

Entrepreneurial Leadership and Its Influence as an Innovation Catalyst in Modern Management

*Rafał Kozłowski**

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Synopsis: In this paper I indicate the new approach to leadership in a context of innovation which determines the extent to which a new conceptualization of entrepreneurial leadership is required. This entrepreneurial leadership research model should integrate theoretical perspectives with entrepreneurial reconciliation of dialectical contradictions. From 2008 till now I have conducted the research grant where one of the topics concerns and examines the entrepreneurial leadership research model. Therefore soon I will be able to present the research results which will confirm or reject my assumptions of entrepreneurial leadership model, its importance and role as an innovation catalyst in modern management.

Introduction

How can entrepreneurship be identified? Is it innovating a new product or process entrepreneurial behavior or the routine of an innovative enterprise? Such dilemmas have provoked much of the recent attempt to codify alternatives. Many scholars have highlighted the importance of pervasive innovation across the organization (as opposed to centralized innovation by specifically created groups/teams) as one of the important strategies for long-term marketplace success, especially in large organizations. However, most large organizations experience a severe gap between intent and reality in this regard. These issues have been extensively discussed in literature [Pinchot, 1985; Hamel, 2002; Kaplan and Norton, 2001; Quinn, 1985]. Trying to combine leadership and entrepreneurship, and observe its influence as an innovation catalyst in organization, it is crucial to notice, that whereas there are many definitions of leadership, two notions underling most of them are process and influence [Bass, 1990; Yukl, 2006; Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001]. It – as Bennis and Nanus claim – „creates a new audience for ideas because it alters the shape of understanding” [1992, p. 40]. Additionally, Shamir and colleagues [1993] provided indirect support for the assertion that leaders who appeal to ideological values, interject meaningfulness into their organization and their followers’ work.

The lead entrepreneur, or entrepreneurial leader, is crucial to the entrepreneurial team. Some scholars claim that such a leader is the one who has to create visionary scenarios that are necessary for selecting and mobilizing a supporting cast of interdependent members who commit to and enact the vision to achieve strategic value creation [Gupta, MacMillan & Surie, 2004; Rickards & Moger, 2006].

* Dr. Rafał Kozłowski, University of Economics in Katowice, Poland.

What is the relationship between entrepreneur and entrepreneurial activity? Malach-Pines, Sadeh, Dvir, and Yafe-Yanai [2002], for example, found that entrepreneurs strongly identify with the work that they do. Stevenson and Jarillo [1990] identified entrepreneurial activity as a behaviorist discipline, strongly aligning it with the individual's need or desire for creativity and/or new and different approaches to common situations. Individuals who participate in entrepreneurial efforts often have a strong need for innovation and creativity and alter production and other processes to create something new, identify new markets [Hitt, Ireland, Camp, & Sexton, 2001], or find more efficient means of production.

New business venturing is usually associated with individual entrepreneurship, but as Burgelman [1983] indicates it is also an important corporate phenomenon. Individuals and small teams can form entrepreneurial groups inside an organization capable of persuading others to alter their behavior, thus influencing the creation of new corporate resources. Organizational renewal is a more expansive notion of a complete business (egally or economically defined) altering its resource pattern to achieve better and sustainable overall economic performance.

Schumpeterian innovation requires a far more stringent test. The behavior must transform not only the enterprise but also the competitive environment or industry into something significantly different from what it was. I label this behavior as frame-breaking change. The idea is normally associated with emerging industries and new entrants, yet can apply equally to incumbents in well established sectors, as Schumpeter pointed out. These innovations often represent new combinations such as high quality at low cost [Deming, 1982], speed and efficiency [Stalk and Hout, 1990], miniaturization and low cost [Morita, 1986], or fashion and mass markets [Baden-Fuller and Stopford, 1992]. Hampden-Turner [1990] has labeled the development of such new combinations as dilemma resolution. Schumpeterian competition suggests a new way of thinking about competition. Traditionally, authors have depicted the competitive contests in mature sectors as being among strong and weak firms, with different positions and resources, but all sharing a common sense of a dominant and stable 'recipe' [e.g., Harrigan, 1988, and Porter, 1980].

There is a strong relationship between innovation and employees taking on psychological ownership of the company's growth thereby manifesting entrepreneurial behaviour. Since this is done within the framework of a large organization rather than as an autonomous entrepreneur, it is more appropriate to look at these innovators as corporate entrepreneurs or intrapreneurs [Pinchot, 1985; Hamel, 2002; Stopford and Baden-Faller, 1990; Kaplan and Norton, 2001; Quinn, 1985].

