (between leaders and followers),

- Leadership involves inspiration and influence,

- Leadership forms in groups,

- Leadership involves organizational common goals" (Clark and Gruber, 2017, p. 4).

Furthermore, real leadership comprises of "continuing processes that leaders and followers achieve self-awareness and develop open, transparent, confiding and real relationships that might be formed and affected by planned interventions in advance such as training sessions" (Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm and McKee, 2014). Figure 2 shows the practices that real leaders apply.

- 360-degree feedback,
- Specific job assignments,
- Coaching,
- Mentoring,
- Networking,
- Action learning,
- Corporate case studies,
- Computer simulations,
- Experiential learning.

Figure 2. Practices of Leadership (Dalakoura, A. 2010. Differentiating leader and leadership development: A collective framework for leadership development. Journal of Management Development, 29 (5), p. 434).

"Moreover, there are two common forms of effective leadership within the organizations"; they are as follows (Einarsen, Skogstad and Aasland, 2017, p. 3):

"Constructive leadership: These types of leaders often show both pro-organizational and pro-subordinate behaviors with the legitimate interests of the organization, promoting and showing efforts for the strategy of the organization when at the same time motivating and supporting their followers via considerate behaviors, inspiration, and the involvement and participation in decision-making processes. In sum, they both concentrate on the optimal use of organizational resources to achieve legitimate organizational goals.

Laissez-faire leadership: These types of leaders do not often interfere till problems are either straightly brought to their attention or the problems become so hazardous that any action is demanded and can no longer be prevented given the responsibilities related with their duty or position."

Building and maintaining effective teams which compete successfully and fairly with others is one of the major skills of the competent leaders. Additionally, "competent, effective leaders *have the ability* to motivate employees and they always care for their subordinates' needs, ideas, abilities, and aspirations" (Nelson and Hogan, 2009, p. 10). According to Özdemir (2019), when the employees are well-motivated, their emotional commitment will certainly increase and then, they will think that they are one of the important parts of the organization and they hardly ever intend to quit or search for another job. In sum, leaders empower their team by inspiring and playing a good role model at workplace. John C. Maxwell implies it in brief as, "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way" (Zioagas, 2019, p.1).

Destructive Leader and Leadership

"Destructive leader and leadership are also defined as toxic leader and toxic leadership. Since everything has one unwanted or dark side, leaders have one too, "destructive, toxic leaders. While, effective and authentic leaders involves in mutually agreed upon goals with followers working based on organizational objectives, a destructive leader is somebody who influences other people for the primary purpose of obtaining personalized power, especially for the power which is not shared with others, in order to meet his/her selfish goals/interests, and that result in negative outcomes for their followers, and colluders over the long-term" (Vorster, 2019, p.1). "Destructive leadership is an extensive inclusive phenomenon involving various types of misbehaviors by managers, supervisors, and leaders in their power and playing role as a superior" (Einarsen et al., 2017). "Although

destructive leaders and their uncivil behaviors are the ones that are never desired within organizations, destructive leadership is so common in the workplaces and it's estimated that the level of destructive leaders in organizations is at approximately 25% witnesses or targets of destructive leader behaviors" (Erickson et al., 2015). Table 1 (Erickson et al., 2015, p. 2; Padilla et al., 2007, p.178; Thoroughgood, Sawyer, Padilla and Lunsford, 2018, p. 628; Mathieu, Neumann, Hare and Babiak, 2014, p. 83). displays some common features and traits of destructive leaders:

Table 1
Common Features and Personality Traits of Destructive Leaders

Abusive	Incompetent	Bullying
Tyrannical	Intemperate	Toxic
Evil	Rigid	Bad
Callous	Insular	Narcissistic
Hostility	Malice	Unethical
Coercion	Theft	Corruption
Liar	Harassment	Ridiculing

