CONTENT UNIT 10

LEADERSHIP ROLE OF MASTERS

10. The leadership role of the masters

10.1 The introduction

The topic

As a leader, you are the management of the team, so to speak, and have to fulfil a multitude of different tasks. Multitasking is the keyword here. In the following learning, unit you will read about the exact tasks you face and how you can successfully lead your team. In addition, we will also look at working in a cross-generational and diverse environment and at measures that enable both age-appropriate and equal work organization.

In detail, you should have the following knowledge after completing the course unit:

- You can define the leadership styles and list the competence of leaders.

- You know the basic pillars of successful (team) leadership.

- You know the definition of a team role.

- You can present different circumstances that have a motivating effect on employees.

- You know the characteristics of ageing-appropriate work design.

- You can describe how age can influence the ability to work and behavioural prevention of work in old age.

- You can explain the term gender.

- You can explain the relationship between language and reality and use this to make arguments for gender-sensitive language.

- You are aware that the unequal treatment of men and women is not only based on biological but rather on social factors.

- You know what Intercultural diversity is and can effectively support cultural diversity, promote cross-cultural communication and understanding

10.2 Leadership

A vehicle needs someone to steer it, an orchestra needs someone to conduct it and a successful party needs a host who ensures that everything runs smoothly. Just like a vehicle, an orchestra or a party, a company or a team needs someone to guide and steer it and to keep an overview.

However, it is not only about leading your employees but above all HOW you lead them.

A person's leadership style depends very much on the personality of the leader and the leadership style.

> **Definition**
>
> Leadership style describes the behaviour of leaders towards their employees.

A distinction is made between two basic leadership styles:

- Authoritarian leadership style: Only the leader makes decisions and controls. The employees carry out the assigned tasks without being able to contribute themselves.

- Democratic management style: Employees have a say in decision-making processes. Challenges and solutions are discussed together. However, the manager has the final decision-making power.

Like other industries, there are various leadership styles used in the automotive industry, and different companies may adopt different styles depending on their organizational culture, business model, and goals. Here are some examples of leadership styles commonly used in automotive companies:

Transformational Leadership: Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their teams to achieve a shared vision. They lead by example and encourage their employees to think creatively and take calculated risks. This leadership style is common in automotive companies that prioritize innovation and creativity.

Autocratic Leadership: Autocratic leaders make decisions on their own and expect their employees to follow their instructions without question. This leadership style is rare in modern automotive companies as it can lead to low employee morale and engagement.

Servant Leadership: Servant leaders prioritize the needs of their employees and work to serve them rather than their own interests. They encourage open communication, collaboration, and teamwork. This leadership style is common in automotive companies that prioritize employee engagement and satisfaction.

Laissez-faire Leadership: Laissez-faire leaders delegate decision-making authority to their employees and provide minimal guidance or direction. This leadership style is not common in the automotive industry as it can lead to a lack of direction and accountability.

Situational Leadership: Situational leaders adapt their leadership style to the situation at hand. They assess the situation and adjust their leadership style to fit the needs of their team. This leadership style is common in automotive companies that face dynamic and unpredictable environments.

The qualities a leader brings with him or her also influence the way he or she leads. It is not so easy to clarify which characteristics an "ideal leader" must possess. A leader must have many different qualities and skills. The following overview shows a few of the most important characteristics:

However, an ideal leader not only needs certain qualities but also has certain tasks to fulfil. The main tasks of staff leadership are as follows:

Planning	Organisation	Leadership	Control
·Resources of the employees	·Framework conditions	·Leadership of the employees	·Control

You now know leaders' different characteristics and tasks and can distinguish between leadership styles. The leadership concept in turn differs from the leadership style.

Definition

Leadership concept means how leadership activities are designed. Leadership concepts aim to make leadership efficient

Leadership concepts are regarded as guidelines for the actions of leaders. The focus is on achieving common corporate goals efficiently.

10.3 Teamwork

How do you successfully manage your team, so your employees feel comfortable and motivated? First, it is important to remember that a team leader is in a constant field of tension between management and staff.
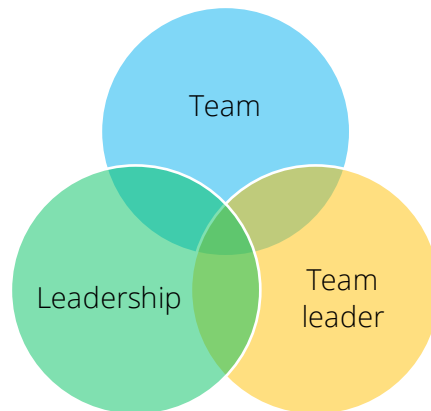

The goal of team leadership is to use all available resources in such a way that the team's goals can be achieved efficiently and, if possible, without outside help.

