

## Gender differences in leadership styles.

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The topic of gender differences in leadership has been one of the most intensely studied topics in psychology in recent times. Traditionally, men held the most powerful jobs in society, including doctors, lawyers, CEOs, and politicians, whereas women were associated with stereotypically female professions such as a secretary, a nurse or a cashier. But, in modern society women have become an increasing proportion of nearly every profession except for some. Women still do not hold a proportionate share of the top administrative positions. Is this because men and women function differently as leaders and if so, are these differences gender-linked? This question has attracted the attention of researchers who have been trying to explain why there are lesser women leaders compared to men. In this paper, I am going to give an overview of the topic of gender differences in leadership style.

Leadership is that process in which one person sets the purpose or direction for one or more other persons and gets them to move along together with him or her and with each other in that direction with competence and full commitment (Jacques 1994, p.4). Generally, there are three main types of leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. Transformational leaders are charismatic, inspiring, humble, emotionally intelligent and mentoring. They motivate people to achieve the goals set and have good conflict-resolution skills. A transactional leadership style includes monitoring subordinates, intervening to correct problems and rewarding behavior. The Laissez-Faire leader gives full freedom to his subordinates to act on their own. The leader defines the objectives, policies, programs, and then leaves the rest to be done by the subordinates themselves [2].

A meta-analysis of 162 studies showed that women were more transformational leaders than men. Women were also more likely to display the reward component of the transactional style whereas men as transactional leaders tended to display the monitoring and intervening aspects. Men were more likely to use the Laissez-Faire leadership style. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that women were more concerned with maintaining interpersonal relationships and task accomplishment. This contradicts the stereotypical view of women as leaders who are more concerned with relationships than with task accomplishment. The strongest difference found was that women tended to adopt a more democratic or participative style, and men tended to adopt a more autocratic or directive style (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003). A meta-analytic review showed that transformational leaders were more effective than transactional leaders regardless of gender (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Women and men may not behave so much differently as leaders as it is that their behavior is perceived differently. Women are most likely to encounter difficulties if they display stereotypical masculine behaviour in a male-dominated setting. People may assess a female leader not as competent as a male leader because she lacks the agentic qualities required for leadership. If a woman possesses agentic leadership qualities, people may evaluate her less favorably because those qualities conflict with the female gender role. Women who behave in a stereotypical way

are more likely to influence men than women behaving in a non-stereotypical way. Therefore women face a dilemma when they are expected to behave in a submissive way but the situation requires them to be assertive. A research suggested that in order to be successful leaders women need to combine and display agentic qualities with communal qualities (Johnson et al., 2008).

We are currently in a period of transition when it comes to our thinking about gender differences in leadership styles. Currently, evidence shows that there are some small differences in the leadership style of men and women as a result of socialization. There are still many unanswered questions on this topic. One of the questions is whether there are really any innate differences in the leadership style of men and women. In my opinion, we all need to realize that people with their wide range of abilities, qualities should be looked at first and foremost as individuals rather than a member of one gender or another. Gender roles stereotypes have caused harm to members of both genders. Both genders have an equal role to play in the reshaping of tomorrow's organization. They both have a lot to teach each other and learn from each other as well. We need to stop thinking about one style as feminine and another as masculine. We have to recognize and accept that different leaders have different styles and stop automatically associating one style with women and another with men.

#### **Источники и литература**

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