"While reviewing the term "destructive leader or leadership", researches pointed out that some leaders shouldn't be regarded as bad ones until hard mentoring or strict tactics don't last so long or last for the short term in order to reach the organizational goals in time. One single mistake by any leader shouldn't be regarded as determinant of a destructive leadership manner. But, if such mistakes happen again and again, then it's certain that they serve as destructive leadership beyond regardless of its objectives or reasons" (Einarsen et al., 2017, p.3). For example, Erickson et al. (2015) stated that it's sometimes hard to define whether someone is a good or a bad leader. The key to determine best is "when enough becomes too much". For instance, a leader who eminently or carefully monitors the performance of employees and mentors them perfectly to do their job might be regarded as engaging in effective leader behavior. However, when that monitoring and mentoring turns into exaggerated, unbearable limits, the leader is possibly accused of micromanaging and as a destructive leader. Again, it's maintained that before labelling someone as a destructive leader, his/her behaviors should be evaluated first as systematic, volitional and repeated over a long period of time. In addition, Padilla et al. (2007) maintained that, destructive leader personalities are often associated with positive effects, at a minimum in the short term but it is the long-term negative ramifications that prompt the "destructive" label. So it might be inferred from the ideas that destructive leader behaviors may be formed on a basis ranging from selfish, ineffective/incompetent to unethical/evil. Furthermore, Vorster (2019) argued that some undesired personality traits that are related with destructive behaviors (e.g. arrogant, selfish etc.) are perceived highly acceptable when choosing someone as a leader for their businesses. For example, arrogant, narcissistic tendencies and high levels of selfishness might seem attractive to the people at interviews and they might be assessed as higher self-confidence, self-assuredness, or high self-efficacy, that personality traits that are rewarded for leadership positions. Behery, Al-Nasser, Jabeen, Rawas and Said, (2018) emphasized in their study that destructive, toxic leaders may be effective and competent in their profession at workplace in the short-sighted sense but they often intent to manipulate the work climate with their followers and they usually choose to succeed in by tearing others down. In brief, "destructive, toxic leadership lead to:

- Decrease in employee job performance,

- Increase in employee workplace deviancy,

- High levels of psychological distress,

- Low levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment,

- Extreme levels of work–family conflict" (Mathieu et al., 2014, p.83).

Also, "abusive, toxic leadership may result in assisting increased politics perceptions among employees at workplace. The undesirable perceptions often affect employee attitudes and behaviors in a negative way" (Harvey, Stoner, Hochwarter, and Kacmar, 2007, p. 275).

"Bosses from hell" often adopt behaviors such as undermining, bullying and abuse that lead to omnipresent form of mistreatment, supervisor social undermining, which happens when a leader or a boss intentionally tries to hinder employees' successes at workplace, intervenes with their ability to maintain positive interpersonal relationships, indeed efforts to destruct their reputation. "The destructive impacts of supervisor social undermining is incontestable, case in the host of negative consequences for targeted employees such as reduced self-efficacy and job satisfaction and increased health issues and for organizations jeopardize work climate, employee counterproductive behaviors, withdrawal, and turnover intentions" (Booth, Shantz, Glomb, Duffy, and Stillwell, 2019, p. 1). Consequently, it's true that leaders have a significant effect on employee commitment levels too. And there's a famous quote supporting this idea that "People don't quit jobs, they quit bad leaders".

Discussion, Conclusion and Solutions

"Regarding the recent researches, 89 percent of bosses believe employees leave because they would like to earn more and/or want more money but it's certainly not true. However, the truth is, merely 12 percent of employees really leave an organization for more money. Additionally, 79 percent of people leave their jobs because of 'lack of respect and appreciation' and 58 percent of people claim that they rely on strangers more than their own bosses" (Sturt and Nordstrom, 2018, p. 1). According to Reina, Rogers, Peterson, Byron and Hom, (2018), as a result of the survey, it was concluded that 42 percent of 10.000 job seekers left their jobs because of the bad, toxic managers. Then, it means that it's a huge employee turnover rates and since turnover leads to work climate destruction gradually and a total reduction in organizational effectiveness, it might be too costly for the organizations. Distrust of leadership becomes a worrying phenomenon for the employees and unfortunately toxic leaders often legitimates this famous saying "People don't leave companies, they leave bosses". McCallaghan, Jackson and Heyns (2019) also maintained in their study that negative follower feelings and attitudes, negative follower behaviors, and almost all negative organizational outcomes are related with the destructive leadership in organizations. In sum, Pradhan and Jena (2017) pointed out that major negative effects on an employee's job behavior and performance like sharp decrease in job satisfaction, decrease in organizational commitment, limited organizational citizenship behavior and reduced job engagement that cause higher intention to leave, increased sense of helplessness, increase in employee's role conflict, and higher turnover intention in organizations. Therefore, in order not to be one, leaders or candidates of leaders should weigh the following advice and solutions:

