



The Three- Skill Approach to Leadership

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According to Katz [1], the three-skill approach includes technical, human, and conceptual skills. Leaders in various levels of leadership, including top management, middle and supervisory management, are supposed to possess all three skills to prosper in all their managerial work. Therefore, the leaders in different leadership levels need to mix the three types of skills to implement the three-skill approach. Possessing leadership skills enables managers to use their knowledge and competencies to accomplish set goals.

Technical skills help one acquire proficiency in a precise type of work or activity hence most significant at lower and middle levels of management compared to upper management. Leaders also require human skills, also known as people skills which enable them to work with people. These skills help leaders be aware of other members' needs and thus allow them to consider those needs as they make a decision. Human skills also enable the team to work as a group, therefore cooperation and achieving common goals. The third type of skill that a leader should possess is conceptual skills which enable them to work with ideas and concepts. Conceptual skill helps the leader to formulate the goals to be achieved in an organization.

An organization such as Amazon has become successful since it has been able to apply Katz's three-skill approach in its management. For instance, the success of Amazon under its top leadership led by CEO Jeff Bezos has demonstrated the use of technical skills through their ability to use appropriate tools and techniques. Some applied techniques focus on the customer's long-term satisfaction by adapting and learning new skills and building new technology to serve the customer. The top management in Amazon has been able to apply human skills under the leadership of Bezos.

Human skills or people skills involve having knowledge and being able to work with other people. With this skill, the leader can identify and consider other people's needs before making decisions. For example, the CEO in Amazon strives to meet customer needs, which helps him come up with goals that will have considered customer needs and, hence, customer satisfaction. The third type of skill in the three-skill approach is a conceptual skill that Bezos has been able to apply mainly in his management as the Amazon CEO.

Conceptual skills help the leader work with ideas and concepts, hence formulating organizational goals and strategic

plans [2]. Conceptual skills are required mainly by the top management since they are in charge of coming up with a strategic plan for the organization's future. With this skill, the Amazon CEO has been able to bring massive changes to the company, for instance, the initiatives that led to Amazon web services. According to Anders [3], some of the concepts that Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has led to the company's success include statements such as basing the strategy on things that are not going to change. Other concepts include obsession over customers, being willing to be misunderstood, being a company that charges less, considering customers' needs, and working backward. Also, adopting an intense but friendly culture, not being afraid of failure as long as they invent and willingness to learn are some top management concepts that have helped the company prosper.

According to Mumford [4], leaders should have leadership skills to solve organizational leadership problems. These skills include problem-solving skills that help identify problems, understand the problem, and generate a potential solution. Leaders also need social judgment skills which help them come up with implementation frameworks for the organization. Social skills are also required, which help leaders motivate and direct the team in the implementation stage. Amazon leadership performance has been made possible due to adopting the skills model of leadership in their management style. The organization management has drafted several principles for their workers to refer to every day.

The principles include customer obsession, where leaders work backward since they consider the needs of customers first. This approach makes them work hard so as they can satisfy and earn their customer's trust. Ownership is another principle adopted by Amazon leaders which allows them to plan for long-term goals. Finally, another principle is invented and simplified whereby leaders will enable the team members

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to be innovative, motivating the team players to develop new ideas for the company's good.

Amazon has adopted a hierarchical organizational structure where the employees are organized across twelve levels, and CEO Jeff Bezos is in level twelve. At the senior management team, level eleven, there are senior vice presidents and worldwide controllers, and they all report to Chief executive officer Jeff Bezos. At level ten, there are vice presidents the other team members of senior management. The middle management includes human resources and legal operations, who as well report to the CEO. There are segments within the organization, and the heads of these segments also report directly to the CEO. The leaders of these segments supervise over 560,000 employees.

The company has been able to exhibit a skill mix in all levels of management which has led to the organization's success. For instance, the CEO possesses high conceptual skills that have enabled him to develop a visible motto in all its operations. Also, the CEO formulated the "two-pizza rule," which allows the team to be in small numbers; hence the organization is highly adaptable to any market adjustments. In addition, the middle and the supervisory managers possess high technical skills to help them produce actual products as expected. Some of the technical skills owned by the middle and supervisory manager include software engineering, project management, object-oriented analysis, and design, among others.

All levels of management in Amazon possess good human skills, which is why they can communicate with their customers. This skill has helped them satisfy their customers through the production of products as per their needs, and it is because of this, the company is considered the largest internet retailer in the world. Senior management made of CEOs, SVPs, and VPs are responsible for overseeing multiple businesses in the organization. These managers have adopted kartz skills mix, which has enabled them to build smooth collaboration across various businesses. Teamwork among different management levels is one of the robust features that have been developed due to the skill mix. Teamwork has enabled decision-making to be very fast in the company. The main concern is about the results since all members feel ownership and aim to satisfy customers.

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