> **Example**
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> **Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Many automotive companies use cross-functional teams to collaborate on projects and initiatives. For example, Ford has established a cross-functional team called the "One Ford" team to work on global initiatives, including product development and sustainability.
>
> **Shared Goals and Objectives:** Successful automotive companies set clear goals and objectives that are shared across teams and departments. For example, Toyota uses a system called Hoshin Kanri, which translates to "policy deployment," to align the goals of different departments and teams.

The cornerstones of successful team leadership are as follows:
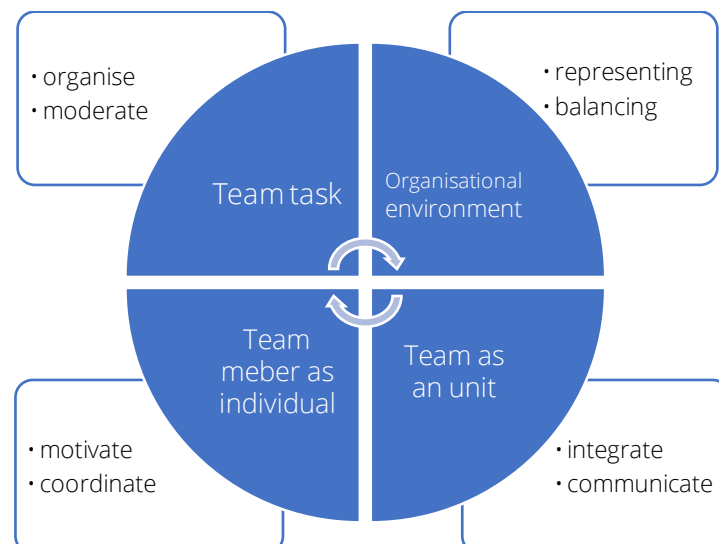
When working together in a team, conflicts or disruptions can occur from time to time. As a team leader, you should be available as a contact person in such cases, but not solve the conflict yourself.

The most important thing is to recognize disruptive factors as early as possible and to address them. If conflicts are not detected or are detected too late, they come to a head and ultimately become much worse than they originally were. It is the task of the team to look for solutions together and to work on the conflicts together. Each team member is jointly responsible for resolving the conflict.

Possible measures that you can take as a team leader to avoid conflicts or to manage them successfully are as follows:

- Team training to strengthen the "we" feeling

- Conflict training to prevent rivalries

- Communication training to optimize communication in the team

- Provide feedback strategies

- Solution developments

- Clear formulation of goals and review of the implementation

- If necessary, call in experts for advice

It is also typical for teamwork that its members take on a certain role, a team role, similar to their circle of friends, family or society.

Definition

Team role means the function that a person takes on in a team or that is assigned to him/her.

Only when everyone has taken on a role and is satisfied with it, can the work in the team begin.

For successful teamwork, however, it is not only the assumption of a suitable role that is central but also motivation. When employees are motivated to do their work, they perform better.

> **Definition**
>
> Motivation describes the totality of motives and influences that lead a person to choose a certain course of action to achieve a certain result

What can a leader do to motivate employees to work? This is not so easy, because motivation can be achieved in many ways. Some people feel particularly spurred on by financial or material motives, others by social motives or recognition. The two-factor theory developed by Frederick Herzberg defines basic factors that must be fulfilled to optimize work motivation. Herzberg distinguishes between two different influencing factors: the motivators, which must be fulfilled to create employee satisfaction, and the hygiene factors, which are needed to prevent dissatisfaction.

Hygiene factors	Motivatos
Safety at work	Responsibility
Corporate image	Career opportunities
Appropriate remuneration	Personal development
Leadership style	Recogniation
working conditions	Work content

10.4 Generation management

The current trend of an ageing population also has an impact on companies. It has become an important task in companies to maintain the ageing workforce and to promote their skills. What measures are needed to achieve this? How can ageing-appropriate work design be achieved?