Stopford and Baden-Fuller [1994] found that different types of entrepreneurship can exist in the same firm, that many attributes of entrepreneurship are common to all types, and that these attributes change their role and relative importance over time. They also examined external and internal triggers for change and compared the different responses to gain some insight into what conditioned the responses and outcomes. Their findings add to previous evidence that some firms can prosper in hostile or 'mature' environments [for example Hall, 1980], by showing how some have achieved such prosperity.

A proposed framework for research

A number of studies have highlighted the relationship between particular leader behaviours and/or leadership styles and organizational innovation. For instance, Keller [1992] found that transformational leadership positively influenced performance of research and

development project teams in a large R&D organization. Greenberger and Sexton [1988] found that entrepreneurial leadership displayed by the top management team fundamentally drives innovation in firms. Top management team members can affect the development and implementation of new products by providing the leadership necessary to create a climate that stimulates innovation in the organization. The importance of effective leadership in bringing out innovation among creative people is illustrated by Andrews [1967]. Cogliser and Brigham [2004] completed a comprehensive literature review at the intersection of leadership and entrepreneurship, and they conclude that the areas of thematic overlap across leadership and entrepreneurship include vision, influence on both followers and on a larger constituency, leading innovative and creative people, and planning.

From this point of view entrepreneurs needed to meet the following requirements for participation in the phenomenology exploration of innovation catalysation: (a) They must be business owners, founders, or part of a founding group; (b) they must currently work in the same business; (c) the business must have revenues of less than \$2 million/year; (d) the business has at least 2 years of experience; and (e) the business must have been profitable or reached the break-even point for at least 1 year. Age was not a strong qualification, but for the purpose of the study, those under 25 years of age were excluded because they would not have had the depth of experience required for the study. Innovative competition is not exclusively the preserve of the new entrant. Some is provoked by established firms that have managed to find and deploy new combinations of resources as a means of retaining leadership [for examples, see De Geus, 1988 for Shell; and Tichy and Charan, 1989 for GE]. Sometimes they have first reacted to others' innovations, started processes of renewal and only later on have created new capabilities to the extent that they could go on to change the basis of competition for their industries, just as Brandes and Brege [1993] report for the Swedish multinational, ABB.

Some behavioral, action oriented descriptions of entrepreneurial leaders can be found in Covin & Slevin [2002], who argue that entrepreneurial leadership is characterized by the following six imperatives: 1) Nourishing an entrepreneurial capability, 2) protecting innovations that might threaten the current business model, 3) making sense of opportunities, 4) questioning the dominant logic, 5) revisiting the „deceptively simple questions”, and 6) linking entrepreneurship and strategic management.

Timmons [1999] argued that the central theme driving a highly dynamic entrepreneurial process is the opportunity force, by which entrepreneurs can creatively identify opportunities by deploying relevant resources. From a meta-analysis of the determinants of organizational innovation, Damanpour [1991] suggested that the increasing complexity of work processes and the increasingly competitive business environment have created new challenges for organizations, and that their top managers' style of leadership has accordingly become an increasingly important determinant of organizational innovation. Entrepreneurs need to generate valuable ideas for new products, services or technologies that will appeal to some identifiable market and potential opportunities, and they must figure out how to bring their projects to fruition [Ward, 2004].

Something similar would need to be done with respect to innovation. Entrepreneurs will have to learn to practice systematic purposeful innovation. Successful entrepreneurs do not wait for a bright idea to strike; they do not look for the big time innovation that will revolutionize the industry they are operating in nor do they work to create a multi-billion dollar

business. Therefore, those entrepreneurs who start out with the idea of making it big and thus are in a hurry are probably destined to fail because they are bound to do wrong things.

Entrepreneurial leaders create visionary scenarios that are used to assemble and mobilize a supporting cast of interdependent members who commit and enact the vision to achieve strategic value creation [Gupta et al., 2004, p. 242]. Second, entrepreneurial leaders tend to be tolerant of ambiguity, persistent, persevering, creative, as well as enthusiastic and dynamic leaders with high networking and communication abilities [Stuart & Abetti, 1987], and this enables them to build entrepreneurial culture and organization [Timmons, 1999]. Third, entrepreneurial leaders have a propensity to act autonomously, a willingness to innovate and take risks, and a tendency to be aggressive toward competitors and proactive relative to marketplace opportunities [Lumpkin & Dess, 1996]. Fourth, entrepreneurial leaders act as change agents and facilitators to implement creative problem-solving systems or process-orientation, thereby releasing creativity from the team, and empowering people in problem-solving, setting quality standards, continually improving and setting higher goals [Ekvall & Arvonen, 1994; Rickards & Moger, 1999, 2000].

