

# How India Is Gearing Up in Strategic Leadership

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## **Abstract:**

Strategic leadership involves managers using their creative problem-solving skills and strategic vision to help team members and an organization achieve long-term goals. Strategic leaders are strong communicators, active listeners, passionate, positive, innovative, collaborative, honest, diplomatic, empathetic, and humble. This article throws light on some good Strategic Leaders who have turned around their organizations. The article also talks about Threshold Competencies in Strategic Leadership.

**Keywords:** Threshold Competency, Strategy, Qualities, EQ, Change Management, VUCA, Teamwork.

Threshold competencies include basic knowledge, skills, character, motives, self-image, and social role and these are essential for performing a job. Without these, some areas of performance will be of poor quality. To move beyond minimum performance, additional competencies are required.

the term threshold competency was coined in 2006 to describe the level of knowledge and skills an individual must have before they can take on a particular employment. This is typically measured by conducting interviews and written tests. Threshold competency is a term used to describe the level of skill or knowledge that an individual needs to be able to perform their responsibility in a job.

Can everyone become a leader? The answer is NO. Some people mould themselves in leadership position easily. Strategic leadership is a type of leadership in which leaders influence those around them to embrace a collective vision for the success of their organization. These leaders can work confidently in today's VUCA world by approaching situations with creativity, vision and focus on long-term success and providing their team with a clear sense of direction and collaboration to work together toward a common goal.

**Good leaders understand VUCA World:** VUCA stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It describes the situation of constant, unpredictable change that is now the norm in certain industries and areas of the business world.

Tactical leaders possess the unique ability to figure out the best strategies and implementing them methodically to help their organization remain sustainable. And, sustainability requires adaptation, whether it's the available technology, the changing climate, fluctuating economy or other affecting factors, and organizations without strategic leaders are at risk of failure in the face of these factors.

What is Google CEO Pichai's leadership style? According to reports, he is a modest, restrained man. He is empathetic, supportive, and graceful at navigating political minefields. He avoids confrontation, instead emphasizing cooperation. He waits out conflicts rather than confronting opponents. "He has great relationships. He's just not a polarizing figure," Minnie Ingersoll, a former Google product manager who worked with Pichai early in his career, told The Wall Street Journal.

**EQ is an important threshold competency:** Leaders with high emotional intelligence can utilize their emotions appropriately to influence positive outcomes. This is a must-have skill for leaders. It helps them effectively manage teams without causing rifts or conflicts.

However, there are some basic competencies that are essential for an employee to hold a leading position. These are: conceptual skills, integrity, humanity, communication skills, and business acumen. While the first four are basic traits that make an employee a good leader, business acumen is exceptionally important. Business acumen is an ability to understand and handle business situations. It is the collection of both general and organization-specific knowledge about how things get done and why they are important.

Leadership competency is an essential element of a team leader at mid-level, or senior-level position in an organization. The most essential part of a leader's job is to understand and convey goals, delegate tasks, set deadlines, and motivate employees. Good EQ helps leaders to perform well.

Employees who wish to progress into managerial roles are required to have leadership competency. The leadership ability of an employee is judged based on his interaction with other employees, subordinates, how he builds relationships with others, and how he handles conflict.

The leadership style of Mukesh Ambani is very distinctive. Mukesh Ambani doesn't restrict himself to the traditional boundaries of monocratic, transformational, and situational leaderships among others. He has his own unique style of leading. He is a visionary. He can think of the future - the unknown. He knows what technology will be feasible in the future. He understands the sustainability of a company and its potential not based on its present promises but what it promises in the future. It is this ability of the Indian billionaire that has ensured the unprecedented success of Reliance Industries, a conglomerate that was founded by his father Dhirubhai Ambani. Mukesh is an impatient man. He wants solutions to the problems at the earliest. For that purpose, he employs only the best hands. He doesn't pretend that he knows the solution to each problem.