Note

Ageing-appropriate work design aims to maintain and promote employees' ability to work throughout their working lives so that older employees can also remain productive.

The main criteria of ageing-appropriate work design are as follows:

- Implementation of general measures for health-promoting work design

- Holistic view of the ageing process (includes the entire working life of all age groups)

- Taking preventive measures to achieve a healthy organisation of employment in the long term.

- Maintaining and promoting the health, skills and motivation of employees

Workforce Development: Many automotive companies are investing in workforce development programs to help their ageing employees stay engaged and productive. For example, Toyota has a program called "Golden Years" that offers training and development opportunities for its ageing employees.

Health and Wellness: Automotive companies are working to improve the health and wellness of their ageing employees by offering wellness programs, ergonomic workstations, and flexible work arrangements. For example, Ford has a program called "Fit for Life" that promotes healthy living and fitness for its employees.

In addition, one must bear in mind that the ageing process varies greatly from person to person. Certain performance and personality characteristics can develop in different directions. Regarding earning capacity, however, some factors can be determined that tend to get better or worse with increasing age.

Aspects	Increasing with age	Decreasing with age
Skills	Experience and expertise	Selective attention
	Self-management competence (e.g. dealing with emotions)	Tackling new problems
	Social skills	Sensory skills (e.g. muscle strength, balance)
		Physiological functions (e.g. lower endurance, longer recovery times)
		Motor skills (e.g. speed, agility)
Health	Physical complaints	Health
	Absenteeism in terms of duration	Absenteeism in terms of frequency
	Chronic diseases (e.g. cardiovascular)	Performance

Age thus influences the ability to work in very different ways and can have both positive and negative effects.

Let's hold on:
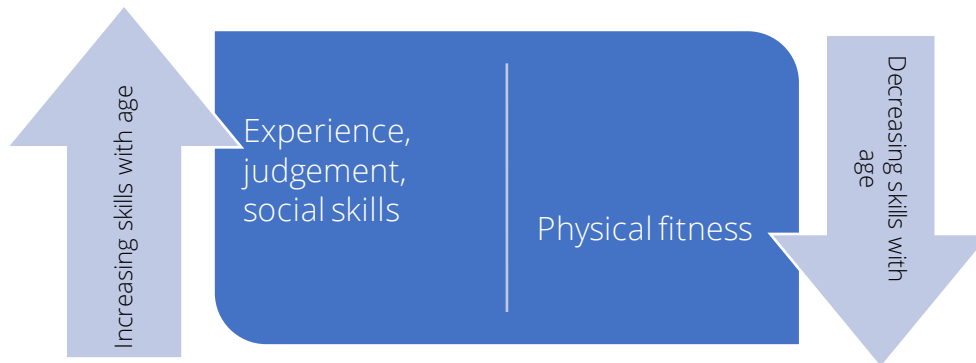
Psychological abilities, on the other hand, usually remain the same. This means those abilities that have to do with thinking, attention, or the ability to concentrate, as well as dealing with emotions.

The goal of every company should now be to take behavioural prevention measures in old age in good time. We have different possibilities to do this.

Important

The goal is to be able to go into the future fit for work.

This includes:

- Maintaining a balance between available resources and the work.

- Provide further education and training to maintain and update staff skills. Here, the changing learning requirements of older persons must also be considered.

- Show appreciation for the employees and show them that they are respected.

- Support in challenging situations

- Constructive feedback to improve performance

- Continuous communication between managers and employees

- Prevention of any kind of discrimination

- Protect employees of all ages from workloads that are harmful to their health.

- Ongoing adaptation of tasks to the strengths, skills and needs of individual employees

Automotive companies can also promote ageing and care for life health towards customers:

Design for Accessibility: Automotive companies are designing their vehicles to be more accessible and user-friendly for ageing drivers and passengers. For example, Honda's engineers work with elderly drivers and passengers to understand their needs and develop features like larger and more accessible doors and seats.

