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**BOOK REVIEW*****THE ART AND SCIENCE OF LEADERSHIP (7TH EDITION)***

BY: AFSANEH NAHAVANDI

Boston: Pearson, 2015

393 pp. paperback

ISBN: 978-0-1335-4676-7

The book *The Art and Science of Leadership (7th)* is a researched based review of the history of leadership as an academic field and a description of current theory and practice. It contains ten chapters divided into three parts. Part 1 (Building Blocks) includes chapters 1-5. These chapters cover the definition of leadership; leadership in a global, multicultural context; the history of leadership theory and thinking; individual differences and traits of leaders; and the use of power by leaders. Part 2 (Contemporary Concepts, chapters 6 and 7) discusses current ideas in the field, including charismatic, transformational, and value-based leadership. It also reviews the distinction between micro and upper echelon strategic leaders, and the unique ways leadership is practiced in non-profit organizations. Part 3 (Leading, chapters 8-10) focuses on leading teams, leading change, and developing leaders.

Dr. Nahavandi acknowledges that there are many definitions of leadership, but states that there are four “common elements” in most of them. Leadership (a) is a group and social phenomenon, (b) involves interpersonal influence or persuasion, (c) is goal directed and action oriented, and (d) assumes some form of hierarchy within a group (3). Her own definition of a leader is: “any person who influences individuals and groups within an organization, helps them establish goals, and guides them toward achievement of those goals, thereby allowing them to be effective” (3). This definition accords with the idea that leadership is the same no matter the motivation or goals of the leader or group. Thus, Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin would fit this definition as well as Nelson Mandela or

Abraham Lincoln. Those who espouse value-based approaches to leadership might disagree. (So, the debate about defining leadership continues).

A key concept that permeates Dr. Nahavandi's thinking about leadership is the idea that leadership can be taught to almost anyone; one is not born a leader but learns to be one. Thus, the practice of leadership is not limited to a few gifted persons. In any organization leaders can be developed through an intentional process. This connects well with her focus on shared leadership in teams or groups, which, as she documents, is a very popular concept in the field of leadership today.

The *Art and Science of Leadership* is very well written. The author is very adept at writing in a clear, understandable, and well-organized manner. Terms are clearly defined and illustrated. Many stories and examples from real life leadership contexts help to make clear the ideas and concepts that are discussed in the book. Also, many chapters include a discussion of how leadership concepts and practices are implemented in various cultural contexts. For example, Dr. Nahavandi indicates that the use of direct evaluative feedback from followers to positional leaders as part of a leader development process is often very effective in places like the United States or certain European countries. This approach might be ineffective or even counterproductive in some cultural contexts in Asia or the Middle East. Thus, a leader must be aware of these dynamics and find culturally appropriate ways to provide feedback. Things get more complicated when the leader is serving a multicultural team or organization.

Another aspect of the book that is very beneficial is that it recognizes that there is not a single theory, approach, or way of practicing leadership that is effective in all situations or contexts. The author often integrates several theories or ideas when explaining how a leader ought to address various situations or circumstances. This broad synthesis of ideas and practices is very helpful.

Another strength of the book is that pertinent discussion questions, exercises that involve the content, and self-assessment instruments conclude each of the ten chapters. These interactive prompts make the work very practical and assist the reader in

integrating that content into their personal practice of leadership. There are also many useful figures and tables that clearly capture the essence of the various ideas, concepts, theories, etc.

One of the few limitations of the book, especially in religious leadership contexts, is that most of the stories and illustrations are from the business world. To include examples from other types of organizations would broaden its scope. Also, there could be more in the book about the role of leaders in conflict resolution.

The Art and Science of Leadership is an excellent book for use in seminary leadership classes. And anyone who teaches leadership should at least read the book and have it on their shelf as a good reference tool.

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