Leadership Training and Development Sessions

Tafvelin, Hasson, Holmström and von Thiele Schwarz (2019) claimed in their study that the leadership training is an effective way to promote and develop leadership skills and the efforts and financial resources that are invested in leadership trainings are worthwhile for the organizations because leaders who participate in leadership training can have developed leadership skills compared to those who do not participate in training. For example, Watts, Steele and Mumford (2019) concluded in their study that through leadership stories in executive education programs, analyzing real stories and leader development training, the sense making and the underlying cognitive mechanisms of the leaders can be developed and so, they can have promoted formation and articulation of better viable leader visions. It's true that leaders are born but the candidates of managers or leaders can be taught or learnt about being effective leaders. We the people all have inherited goodness or have goodwill inside. Nourishing them via leadership training programs, self-awareness and insight can be developed and mitigating and/or overcoming the negative effects of the personality traits of employees might be easier for the leaders. "Again, "for example, one of the significant dark sides of the leadership, "narcissism" might be unfolded and its possible unwanted outcomes can be displayed and defined through self-awareness and emotional intelligence training sessions". As, Nelson Mandela underlined, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world" (Quek and

Kaufman, 2019, p. 1), an insight and being respectful for other people's rights and ideas can be gained through trainings and education.

Showing Mutual Respect

Gils, Van Quaquebeke, Borkowski and van Knippenberg (2018) maintained that respectful leadership is the strongest restorative effect on employee performance and signals them that they are accepted and have status within the team in the organization. Plus, they concluded that respectful leadership can play a vital role in reducing the negative effects of gender differences and role incongruity and increasing employees' belongingness and motivation to perform their tasks. Therefore, it's so obvious that before employees walking out the door, just before the last straw to break the camel's back, they feel themselves so bad that they haven't been regarded as not respected an employee and/or even a human being. If the employees feel themselves uncared or disrespected, either they are not treated well or obstacles aren't cleared from their paths, they might be lost. If they think their voices are heard or appreciated, they will to go on their job as far as they can. However, they should care for the decisions the management took and commit their work until they encounter rude or unfair practices. That means mutual respect that whether employees or leaders choose to be compassionate, committed, truthful and honest and the employees never think of fearing of losing the relationship or the job.

Selfish Leaders

Selfish leaders are the ones who only look after themselves. They seem to pursue organizational goals and aligning the teams within the organizations but the only thing in his mind is getting good with his/her superiors for promotions, bonuses or further prestigious positions. Selfish leaders only care for getting ahead, accomplishing things, earning credit, but they are expected to be selfless, to put others' needs before their own and advocate for what's best for the individuals in the organization. However, they never praise for the team, never celebrate everyone's success or appreciate the contributions of the team members for the achievement. Indeed, leaders should form an adaptive social structure to support the mission and their people, generate trust and optimism within the organization and appreciate the efforts of the team members. Indeed, Salas-Vallina and Alegre (2018) discussed in their study that a selfish leader who disregards the human side of management and show less empathy causes lots of medium and long-term negative consequences on followers and organizations on the whole. Besides, they maintained that unselfish climate of fair treatment toward followers and employees enhance working environment where experimentation and risk-taking, interaction with the external environment, and participative decision-making are supported.

Leaders Who Are Always Right

Pelletier (2010) argued that destructive leaders often ignores the comments and ideas of the subordinate and they think that they always have all the answers and they rarely trust smart, talented employees who are capable of doing their jobs instead of letting them perform their duties. However, only developing strategic, operational or financial excellence, leaders should also develop themselves for moral principles and human-centered relations. One can never always right, as human beings, whatever position people work, we may learn from others. If a leader never listen subordinates' ideas or views then, creativity and learning new things never happen in the organization. Effective leaders never adopt the saying that "I'm right, therefore you are wrong". Employees expect to be respected for their ideas or solutions when it's time to tell their thoughts. Effective leaders try to understand the employees' point of view and when the individuals think that their thoughts are also being considered by the management, and then, the potential for building a sustainable organizational structure is more likely rather than the potential of flourishing conflict and division in the organization.

Leaders Who Fall in Love with Themselves (Narcissistic leaders)

Initially, narcissistic leaders might be regarded as enthusiastic, attractive and humorous. Moreover, narcissistic leaders have powerful vision and a great ability to attract and inspire followers. That's true but, that doesn't mean narcissism can be a useful leadership trait for the organizations. However, narcissistic leaders might cause huge costs for the organizations sooner or later. At the expense of their people/group members in organization, their priority is only themselves. One of the "Darkest Triad" traits, narcissism dates back to ancient times, depending on a Greek mythology, Narcissus who loved everything beautiful and fell in love with himself when he was gazing his reflection in the water, and finally fell into the water and drowned. As implied in the myth, narcissistic leaders might jeopardize everything even themselves in the end. Because, they are emotionally isolated and highly distrustful, they are often poor listeners and they lack of empathy and respect. They can tell lies easily and never think of negative outcomes of the lies, plus, they often trigger rage in the organization resulting in the destruction of healthy work climate. They are seldom empathetic people so; they never care for the thoughts feelings and emotions and the demands of their employees. They never hesitate to devalue or humiliate others publicly with no sense of remorse so, job satisfaction of the employees decrease and then, they often think of leaving. In sum, narcissistic personality disorder requires medical attention and narcissistic leaders/managers can ruin their career and the organization itself. Last but not least, as Hellmich and Hellmich (2019) alleged in their study that narcissistic leaders can easily be regarded as they are charismatic and appealing and it is usually difficult for organizations to extricate them before it's too late but they also claimed that identifying narcissistic leaders can be figured out through thoughtful interview questions and reference checks by getting in touch them.

