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# Elon Musk as a Leader

## Introduction

For the Leadership analysis series, I choose the profile of Elon Musk, founder, CEO of SpaceX, Co-founder of Tesla, CEO of Neuralink, founder of the Boring company and also PayPal. (Ref- Elon Musk. (2019, July 19). Elon Musk is one of the pioneers of the world and a great human being. I already analyzed the many facts of Musk in the previous paper. In this paper I will discuss about his Ethics, code of conduct, conflict management and strategic planning skills. I will also discuss the Power and Politics skills of Musk.

## Ethics and Professional Code of Conduct

Ethics are the standards of right and wrong that influence behavior. Ethics provide guidelines for judging conduct and decision making. The emphasis was on how an individual's personality traits and attitudes, level of moral development, and the situational context affect their ethical behavior (ref- Achua, Leadership - theory, application, & skill development, 2014, P-371).

Musk is known for his leadership and his ethical code of conduct, be it while managing any project, team or while addressing his employees. Musk has always maintained ethics and always follow the code of conduct. After the failure of the SpaceX rocket launch for the 3rd time, he had a brief talk with the employees regarding the failure of the program. He said, 'If things are not failing, you are not innovating enough'. Musk also mentioned that he will never give up on his part. It clearly indicates that he never stops working until he achieves the goal. Elon Musk ethics can be described with the following aspects (ref: 'Elon Musk Work Ethic: 10 Secrets for Insane Success')

- Start the day with critical work: Musk always starts the day with his most critical work. This means dealing with important emails so that it will unblock other people's work and progress.
- Use Feedback Loops: Musk believe that one can achieve the final goal by the feedback of other peoples. With the feedback loops, work can be done in better ways.
- Better Communication: Musk believes that good Communication is the key to any success. He is the master at public speaking, converting complex topic into easy and understandable language.
- Time Management: Time is the essence of all things. Musk always tries to optimize his time using feedback loops.
- Embrace stretch goals: "The first step is to establish that something is possible; then probability will occur"- Elon Musk. He always tries to set the deadlines for company's project and want his employees to finish the project before the deadlines.4

Professional Code of conduct is the vital element of any profession to maintain standards for the individual inside any organization. Many organizations have a written code of ethics or code of conduct that displays the values and principles governing employee behavior. Written statements have the advantage of explicitly stating the company's position on ethical and moral issues, and they serve as benchmarks for judging both company decisions and actions and

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individual conduct. A growing number of organizations have added a code of ethics to their list of formal statements and public pronouncements. They are seen as tools for highlighting an organization's ethical and socially responsible culture. (Ref- Achua, Leadership - theory, application & skill development, 2014, P-373). Professional code of conduct brings about trust, responsibility and duty to the people that the profession serves. Musk was determined to bring his goal alive and worked very hard until he achieved his dream.

## **Managing Conflict**

Poor communications, feedback, and coaching can lead to conflict. A conflict exists whenever people are in disagreement and opposition. Conflict is part of everyday life in organizations. It affects everyone involved and how we manage conflict affects performance. (Ref Achua, Leadership - theory, application, & skill development, 2014, P- 200). Conflict management was proactively managed by Elon Musk. He recognized the challenges in the different projects and always try to overcome the challenges with the help of his employees. The five styles that Musk followed in managing conflicts are given below:

- **Accommodating:** Accommodating styles forsakes our own desires in exchange for those of others. In this type, we generally put the concerns of others before our own. Musk believe in this type for managing the conflicts. He generally tries to share the same idea as his employees do.
- **Avoiding:** This style generally evades the conflicts. In this type we generally neither pursue on our belief nor on the others which ultimately postpone the conflicts.
- **Compromising:** It generally attempts to find a temporary solution which results in pleasing all the parties.
- **Collaborating:** It generally finds a solution that will meet the needs of all other parties. Musk try to create a good collaboration with all his employers.
- **Forcing:** The forcing conflict style user attempts to resolve the conflict by using aggressive behavior to get his or her own way. When we use the forcing style, we are uncooperative and aggressive, doing whatever it takes to satisfy our own needs at the expense of others, if necessary.

## **Strategic Planning**

Strategic planning is the management activity that is generally used to set priorities, strengthen operation, make certain goals to ensure that employees and the different stake holders are working towards the common goal. Strategic planning generally gives the details about how the association is going and how it will reach the final goal. After the failure of the SpaceX program for the third time, Musk did a strategic planning to overcome this issue. Musk told his employees that they need to be calm and should learn new things from their mistakes. Musk also makes the strategic plan for the Tesla motors. The main aim was to create a low volume electric car. This was the very smart strategy of the Musk because it gives them realistic and achievable goals.

## **Power And Politics**

Musk is known for his leadership and great communication skills. He is very powerful and great influential leader. Power and politics are said to be one of the key aspects for the growth and

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success of any leader and Musk possess both of this quality. The primary source of Elon Musk power is his leadership skills. He hires brilliant and talented individuals that can design and develop his products. Musk generally influences people in his organization as well as outside world by using great communication skills. He often tweets about any achievement of his company as well as he appreciates his employees who are often involved in that success.

## **Application of Analysis to Leadership Roles and Responsibilities**

Musk possesses all the leadership qualities that a good leader should have. After researching on Musk throughout this semester, I can definitely say that Elon Musk is truly a great leader whose leadership style is very much relevant in workplace. Based on the analysis of leadership roles and responsibilities of Elon Musk, I will try to focus on the following aspects

- Ethics and Professional code of conduct are one of the key aspects of any company or organization. These are the strong pillars which help every individual to grow in the right way. Elon Musk's leadership and his skills in this aspect inspire me a lot.
- Every organization has conflicting personalities and it is very hard for the leader to manage the different conflicts. So, we can apply managing conflicts attributes of Elon Musk in our organization.
- In my current role, I have huge responsibilities of project planning. So, by applying the strategic planning traits, it will become very easy for me to manage any project.
- Most important characteristics that we can apply to our organization is power and politics. It is very important to make connections with the right people in the organization.

## **Conclusion**

Musk is a great leader who dreamed big and broke all the barriers to achieve the final goal. The qualities that Musk possesses are not only limited to his organization but also inspire people outside the world. In conclusion I can definitely say that Elon Musk's leadership has many traits which can inspire anyone.

## **References**

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