Leadership Models

The most common leadership theories include:

* The Great Man Theory- Theorists continue to argue whether a leader has a natural ability to lead or if they are molded into leadership through extensive training and developmental procedures. It is my belief that individuals can be transformed into leaders’ however; this transformation does not guarantee good effective leadership. Leadership is a skill that can develop over a period of time some theorist would suggest that this developmental stage is rendered as a method of trial and error. Executives continue to test processes to determine the best practice for leading an organization to success and training subordinates to be more than employees. “Leaders must exhibit high levels of courage with a willingness to listen to others in order to collect and analyze information” (Fry, 2004).
* Trait Theory-is the theory that a leader can be either born or made if they are made with certain qualities such as intelligence, responsibilities, and ethics.
* Behavioral Theory-leaders are categorized by task and people. There are some leaders who prioritize tasks and strive to meet deadlines. There are some leaders that are mostly concerned with motivating people and building relationships with people. Leaders who establish relationships with people will most likely have a strong workforce in which case employees will be more receptive to an interpersonal style of leadership. Employees will feel as though they are valued as opposed to a leader who is task oriented. Although a task-oriented leader isn’t a bad character trait it would benefit a leader as well as the organization if there were a balance between the two. Both types of behavior contribute to enhancing performance.
* Contingency Theory-this theory is a form of situational leadership in which case a leader relies on the consensus of the subordinates to make their decisions. For example if a leader has to make a decision he or she may base his decision on whether his or her subordinates are receptive to his or her decision. Some leaders obtain feedback from subordinates before implementing a new strategy. “Any organization that succeeds requires leaders who can make carefully thought-out and reasoned decisions, who possess a strong sense of ethics, and who use the best information about the future that is available” (Fry, 2004).
* Transactional Leadership Theory-this leadership theory is based on the exchanges made between leaders and followers. The exchange between leaders and followers are beneficial to both parties involved. The leader benefits from an employee’s service. An employee benefits from the employer by receiving rewards, compensation, etc.
* Transformational Leadership-this theory is self-explanatory. A transformational leader is one who has the ability and capacity to motivate employees. He or she has a natural ability to inspire followers and to obtain a desired outcome.

Fry, F.L. & Hattwick, R.E. (2004). *Business an Integrative Approach,* 3e. Chapter 1*: The Nature of Business: The Big Picture*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Companies.