Once again, as Gini and Green (2012) highlighted in their study that, destructive and unethical leadership might flourish for a time, but consequently, it destructs the values that sustain organizations and community. In conclusion, the leaders of today or tomorrow must comprehend the global and social changes well and keep pace with the technological breakthroughs. Besides, being truly effective and inspirational 21st century leaders highly depend on showing regard to the past experiences dealing with the leadership and overcoming the previously discussed problems within the organizational structure in this study. Briefly, all leaders/bosses/managers should remember to live by the golden rule of management: "Manage as you would like to be managed" if you don't want to be one of destructive leaders.

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Geniş Özet

Giriş

Lider beraber çalıştığı ve yönettiği insanlara ilham verebilen ve onların çalışma hayatlarında olumlu etki bırakabilen özelliklere sahiptir. Etkili ve gerçek bir lider, en önce, liderlik yaptığı bireylerin mutluluğunu ve refahını düşünmek, fikirlerine ve tercihlerine saygı duymak gibi önceliklere sahiptir. Bununla birlikte herkesin lider olamayacağı, lider olarak doğulduğuna dair yaygın görüşler bulunmaktadır ancak her insanın özünde sahip olduğu olumlu değerler ve yaşamsal tecrübeyle elde ettiği kötüyü değil iyiyi tercih etme eğilimi bazı eğitimsel ve kişisel farkındalık gelişim çabalarıyla liderlik vasıfları kazandırılabilir veya geliştirilebilir. Liderlere ait diğer önemli özelliklerinden biri de bireyleri etkileyebilmek ve arkasından sürüklemektedir. Tarihte çok etkin liderler görülmüş, devletleri veya büyük şirketleri yönetebilmişlerdir. Ancak her lider arkasından sürüklediği kitleleri, asıl amacı onları refaha ulaştırmak olması gerekirken, örneğin Adolf Hitler gibi bir lider, sahip olduğu kişilik özellikleri veya verdiği bazı kararlar neticesinde arkasından sürükledikleri toplumlara ve kendilerine felaketle sonuçlanan olayları yaşatmışlardır.

Başarılı veya etkin bir lider, kendini iyi tanıyan, yani farkındalıkları oldukça yüksek insanlardır. Bu tanım, liderlerin kendi zayıf ve güçlü yönlerini bilmelerini kapsamaktadır ve ortak özellikleri ise kendilerine ve başkalarına karşı dürüst olmalarıdır. Ayrıca gerçek liderler konuşmaktan çok dinlemenin daha önemli olduğunu bilirler ve kendilerine söylenenleri dikkatlice dinledikten sonra, her zaman haklı olan değil, başkalarından da bir şeyler öğrenebileceğinin bilincinde olarak, sürekli kendilerini geliştirme ve yenileme yolunu tercih ederler. İyi bir lider, birlikte çalıştığı grubu etkin bir şekilde çözümler, duygularına ve düşüncelerine değer verdiğini hissettirir, onlara esin kaynağı olarak, ortak bir fikir ve amaç birliği oluşturarak gösterdiği yolda birlikte yürür. İyi bir lider yeniliklere ayak uydurabilen, yaşanan toplumsal ve teknolojik gelişmeler direnç göstermeksizin sürekli gelişme kaydetmeye odaklanan bir kişiliğe sahiptir. Kendi çıkarları örgütsel ve toplumsal çıkarların önüne hiçbir zaman geçemez.

Liderlerin önceliklerinden biri örgütler için bir vizyon oluşturmaktır. Ayrıca lider, birlikte çalıştığı bireylere belirlenen vizyonun ne olduğunu açık ve net olarak anlatabilmeli ve çalışanların atılacak yeni adımlara karşı isteksiz veya kararsız olduklarını hissettiğinde onların duygu ve düşüncelerini doğru anlayarak ve yorumlayarak, vizyon doğrultusunda, onları istekli ve uyumlu hale getirmenin yollarını tespit eder. Bu yüzden, lider örgütlerde davranışlarıyla rol model olmalı, sinerji yaratarak ve yapmış olduğu uygulamalarda adalete ve şeffaflığa verdiği önemi bireylere hissettirerek, kendini kanıtlamalı ve belirlenen vizyon doğrultusunda istekli olmaları için çalışanların güvenini kazanmalıdır.

