

LEADERSHIP

INTRODUCTION

1. As an NCO in the ATC you are required to "control a section of cadets placed under your direct supervision". What does control really mean and where does leadership fit into this definition?



2. The dictionary defines "control" as the "power of directing" or "command", while "to lead" is "to direct movements of or "guide actions and opinions". From these simple definitions it can be said that to control and lead are the same thing. However, there is more to Leadership than just controlling and that is what this section is about.

3. So why is leadership necessary, what are leaders, what do they do and how do they do it? This has been the subject of much debate and research over many centuries, going back to Roman times and beyond.

4. A leader is not required unless there is a group to be led. There are two main reasons why groups are formed. The first is for administration purposes, as it is much simpler to control a group than many individuals. Providing of course that they accept the groups rules and discipline. The second reason for forming a group is to perform a task that cannot be achieved by an individual alone. This second reason is what stretches the abilities of Leaders.

5. A formal definition of Leadership is:

"To influence the thoughts and behaviour of others in a deliberate direction in order to achieve a desired objective."

6. Perhaps a more informal definition of Leadership is:

"To turn a group of individuals into a team that can achieve something they could not do on their own."

QUALITIES APPROACH

7. The Qualities approach to leadership is a historical belief that leaders were born with the qualities that made them natural leaders. For example, in the time of Wellington, the aristocrat could see the wider picture and had courage, determination and integrity and many other qualities to do what was necessary to lead his forces. Conversely the peasant had none of these qualities and had to be led. Try drawing up a list of personal qualities that you believe leaders need to perform their task as effective leaders. Some lists run to over 140 qualities!

8. The growing educational system slowly reduced the gap between aristocrat and peasant. Some might say that the First World War was the last to be won on the playing fields of Eton and Harrow. Perhaps this is more clearly shown by the World Leaders of the last sixty or seventy years. Consider some of these leaders and the qualities they had. You will probably realise that not all the leaders had the same qualities. So are all the qualities necessary to be a leader, if not which are essential? Once a list is drawn up of essential qualities to what degree is each required? How much integrity makes a leader and how is it measured? How much more courage than normal is required, or when does determination become stubbornness?

9. If Leaders are to be trained then how can all these qualities be defined and how can their possession be measured? From these questions it is clear that qualities are not the only answer to good leadership but they cannot be dismissed entirely as we shall see later.

SITUATIONAL APPROACH

10. Research after the First World War proposed that in a given situation, the person with the most appropriate professional knowledge, abilities and skills would make the best leader. This proposition works for simple tasks, but in more complex situations it would be difficult to find someone who excels in all the aspects necessary to achieve the task. Remember the definition of leadership is to achieve as a group what the individual cannot do. Also if several tasks are to be done simultaneously, how many leaders are needed and which one sets the priorities. The Situational Approach was eventually rejected because clearly knowledge and technical skills alone are not equivalent to leadership.

11. Again the Situational approach to leadership is not the whole answer, but like the Qualities approach it cannot be ignored totally since some knowledge and skills are necessary to be a leader.

SUMMARY OF THE QUALITIES AND SITUATIONAL APPROACHES

12. The Qualities approach attempted to define the social qualities of a leader necessary to bring together and maintain a team to achieve an objective. The Situational Approach stressed the need for technical knowledge and skills to achieve a task. So a leader has to perform two roles:

- Social Specialist. This role keeps the group together by creating and preserving morale through communication, building relationships and having the qualities necessary to be respected by the team.
- Task Specialist. This role is aimed at achieving the desired objective through energy, courage, intelligence and a higher professional skill than the team itself.

13. Research has shown that certain qualities are necessary to support the roles of Social and Task Specialists, these are given in Table 5.1. Not all leaders conform to these needs. The requirements of a leader vary according to other factors, e.g. the group with which they work, the environment in which they work and the task to be accomplished. Modern research has decided that it is not what leaders are that is vital, but what they do, i.e. their function. This leads to the Functional approach to Leadership.

Qualities	Roles
<p>Motivation and Achievement. Through a strong desire to achieve; labours long and hard to satisfy an inner drive not totally for material satisfaction.</p>	Task
<p>Specialist Knowledge and Skills. To achieve objectives they have a superior professional skill to their followers; they continually strive to develop their skill and knowledge.</p>	Task
<p>Intelligence. A slightly higher knowledge than their followers enables them to solve problems and communicate effectively.</p>	Task & Social
<p>Maturity and Breadth. Is more phlegmatic (calmer) than followers, controlling emotions during the peaks and troughs of success and failure.</p>	Social
<p>Respected and People Conscious. They understand the need to keep a group happy to achieve a task and the attitudes of their followers are of prime importance when planning a task.</p>	Social

Table 5.1 Qualities Required by Leaders to Support Social and Task Roles

FUNCTIONAL APPROACH

14. The functional approach to leadership describes what a leader has to do to satisfy the needs of both the Task and Social specialist roles. To achieve the Task role the leader must satisfy the Task Needs. To achieve the role of Social Specialist is more complex. The leader must consider not only the Team Maintenance Needs but also the Individual Needs of those in the team. These three areas of needs are described below.

