

## LEADERSHIP, THE PLEASURE OF EXPRESSING OURSELVES THROUGH WORK

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*Abstract: What is absent in the immediate reality is the charm, the pleasure of expressing ourselves through work, given by the existence, around us, of charismatic people who are as important as salt is to the food. That is why I considered this scientific analysis of leadership necessary, setting out from the personal magnetism of some people who have innate leadership skills.*

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### 1. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ABOUT THE PLEASURE OF EXPRESSING OURSELVES THROUGH WORK

All is possible when seduction is involved:

- Individuals might be seduced against their will;
- Leaders might seduce a given group without even aiming for it and they may find themselves triumphant without having planned or wished to.

This can be explained by starting from the **objective reality according to which the group transposes to a state of mind that is presumed to have been generated by the charismatic leader, but in effect has been intensified by the group itself** (Kets de Vries, 2003).

The type of seduction that leadership is built upon has nothing to do with eroticism and it consists of any sudden change or swing of attitude of a human being, such as any:

- sudden conversion;
- contribution in the name of a cause;
- moral metamorphosis.

The point is not to get what you want, but to want what you've got.

The seduction exerted on fellow creatures, from a non-erotic perspective, is in fact the charismatic leaders' mutual act of **leading and being led**. As interaction, this implies the use

of some subtle charm in order to influence the others, to make them regard you with gratitude for the inner fascination you induced when they considered you the symbol of a world that they didn't know, but that they were coveting. Seduction must be understood as something that comprises a **certain degree of autosuggestion**.

The capacity to seduce is characteristic of the persons with leadership skills, as it is innate and it consists of **the personal charm some of us are born with and that we increase by means of cultural polishing up, materializing it in the sensation of dominating charm exercised more or less consciously over other individuals**. The seducer controls the seduced. To be the desired person is a subtle form of control. It is equally true that the **seducer**, as the person seducing others, **seduces himself/herself too**, depending more or less on the strength of his/her desire for power. The stronger the desire is, the more we may speak of a malignant form of narcissism and manipulation.

The seducer's portrayal segregated on genders appears:

- fragile and distinguished as a passive, defensive alternative of charm, even more redoubtable (in women);
- energetic, fanatic, determined and clairvoyant, as an active and offensive alternative to charm (in men).

Scientific research in the field of social psychology has demonstrated that, similarly to the world of bees, where the vast majority is made up of nurses and only a minority represents the queens, in the world of human beings, **three quarters of the individuals lack charm**, having nothing seductive in them. These types of people are terrified of inter-human relations that imply proximity, because they regard them as hazardous and therefore do nothing in order to bring their fellow-creatures closer. On the contrary, they do all they can to send them away. The paradox is that these individuals, who do all they can to isolate themselves, consider that the greatest threat that lurks is for them not to be accepted, or to be rejected, abandoned and humiliated by others. This majority of people build a scenario in their minds according to which they cannot be loved, given the fact that they do not deserve to be loved. They are the same people who surrender to the subjective perception that a charming, seductive fellow-creature, the leader, possesses something that they need.

If he/she possesses those qualities that can turn him/her into the representation of the personal fictions of the group members, the person in question will exercise, consciously or not, a certain fascination, seducing through the fact that he/she can reflect the image of the leader who embodies the strong emotional currents awakened by the subjective perception of the individuals from within the group.

It is a demonstrated fact that to be a leader is a talent, such as playing the piano or writing poetry. Personal charm cannot be acquired by storing up competences. Constructed charm is or is not artificial and cannot replace authentic inter-human relating.

We are currently witnessing the apparition of literature on seduction techniques that promise the impossible, that is to transmit the competence to seduce to anybody, even to those individuals who lack charm, i.e. to certain people who fear the idea of not being accepted by the group they are a part of, who dread rejection, humiliation abandonment, who lack self-confidence, nurturing the belief that they do not deserve to be loved and are not entitled to hope to ever be loved. It is cruel

to promise sight to the blind, on condition they attentively read a couple of books.

Undoubtedly, the principles promoted by this type of scientific literature on the seduction techniques are correct, but they exclusively address people born talented and charismatic. Otherwise, persons who unconsciously avoid seduction applying them will turn them into anti-seduction techniques. Thus, a person who lacks charm, is insecure or has no self-confidence may intend certain gestures to attract others, but by monitoring their accomplishment he/she will make the charm of the interaction disappear and will let show the rigidity and lack of spontaneity. Seduction techniques are for those who try to make it look as if they were born charming, serving as a shield that the false seducers will put between themselves and those whom they wish to manipulate, so that they would feel safe and avoid being attracted or touched, thus losing control.

