

Being a Leader

Introduction

Leadership is a rather difficult term to define because many different philosophers, thinkers and even business professionals have give different meanings for it. However, the general directions given by analysts like Welch (2005), Byrne (1998) and Gardner (1995) have several common points with the definition given by House (2004) who states that the quality of leadership is, "The ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members (House, 2004, Pg. 15)".

The Example

With this definition, the importance of leadership in business can be fully understood if it is applied to the leadership qualities exhibited and promoted by Jack Welch during his tenure at GE. His leadership has been credited as one of the primary reasons which took GE from a company which was in financial trouble and losing investor confidence to the position of the most admired and respected company in the world (Colvin, 2005).

Welch (2005) outlined his own theory of leadership which agrees to a large extent with the trait theory and he comes across quite clearly in terms of his leadership ideal when he gives the eight rules of leadership in his book titled Winning. These rules cover a lot of areas in terms of how leadership should be maintained by an individual but the basic tenants of leadership come with a connection towards doing what is right and having the courage to make changes when a change seems impossible.

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