Effective leaders not only guide teams towards achieving strategic objectives but also foster a culture of innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement. They inspire employees to reach their full potential, steer through challenges, and capture new opportunities. A successful leader ensures employees' prosperity and the organization's economic success.

**Respects discipline:** Employees get influenced by their manager's discipline, his style, which in turn improves their work performance. Some leaders also use a compensation structure to promote the achievement of strategic goals resulting in the union of individual and company goals.

A leader's role is to prioritize the team's needs and create an environment where everyone can flourish and learn from one another. They know that investing in people and prioritizing their requirements results in unwavering loyalty and trust. To inspire the team, managers need to communicate a simple clear and relevant vision of the way forward. Solving internal conflicts is not an easy task. Differences of opinion and confrontations are inevitable when a diverse group of people gathers under one roof.

Narayan Murthy is known for his down to earth nature and friendliness. His achievements and hard work are a great example for any other Indian who aspires to be an entrepreneur. His encouragement has led to the revolutions of startup industries in India. He gives importance to passion and will to persevere. He says that leaders must give priority to the long-term interests. High levels of optimism and high aspirations.

**Inspires Team:** A leader's job is to inspire their teams from time to time by appreciating/recognizing their efforts, comprehending complex situations, and acting appropriately towards creating a contented workforce. Leadership development programs help to reinforce the company's vision, mission, and values. These programs bring employees together, and team-building events provide opportunities for socialization as well as encouraging employees to work as a team and better understand one another on a personal level.

Motivating employees is learning about their needs and desires, delivering what they require, and rewarding them for a well-done job. A leader inspires team members by listening to and appreciating their ideas, as well as recognizing their contributions.

A leader is accountable for ensuring that his/her team stays efficient and productive. They can encourage higher productivity levels from each team member by applying modern management strategies designed to improve time management, minimize employee stress, and increase the quality deliverables of meetings.

The Indian business tycoon Azeem Premji plays the role of chairman of Wipro Limited and has a net worth of US \$7.2 billion as of October 2019. One of the top industry leaders in India quotes "Success is achieved twice. Once in the mind and the second time in the real world" among others demonstrate how he as one of powerful person in India thinks. Premji's sharp strategic vision and crisp communication skills led his team to strive for excellence. He has been known for his modesty, simplicity, and non-extravagance.

**Managing Change Effectively:** Managing change especially when it's traumatic is no joke. CCD, which once did roaring business through it's over 500 outlets in India and abroad, has now plunged into debt, forcing the closure of these cafes that was thronged by youngsters and office goers. The founder V.G. Siddhartha committed suicide which called for change in leadership because the Bengaluru-based firm saw a sharp decline in its fortunes and piling losses. People thought that the Coffee Day company would not survive after Siddhartha's death and questions thronged as to who would continue to run the company after him. People believed the company could not recover because of the accumulated debt.

But Malavika Hegde, wife of V G Siddhartha, put all the suspicion to end and achieved a milestone by saving CCD from disappearing despite being a single woman and mother of two sons.

Good leaders uphold agreements and make sure others do the same. They don't let people get away with not changing, and work to understand the underlying reasons so they can remove obstacles. Malvika Hegde aided CCD to sail through challenging times by improving employees' ability to respond quickly in unpredictably changing business situations. Leadership plays a significant role during such times of layoffs, corporate restructuring, political turmoil, and new competitors.

**Conclusion:** Leadership is a vast subject and requires a necessary skill especially for team handling and senior positions in an organization. The list of threshold competencies that a leader should possess is immense. Many behavioural or personality traits can be observed and learned by leadership role in an organization. And leadership studies are a multidisciplinary academic field of study that focuses on leadership in organizational contexts and in human life.

A leader's role can't be overlooked because it impacts the entire business. A strong leader has the power to inspire, energize and motivate their entire team to work together to achieve shared goals, leading to more effective collaboration, innovation, and productivity.