- **Task Needs.** The leader has a need to achieve a complex task or objective by using their team (the leadership definition again). Without the task the team would not be necessary. The actions necessary by the team to achieve the task are called the Task Need.
- **Team Maintenance Needs.** To achieve tasks the group needs to be held together in a united team. The conviction that the team is achieving more than an individual brings with it the satisfaction of being a member of the team and being able to share in that achievement. The individual may be happy to lower their own needs if the team membership brings sufficient rewards. If the rewards diminish then team members may lose interest, and support and participation in the team will similarly diminish. If the team members consist of "Prima donnas" who are unwilling to accept a lower self importance then the group will not function as a team but as a gathering of individuals. Many groups develop unwritten laws, codes of conduct, rituals and traditions in order to re-inforce the idea of unity. A group will often *react* strongly against an individual member who

does not conform to the group's standards or who appears to be a disruptive influence. This is the area of Team Maintenance Needs

- **Individual Needs.** Everyone has their own physical and psychological needs, which they see as important in maintaining their morale, and brings these needs to any group they join. A team member looks to the group to provide their basic needs more quickly than would be possible outside the group - else why join or take part? These feelings do not occur in groups that are formed artificially, such as Flights at Summer Camp, until wholehearted participation develops which may take some time. Hence the usual expression the team has not "gelled".

15. The three needs described above have to be considered all at the same time, as shown in Figure 5.1. The importance, or size, of each circle and their overlap varies according to the situation. If one function is not addressed then the whole team structure may suffer.

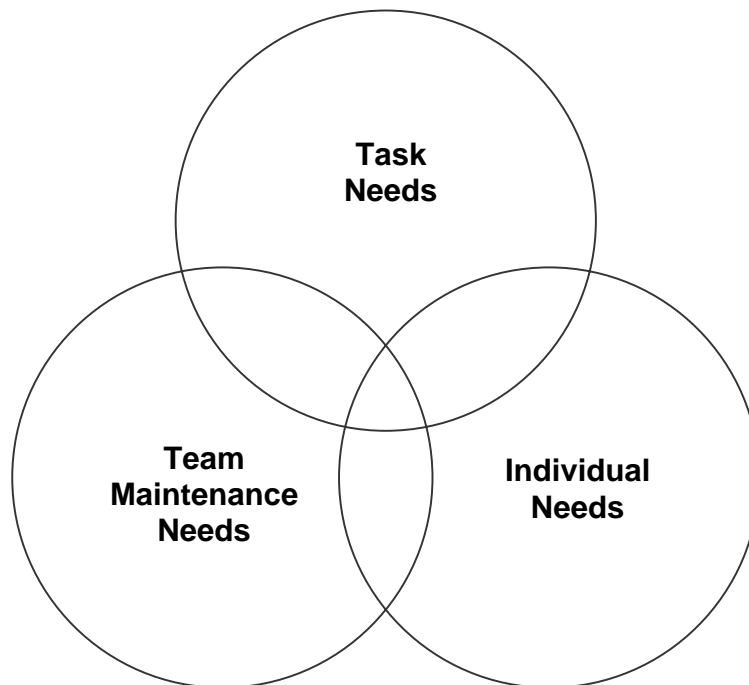


Figure 5.1 The Relationship Between Task, Team and Individual Needs

FUNCTIONS OF A LEADER

16. Any action that is taken to satisfy the three "needs" is, by definition, a leadership action. It follows, therefore, that the person taking the action must be the leader. To determine the appropriate leadership action the leader must satisfy the following:

- **Awareness.** The leader must have full awareness at all times of the three needs of the group in the specific situation in which they are working.
- **Functional Response.** The leader must respond to the appropriate function to satisfy the need. If more than one "need" exists the leader must prioritise their responses
- **Knowledge Skills and Attitudes.** To be aware of needs and to respond correctly to satisfy those needs, the leader must have certain specialist knowledge, skills and attitudes. The purpose of this course has been to introduce these to you.

17. The group and its situation will never be static. It continually evolves to achieve the greatest personal satisfaction for the largest number of members. The groups needs, therefore, constantly change. The responses to satisfy them will also change and what may have worked before may have an opposite effect now.

18. The main functions of each of the needs are given in Table 5.2.

Areas of Need		Appropriate Functions		
T A S K		Appreciating the situation		
		Making and adjusting a plan		
		Allocating responsibilities, work and resources		
		Control of Quality, tempo and performance		
T E A M		Communications		
		Setting and maintaining standards		
		Instilling and Maintaining Discipline		
		Building team spirit		
		I N D I V I D U A L		Motivating, praising and giving a sense of purpose
				Giving status
Training the group and individuals				
Recognising and using individual abilities				
Attending to personal problems				

Table 5.2 The Functions Appropriate to the Group Needs

CONCLUSION

19. It is not what leaders are that makes them successful but what they do. An effective leader is one who is:

**"Aware of the task, team maintenance and individual needs of their group,
and has the knowledge skill and attitudes to respond to those needs
in accordance with priorities of the situation."**