Similarly dangerous is the excessive use of the genuine native charm, with the purpose of dominating those in the proximity, as an obsessive need for power, case in which the manipulator will seduce himself/herself beyond limits, ending up smashed by the force of his/her own desire for power. This is the situation that designates the concept of exacerbated, malignant narcissism, where seduction operates as a defence system against painful feelings of rejection, abandonment and depression, in an attempt to convince the ill ego that it is attractive, wanted, loved and full of life, by means of confirmation of the personal value regarded as a toll of the manipulated victims, gathered in large numbers on display on "the hunting trophy wall".

Seduction and manipulation are possible manifestations of the individuals' personal strength, both deriving from the innate charm and aiming to influence the other. **The difference is given by the pursued purpose**, which depends on the strength of the individual's personality, expressed in dimensions such as self-confidence, congruence, authenticity and morality.

The seducer might make use of the attraction created in order to exercise his

power over those seduced, either by keeping the effect of the seduction to himself, or by giving up on his own glory and orienting his/her strength toward higher prizes. In the first case, we are talking about manipulation, while in the latter we speak of mentors, masters, professors, vibrant leaders, who **deviate their disciples' fascination away from their own person, from their knowledge, to the idea that those whom they have inspire will be able to do things they were not aware they could.** Without the strong emotions nurtured by the group towards the leader, any activity becomes unattractive.

**To manipulate is to use people by seducing them, including erotically, to the end of using them for purposes that are not their own.** It is essential not to mistake manipulation for seduction, the latter being most often beneficial for the one experiencing it, as it elevates him/her to another spiritual dimension.

**To seduce is to propose another a higher level of existence that relies on such aspects as living more intensely and expecting more from life.**

What differentiates a manager from a leader is charisma, that is the individuals' magnetism, that certain '*je ne sais quoi*', a mystery even for the one blessed with innate charm, based on character traits, which he /she tries to hide and not on something he/she would be convinced to show, as a personal advantage. The leader's charisma relies on authenticity and that is because artifice and control have nothing to do with seduction, as a phenomenon developed in the depths of personality.

What impresses, enlivens, fascinates and hypnotizes in a person with leadership skills is the profound side of his/her charm, which works as a magnet with five attitudinal properties:

1. The belief that one needs not be entirely agreeable.
2. The capacity to count on oneself alone to cope life's problems.
3. The sincerity and creativity in expressing personal opinions and solving problems.
4. The harmony between what one thinks and does.

## 2. AUTHENTICITY

Leaders are sympathetic by the people surrounding them, because they do not refrain from being honest and bold under any circumstance, imposing their character, desires, projects, but weaknesses too, assuming all potential risks. Being resolute persons, leaders cause fascination because they allow themselves to be themselves, being physically and psychically present under any circumstance, without fearing that they might be discovered as they truly are, with their weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

Precisely because they have the courage not to waste energy on fighting the tiresome and useless battle for the maintenance of appearances, leaders have always exerted a certain fascination over the crowds. The leader's magnetism is related to not keeping appearances, not necessarily meaning that the leader is at peace with all the aspects of his/her personality, but rather that he/she never lets himself/herself deceived by the contradictions and conflicts with him/her.

What makes the leaders examples for those around them is the acceptance of their own individuality, people discovering a new energy in their company, one that sets out from sincerity and positively stimulating boldness that is contagious for the fascinated group. This is the capacity to shine of the one seducing the group, of the leader: to give the others the impression that they can be 'brilliant' too, provided they dare to assert themselves (Buckingham, Ciffman, 2005).

A leader is an unperturbed person, regardless of the manner in which he/she is regarded by those around, not seeking the total approval or disapproval of the others. A person with leadership skills does not seek to be agreeable to everyone around, expects nothing from his/her fellow-creatures, which is why he/she will not attempt to constraint anyone to behave according to a pre-established scenario that suits his/her personal needs. This is the fundament of respect for the other, as an attitude specific of strong leader personalities, as people who listen to those around without judging them, thus creating a dialogue-enabling climate, fascinating through their

inner freedom. Otherwise, it is the case of the “evil seducer” or the manipulator, and people will feel apathetic, suffocated, paralyzed, without initiative, deprived of the freedom of expression, obligated to behave according to a scenario to their detriment, yet serving the needs of the one manipulating them.

### 3. SELF-CONFIDENCE

Those who feel good about themselves, at peace with their inner self, have always been sympathized by their fellow-creatures. Enthusiastic people who like themselves are capable to generate a good state of mind to those around them. It might involve a bit of narcissism but not much, just as a pinch of salt in the meal. Sometimes it suffices for the human being to feel worthy of love in order for his psychic to give birth to an energy that will enable him/her get through difficulties and problems; the history of the world abounds in examples of mothers, capable of unexpected energies and actions derived from their feelings towards their children and families.