Thornberry [2006] devotes several chapters to the behaviors of four types of entrepreneurial leaders labeled explorers, miners, accelerators, and integrators. Market-focused *explorers* concentrate on developing new markets, services, and products, i.e. exhibit highly innovative and proactive behaviors. *Miners* are more concerned with operational issues and making the company run more efficiently while serving customers better. In the case of *miners*, entrepreneurship is demonstrated in processes rather than in products, which is the case with *explorers*. *Accelerators* are also company-focused but from a human resources management perspective. They constantly challenge their colleagues and subordinates to think and act in more innovative ways. In this way, they promote intrapreneurial behavior in the organization. Finally, *integrators* embody these skill sets of *explorers*, *miners*, and *accelerators*, and look at the big picture, concentrating on the strategy of the company as a whole [Thornberry 2006]. One can view this breakdown as building on the earlier „task leader” model [Marcus 1960].

The concept of entrepreneurial leadership has become increasingly important because organizations must be more entrepreneurial to enhance their performance, their capacity for adaptation and long-term survival [Gupta et al., 2004]. Covin and Slevin [1988] emphasized that entrepreneurial effort refers to key challenges managers face and is related to the three interrelated behaviour components: the risk-taking dimension [inclined to take business-related risks], the innovation dimension [favouring change and innovation to obtain a competitive advantage for the firm], and the pro-active dimension [competing aggressively with other firms]. In another study with cross-cultural samples from 62 societies and over 15,000 middle managers, Gupta et al. [2004] concluded that „entrepreneurial leadership is universally endorsed and that there are societal differences in its effectiveness suggests several promising areas of inquiry” [p. 257].

In this paper I focus on entrepreneurial leadership and its influence on modern organization. Due to the fact that leadership is an important factor in the lives of organizations and their members there have been created a variety approaches for examining and classifying different types of leadership [e.g. Dubrin, 2004; Hunt, 2004; Yukl, 2006].

Although the ultimate purpose of leadership typologies is usually to provide classifications for different skills, behaviors, and processes, such a focus raises the potential for paying

more attention to category definition and less attention to the dynamics of the leadership process itself. Therefore I suggest the dialectical approach as it focuses on the dynamics of leadership and begins with recognition that more substantive leadership involves reconciling of contradictions.

Entrepreneurial leadership research model should integrate theoretical perspectives with entrepreneurial reconciliation of dialectical contradictions. Three common leadership contradictions associated with entrepreneurial phenomena in existing organizations: [1] top-down versus bottom-up entrepreneurial initiatives in creating vision and common direction, [2] economic effectiveness versus social responsibility in shaping organizational culture for entrepreneurial wealth creation, and [3] economic competition versus social cooperation in mobilizing motivation for entrepreneurial partnership [Bratnicki & Kozłowski, 2007; 2009]. For House and Shamir [1993] entrepreneurial leadership framework is derived from context of transactional/transformational, charismatic, or visionary leadership. The approach joins these researchers who argue that the dialectical approach may be extendible to many domains of organizational enquiry [Denison, Hooijberg, & Quinn, 1995; Rowe, 2001; Thayer, 1988]. An interesting illustration is the competing values framework, where it is argued that effective leaders must be able to engage in both similar and contradictory roles [Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, & McGrath, 2003]. Giddens's „the dialectic of control” implicates that no matter how asymmetrical, power relations are always two-way, contingent and to some degree interdependent, and he calls it [Giddens, 1987]. Collins [2001] similarly holds that great performance of leaders is based on combining a culture of discipline with an ethic of entrepreneurship. As well as Collinson [2005], who explores three interrelated dialectical dynamics [control/resistance, dissent/consent, men/women] and highlights the tensions, contradictions and ambiguities that typically characterize the relations and practices of leaders and followers as mutually constituting and coproduced. Farson [1996] also shows how apparent contradictions or absurdities could be the sources of leadership competences. These suggestions are not at all inconsistent with predictions derived from other studies that have pursued the important aspects of leadership in existing enterprises.

