

## The Leadership versus Management debate: What's the difference?

In the discussion between leadership versus management, many articles and writing have been made. There are just as many answers as there are debates.

The main difference between managers and leaders is the way the two styles motivate people and teams to achieve objectives.

Leaders set the goals and new direction, challenging the status quo. They are visionaries and spearhead the team, motivating and leading them to reach this new direction.

Managers on the other hand maintain the status quo, specialising on conformance to the standard, and managing teams and individuals around these boundaries that have been set, organising and directing to achieve the task.

### The Paradox

Leadership versus management, although relatively easy to distinguish between the two, is complex because many people are both. The Manager has the unfortunate paradox of controlling systems, resource and standards, enacting to keep it all together, whilst also running the task of leading teams to achieve unchartered boundaries.

If you think about it and based on theories of [Leadership](#), dictating through an autocratic management style will not win the hearts and minds of individuals. This in turn will create more damage than good for the long term, so Leadership plays an important role in leading and motivating the teams to achieve those new limits.

Equally, systems must be monitored and controlled to ensure tasks and roadmaps are created to achieve those goals. This is normally achieved through the Management function.

### Leadership versus Management

Grace Murray Hopper, an American computer programmer and inventor, wrote,

**“You manage things; you lead people.”**

Subject	Manager	Leader
Make up of role	Stability	Change
Decision making	Makes	Facilitates
Approach	Plans detail around constraints	Sets and leads direction
Vision	Short-term - today	Long-term - horizon
Control	Formal influence	Personal charm
Appeals to	The Head	The Heart
Culture	Endorses	Shapes
Action	Reactive	Proactive
Risk	Minimizes	Takes
Rules	Makes	Breaks
Direction	Existing direction / keeps status quo	New direction / challenges norm
Values	Results	Achievement
Concern	Doing the thing right	Doing the right thing
Focus	Managing work	Leading people
Human Resource	Subordinates	Followers

### Management

Management normally focuses on work and tasks. These activities fit within the subject of resource: Human, time, Money, equipment and anything else that involves achieving that task. The distinction therefore from Management versus Leadership is on managing resource within the constraints of the systems and enforcing the desired standards of work, including:

- **Planning** – Planning resource and tasks to achieve the objectives
- **Budgeting** – Managing the constraints of budgets in the department / project
- **Organising** – Organising support functions and resource
- **Controlling** – Controlling the standards required to deliver the objectives
- **Coordinating** – Coordinating and directing project tasks for achievement of goals
- **Resource use** – Ensuring effective resource is used for the task at hand
- **Time management** – Ensuring tasks and activities are conducted within the correct time frame
- **Decision Making** – Making the right decisions in the heat of the moment
- **Problem Solving** – Ensure problems are contained and eliminated

### Leadership

Leadership focuses on achieving tasks, keeping the team motivated and empowered to achieve that task. Thirdly, it involves getting the best out of each and every individual for the benefit of the team's successful achievement of those goals. It is about leading by example, inspiring, empowerment, creating the most conducive environment for team success:

- **Vision**– focusing on the long term vision or goal
- **Motivation** – Motivation and empowerment to challenge the norm
- **Inspiration** – Inspiring others through merely leading and injecting enthusiasm
- **Persuasion** – Using excellent leadership skills to bring people willingly along the correct path
- **Team work** – Encouraging effort and commitment, and teamwork
- **Building Relationships** – Building strong relationships and ensuring the team is well balanced
- **Listening** – Being able to listen and get the root causes quickly and effectively
- **Counselling** – Ensuring that every member of the team is motivated and effectively empowered
- **Coaching** – Encouraging and giving freedom for individuals to learn and grow
- **Teaching** – Leading the correct performance and expectations
- **Mentoring** – Being the leader in a successful team and parting knowledge and wisdom onto the team and its individuals

It is clear then that there are differences in the debate between Leadership versus management.....

.....Managers are at times, Leaders, so the paradox never ends! Your task is to adopt the correct style when either leading or managing.