Öte yandan yıkıcı, aynı zamanda zehirli olarak da nitelen liderlik, tarihsel süreçte örgütlerin aynı zamanda daha büyük kitlelerin çok büyük yıkımlara yol açmıştır. Devletleri yıkımına da sebep olabilen kötü veya başarısız liderlik, günümüzde oldukça çok tartışılan bir konu haline gelmiştir. Örneğin işten ayrılmayı düşünen ve ayrılmış çoğu çalışan, işyerinde kötü veya haksız muameleye maruz kaldığından şikâyet etmiştir. Ancak çoğu yönetici, işten ayrılanların sadece daha fazla kazanç gözettiklerini ve kötü bir yönetimin olmadığını savunmaktadırlar.

Sonuç, Tartışma ve Öneriler

Yıkıcı liderlerin sahip oldukları kişilik özellikleri, ilk başlarda örgütsel hedeflere ulaşma konusunda olumlu olarak algılansa da, çalışanların üzerinde hissettikleri baskı ve olumsuz duygular artmaya başladıkça yıkıcı liderliğin yol açabileceği zararlar da gün yüzüne çıkmaya başlamaktadır. Yıkıcı liderler, başkalarından veya onların deneyimlerinden bir şeyler öğreneceklerini veya ders çıkarabileceklerini düşünmezler. Yine yıkıcı liderler, bireyleri başarısızlıkları veya eksikleri konusunda azarlar, herkesin gözü önünde küçük düşürürler veya fikirleriyle alay ederler. Zira bir lider bireylere olumlu bir örnek olmalı, birlik duygusunu aşılayarak bireyleri ve onların çabalarını belirli

yönde veya belirlenen vizyona uyumlu olarak harcamalarını sağlaması gerekirken, yıkıcı liderler, çalışanların moralini bozarak, iş memnuniyetlerini hızla azaltma yoluna gitmektedirler.

Yıkıcı, zehirli liderler işe başlamadan önce, gösterdikleri kişilik özellikleri ve oldukça titiz ve hatasız çalışma odaklı yönleriyle çoğu zaman bireyleri olumlu yönde etkilerler. Lakin çalışanlar işlerini yürütürken çok yakından takip edilmeyi, sürekli gözetim altında olmayı ve devamlı olarak üstlerine rapor sunulması konusunda isteksizdirler ve bu şartlar altında kendilerini baskı altında hissederek daha verimsiz hale gelmektedirler. Bunlara ek olarak, örgüt içerisinde algılanan örgütsel politikaların çalışanlar üzerinde yaratmış olduğu endişe ve stres, toplumsal bir hayatın bir parçası olarak yaşadıkları ailevi ve ekonomik sorunlarla bir araya geldiğinde, çalışanlar genellikle işten ayrılmayı düşünmektedirler. Bu da işgücü devrine yol açmakta ve örgütlere fazladan mali yükler getirmektedir. Zira işten ayrılan bir çalışan demek, sahip olduğu bilgi ve tecrübelerinde kendisiyle birlikte kaybolması demektir ve bu da örgütte bir iş kaybına yol açarak kendisi vasıtasıyla kurulan diğer işletmelerdeki bağlantıların ve iletişimin de tehlikeye girmesi anlamına gelmektedir. Ayrıca, işgücü devri ne kadar çok olursa, işletmenin itibar kaydı da o kadar fazla olabilecektir.

Tüm bu bilgilerin ışığında, 21. Yüzyılın etkin bir lideri, sürekli olarak kendini bilmeli ve çevresine ve bireylere karşı farkındalık düzeyini artırmalıdır. Çünkü toplumsal gerçeklikler teknolojik gelişmelere paralel olarak sürekli değişmekte ve evrensel gerçeklikler de buna benzer şekilde devinim göstermektedir. Günümüz veya yarının lideri sürekli kendini geliştirmeli, yeniliklere açık olmalı ve bireylerin farklı fikir ve görüşlerine, yaşam biçimlerine ve tercihlerine saygı duymayı bilmelidir. Ayrıca iyi bir lider, empati duygusuna sahip olmalıdır ve yükselirken kullandığı "merdiveni" beraberinde götürmemeli, beraber çalıştığı bireylerin, insani değerleri ve adaleti benimsemiş çalışanların da kendilerini geliştirmelerine olanak sağlamalı ve onlara liderlik yolunda destek olmalıdır.