Autonomous Vehicles: Autonomous vehicles have the potential to provide mobility solutions for ageing populations. Many automotive companies are investing heavily in the development of autonomous vehicles to provide safe and reliable transportation for ageing individuals.
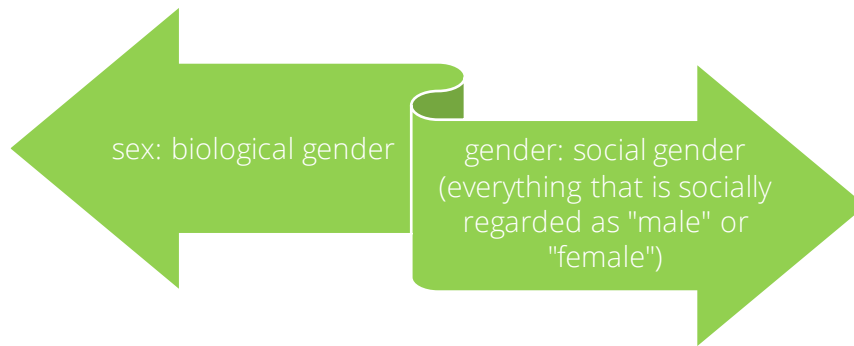
Marketing to Older Customers: Automotive companies are targeting older customers with marketing campaigns that emphasize the safety, comfort, and convenience features of their vehicles. For example, Mercedes-Benz has a marketing campaign called "Forever Young" that targets older drivers with features like adaptive cruise control and lane departure warning systems.

10.5 Diversity and inclusion

Not only is the right way to deal with older employees, but also knowledge in working with employees of different genders and sexual orientations is one of the central tasks of every leader.

Let's first take a closer look at the term gender from a scientific perspective and look at the English language. In English, there are not just one but two words for gender:

sex: biological gender

gender: social gender (everything that is socially regarded as "male" or "female")

The term "gender" already indicates that the relationship between the two sexes can change. Explaining social inequalities with biological reasons is therefore not legitimate.

To prevent discrimination based on gender, a language change is necessary as a first step. Language always reacts to and reflects social processes. If we use language without reflection, inequalities can easily arise. Conversely, we can also actively shape our environment with language. It controls perception and creates or closes spaces in which thought processes take place. It thus has the power to maintain certain power relations but also to change and dissolve them. Gender-sensitive language is therefore not only justified but even necessary.

Example

Automotive companies that prioritize diversity and inclusion in their teams often see better teamwork and collaboration. For example, General Motors has established employee resource groups (ERGs) that bring together employees with similar backgrounds, interests, and identities to promote collaboration and teamwork.

Language also affects our conception of roles. Due to traditional role models, we often tend to associate certain occupational images with female or male persons and then automatically use the female or male form for the occupation. The mechanic and the hairdresser, the engineer and the nurse are just a few examples that are classically associated with a certain gender.

However, role models do not only affect certain occupational groups, we encounter them in all areas of life from birth. Social role models thus also have a strong influence on our identity. Even as children, we learn typical male or female behaviour depending on our gender. Just think of the cliché of putting girls in princess costumes and boys in pirate outfits. So, children experience the classic distribution of roles very early on and develop their identity with these role models.

What is needed, therefore, is a social awareness of how strongly these gender-related stereotypes influence our perception and identity to subsequently bring about a social change.

As we have seen, these stereotypical role models and the resulting unequal treatment of women and men are not based on biological but on social factors. Thus, many people still resort to stereotypical distinctions between the sexes, simply because simple explanations are attractive.

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Example

Income differences between men and women:

"Women just have children" is a common biological argument for women taking care of the family and men taking care of the career.

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It is therefore up to every one of us to change our ways of thinking and acting in such a way that social structures also change and gender equality can be achieved.

Intercultural diversity refers to the range of cultural differences and similarities that exist between individuals or groups from different cultural backgrounds. It recognizes that people from different cultures bring unique perspectives, experiences, and values that shape their interactions with others.

In the context of an automotive company, intercultural diversity means acknowledging and embracing the cultural diversity among employees, customers, and suppliers from different cultural backgrounds. It involves creating a workplace culture that is inclusive and respectful of different cultures, and developing strategies to promote cross-cultural communication, collaboration, and understanding.

Promoting diversity and addressing intercultural differences in an automotive company requires a multi-faceted approach that involves various strategies and actions. Here are some tips to help you address these issues effectively:

Develop a diversity and inclusion policy: Start by creating a policy that outlines your company's commitment to diversity and inclusion. This policy should set clear expectations and goals for promoting diversity and inclusion within the company and should be communicated to all employees.

Provide cultural sensitivity training: Provide training to employees to help them understand different cultures, customs, and traditions. This training should focus on developing cultural awareness, understanding cultural differences, and fostering cross-cultural communication.