Charismatic persons like themselves as they are, allowing other to see them without trying to appear else how, but with all their qualities and defects, the charm of which they don't even suspect, and all this is due to their self-confidence that comforts them and those around, as a calm force of fascination through the courage of not wasting oneself to keep appearances.

### 4. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT INNER COHERENCE IN LEADERSHIP, LIKE PLEASURE OF EXPRESSING OURSELVES THROUGH WORK

The fact that some people are more congruent than others are poses two problems that need to be solved:

1. The occupation of leading positions, regardless of the hierarchic level, by people who are psychically congruent.
2. The increase of mental congruence within the individual, as a side of personal development of any employee of the organization.

The qualities of a charismatic person may

not be perceived in detail, but rather as a WHOLE. Neurolinguistic programming therapists call the inner coherence of persons with leadership skills congruence. The perfect harmony between a person's identity/convictions/feelings/behaviour indicates the level of inner coherence/congruence of that person's psychic.

**The measure of leadership is indeed the fact that the leader is not content to merely defend certain ideas, but will also materialize them in his/her behavior, by virtue of his talent to make/build/ put to application the world of values/beliefs/aspirations from within his/her mind.** Coming out in favor of a thing he/she profoundly believes in, thoroughly developing a project without giving in to obstacles, finding solutions to concrete problems around him/her, that not only affect him/her but those around as well, respecting people and activities starting from the organization of the work and the observation of labor norms are all forms of expression of the inner coherence, easily perceivable in all the gestures/words of a person endowed with leadership skills, who will never cheat, “no” meaning “no”, and doubts being expressed with convincing arguments because there are justified/ supported/ “elaborated”.

**A leader is a happy person, and the source of his/her capacity to reach this state of mind is in fact the harmony he/she permanently finds himself/herself in, with what he/she thinks and does, the congruence of his/her psychic having the wonderful gift of carrying others away in his positive dynamics (Albrecht, 2007).**

**This harmony between the thoughts/emotions/actions of an individual, the congruence, is a marker of the psychical maturity and a state where the ideas form a natural and creative chain, and the emotional experiences are calm, having a self-appreciative inner tranquility.** Under these terms, all actions of the individual are effective, consuming an extremely small amount of energy, but with maximum results.

Cognitively speaking, all employees comprehend and are capable of explaining several things, but not all people are able to

apply them in other actions other than those adequate to their biological age.

These methods of increase of the mental congruence will materialize in the personality of the employees of a company in:

- physical and psychical relaxation;
- expression of the personal emotions and opinions;
- honest recognition that the individual 'does not know', 'does not have what it takes', 'lacks the theoretical/practical knowledge' required to solve a problem;
- the choice of simplicity in the relations with the others, renouncing the 'confrontation' with the fellow-creatures and instead choosing to 'offer our values/beliefs', while expressing themselves clearly/bravely/honestly, using metaphors to allow comprehension and to help those around feel intelligent/relaxed/respected, in their capacity of interlocutors.

At the level of the organization, the selection for managerial positions must necessarily be made relying on a battery of psychological tests, with the purpose of employing people with leadership skills, so that any manager, regardless of his hierarchical level, may be a natural leader, which would translate into (Armstrong, 2003:523-537):

- **the fact that the person in question will constrain no one to behave according to a pre-established scenario suiting his/her personal needs**, but will rather impose the observation of the internal organization regulations of the company, the application of the labor norms, of the country's laws and of the principles of Christian morals, by the methods acquired from the management knowledge;
- **the fact that the person is self-confident**;
- **the fact that the person is genuine**;
- **the fact that the person will act according to his/her own values and, by way of consequence, will do what he/she preaches and would not have a problem saying what he/she does.**

As regards the increase of the mental congruence of any employee of a company, it

is important for the process of self-development, in terms of the individual's mental maturity, to consist of the following aspects (Goleman, 2001):

- **to work, relying on what we ourselves can do** (and not on what others could do to help us, or worse, by obligating/deceiving those who depend on us in order to use them);
- **to eliminate the 'to be perfect' imperative** that the school/educational system has long forced on generations up to this day and that organizations have sustained by cultivating the 'fear of criticism and rejection';
- **to learn optimism** together with and alongside: 1) the disappearance of the obsession of being perfect (or better yet of appearing perfect) and 2) the diminishing of the stress generated by the fear of being regarded as an impostor;
- **to discover skills/passion/things that may support optimism and the individual's state of happiness**;
- **to reorient the imperative of perfection towards skills/passions/things that support optimism and the individual's state of happiness.**

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