

The critical vulnerability of an authentic leader as a tool for achieving outstanding results

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Abstract

Carrying out management activities for more than 15 years, we were faced with the fact that there was a critical *vulnerability* among business leaders who implemented transformation of the organization and subsequently achieved large-scale results. Vulnerability could be caused by criticism of the leader's behavior by stakeholders (employees, partners, shareholders), by expression of distrust in the vision, by sabotage of leader's decisions and could even lead to the termination of leadership activities. However, with the consolidation of the efforts of stakeholders, the vulnerability gradually disappeared, which led to an outstanding results and recognition of the leader. We hypothesized that: 1) there was a unique behavior pattern of an authentic leader, which paradoxically led to uncontrollable, critical vulnerability and only then led the organization to an outstanding result; 2) the reason for the leader's vulnerability was the gap in the level of leadership mindset between the leader and the stakeholders. A preliminary research of leader vulnerability was conducted, the main purpose of which was to search for unique patterns in the leader's behavior. The research objectives included: 1) to pinpoint the leader behavior patterns using the Michigan Model of Leadership, namely the underlying *Competing Values Framework*; 2) to find examples of the gap in the level of leadership mindset of the leader and stakeholders. The participants included 8 top managers actively involved in the transformation of their companies. Research methodology integrated quantitative method (survey) and qualitative method (in-depth interviews). The study expands our understanding of authentic leadership.

Keywords: leadership mindset, Michigan Model of Leadership, organizational dialectics, vulnerability curve