Encourage employee resource groups: Encourage the formation of employee resource groups that support different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. These groups can provide a space for employees to share their experiences, celebrate cultural events, and build relationships with colleagues who share similar backgrounds.

Implement hiring practices that promote diversity: Review your hiring practices to ensure that they promote diversity and inclusivity. Consider implementing blind hiring techniques to remove any unconscious biases in the selection process and focus on creating a diverse workforce.

Foster an inclusive work environment: Foster an inclusive work environment where all employees feel valued and respected. This can be achieved through open communication, fair treatment, and inclusive policies and practices.

Encourage cross-cultural collaboration: Encourage employees from different cultural backgrounds to work together on projects and initiatives. This will help them understand each other better and develop stronger relationships.

Celebrate cultural events: Celebrate cultural events and holidays throughout the year. This can be done by organizing cultural events or recognizing important holidays from different cultures.

By implementing these tips, you can create a more diverse and inclusive workplace that fosters cross-cultural collaboration, communication, and understanding.

Example

In 2019, BMW launched a global initiative called **"Respect, Diversity, and Inclusion"** that aimed to promote diversity and inclusion across the company. The initiative involved several practical steps to foster a more inclusive workplace culture and address intercultural diversity.

For example, BMW created a **Diversity and Inclusion Board** that was responsible for developing strategies and initiatives to promote diversity and inclusion within the company. The Board was made up of representatives from different regions and business areas, ensuring that diverse perspectives were taken into account.

BMW also launched an online learning platform that offered employees access to training courses on topics such as unconscious bias, cultural awareness, and diversity and inclusion. This platform was available to all employees, regardless of their location or role within the company.

Additionally, BMW created employee resource groups for different cultural and ethnic groups, including a group for LGBTQ+ employees. These groups provided employees with a space to connect with colleagues who shared similar backgrounds and experiences, and to share their perspectives on how to create a more inclusive workplace.

Overall, BMW's initiative demonstrated a commitment to fostering a workplace culture that values and respects diversity and promotes cross-cultural collaboration and understanding. By taking practical steps to address intercultural diversity, BMW has created a more inclusive workplace that benefits both employees and the company as a whole.

Foremen play a critical role in implementing and promoting intercultural diversity within an automotive company. Here are some ways in which foremen can contribute to the successful implementation of intercultural diversity:

1. **Lead by example:** Foremen should lead by example and model inclusive behavior. They should demonstrate a willingness to learn about different cultures and actively work to address any unconscious biases or stereotypes that may exist within the team.

2. **Create an inclusive work environment:** Foremen should create a work environment that is inclusive and respectful of different cultures. They should encourage open communication, listen to diverse perspectives, and foster a culture of collaboration and respect.

10.6 The summary

Save knowledge

We were able to establish that the leadership role is a position that encompasses numerous different characteristics and tasks but also sensitivity and openness towards all employees. A leader is in a constant state of tension between the team and the management floor, between which he or she must maintain a balance. How a leader fulfils his or her role depends on the choice of leadership style. We have distinguished between authoritarian and democratic leadership styles. However, the goal of every team leader, generally speaking, is to use all resources in such a way that the team goals are successfully achieved.

If conflicts or disruptions occur while working together in a team, you now know strategies to deal with them. Rule number 1 is to be available as a contact person, but not to solve the conflicts yourself. In addition, it is also the leader's task to motivate his or her staff. To find out what motivates employees, we have used the two-factor theory, which distinguishes between hygiene factors and motivators.

The fact of the ageing population and thus also the ageing workforce must be taken into account in a company. The goal should be to promote the abilities of the employees and to maintain them for as long as possible. In addition, we were able to see that age also has a positive influence on performance. While physical performance decreases, experience, expertise and social skills increase.

In addition to methods and backgrounds of working in an intergenerational team, you now also know about working with employees of different genders. In particular, we have taken a closer look at gender, the power of language in the process of creating social inequalities and the importance of gender-sensitive language.
Finally, it became clear that it is up to each of us to change our ways of thinking and acting in such a way that social equality becomes possible.

Intercultural diversity is about embracing and valuing these differences and recognizing the positive contributions they bring to society. It involves acknowledging and respecting cultural diversity, promoting cross-cultural communication and understanding, and challenging any negative stereotypes or biases that may exist.

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