Conclusions

I believe that organizations of various size and type can benefit from the entrepreneurial leadership approach. This approach provides us with operationalization for entrepreneurial leadership scale, which in consequence should give directions for developing entrepreneurial leadership in organizations. I have indicated that employees who perceive that their supervisors exhibit entrepreneurial leadership behaviors are more satisfied with the companies they work for. Developing entrepreneurial leadership in a firm seems to have immediate benefits through employees' satisfaction. I also believe that managers can improve overall firm performance by constructing a culture centered on the entrepreneurial leadership dimensions.

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Przedsiębiorcze przywództwo jako katalizator innowacyjności we współczesnym zarządzaniu

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł prezentuje przedsiębiorcze przywództwo w różnych kontekstach i jego powiązania z tworzeniem nowych pomysłów we współczesnym świecie. U podstaw przedsiębiorczości leży tworzenie nowej rzeczywistości i przetwarzanie nowych idei w nowe przedsięwzięcia. Ponadto działania przedsiębiorcze są skupione wokół innowacyjnych pomysłów interpretowanych w celu zwiększenia powodzenia szans, które inaczej by się wymknęły. Przywództwo to w pewnym stopniu siła pomysłów, która napędza zbiorowe działanie dzięki wizji. Proces wywierania wpływu na innych ukierunkowuje bezpośrednie czynności na wspólny cel i nadaje sens zbiorowym wysiłkom, co tworzy nowych odbiorców dla pomysłów, gdyż zmienia kontekst ich postrzegania. Zanim zaczniemy łączyć przedsiębiorczość i przywództwo należy zwrócić uwagę, że chociaż istnieje wiele definicji przywództwa, to dwa terminy, które powtarzane są w większości z nich to proces i wpływ. W artykule zaprezentowano definicję Yukla, według którego „przywództwo jest procesem wywierania wpływu na innych w celu zrozumienia i potwierdzenia tego, co musi zostać zrobione i jak należy tego dokonać, oraz jest to proces umożliwiający łączenie wysiłków indywidualnych i zbiorowych w celu osiągnięcia wspólnych celów”. Podobnie traktują przywództwo House i Javidan, dla których jest to „zdolność jednostki do wywierania wpływu, motywowania i umożliwiania innym wykazania się w efektywności i sukcesie organizacji, której są członkami”. Dla porównania zaprezentowano także podejście Gilla, który dla zdefiniowania przywództwa przedsiębiorczego używa pięciu obszarów, szczególnie popularnych wśród teorii i modeli przedsiębiorczości. Należą do nich: wizja i sens misji, kreowanie

kultury organizacyjnej, tworzenie i wdrażanie strategii w celu podążania za wizją i misją, pozytywne wzmocnienie ludzi, wywieranie wpływu na ludzi, motywowanie i inspirowanie ludzi. W dalszej części artykułu przedstawiono wyniki badań empirycznych Gupty, MacMillana i Surie. W swoim artykule badacze ci zdefiniowali przedsiębiorcze przywództwo jako główny element przedsiębiorczego mind-setu, który „tworzy wizjonerskie scenariusze używane do składania i mobilizowania »grupy wsparcia« z uczestników, którzy dzięki wizji byłoby oddani odkrywaniu i wykorzystaniu szans dla tworzenia strategicznej wartości”. Z zaprezentowanych podejść wynika, że przedsiębiorczy przywódca staje się częścią kontekstu organizacji i otoczenia, który kształtuje i formuje proces organizacyjnej przedsiębiorczości. Dzięki temu odgrywa ważną rolę w tym kontekście. Przedsiębiorczy aktorzy, działania i znaczenia są zakorzenione w nieograniczonych sieciach społecznych, powiązaniach i relacjach. To nieustanne przecinanie się przedsiębiorcy i kontekstu będzie miało wpływ na przedsiębiorczość i wydarzenia przedsiębiorcze.

Rola i miejsce przedsiębiorczego przywództwa będzie się zmieniać w następstwie postępu społecznego, ekonomicznego, cywilizacyjnego i kulturowego. Potrzeba wzmocnienia przedsiębiorczości i tego typu przywództwa pojawia się w organizacjach, które są w trakcie ewolucyjnych zmian, gdzie niepewność i wysoki poziom ryzyka stanowią realne zagrożenia. Zadaniem przywódcy jest takie poszukiwanie równowagi między pojawiającymi się aspiracjami w organizacji i jej otoczeniu, aby zapewnić jej sukces również we wspieraniu procesu zarządzania innowacjami.