Topic № 10. Leadership for IT Professionals

Good leadership is critical to individual and organizational success in today's challenging global IT environment. Leaders are needed at every level of an organization and in every discipline - IT is no exception. Leadership is essential to ensuring that project goals and objectives are set and achieved, and to ensure that a project team remains committed and focused to achieving its deliverables. This topic focuses on developing core leadership skills and behaviours and emphasizes that managers can become leaders if they choose to do so. Throughout the topic participants explore and discuss essential leadership concepts and behaviours, and create a plan of how to apply these behaviours in their specific context by developing their own personal leadership development plan.

What is leadership in the IT field?

IT leadership can be described as a person or group of people in senior positions responsible for managing an organization's IT infrastructure, software, applications and resources. These form the vehicle on which an organization's business technology strategy and objectives are based.

What is the role of leadership in technology?

Leaders are able to influence staff, faculty, and administrators by involving them with the decision making process. Second, technology leaders must have knowledge about the dynamics and infrastructure of an organization in order to understand employee apprehension and any other issues that may develop.

What is technology leadership?

Technological leadership encompasses how a leader uses technology during their daily duties and tasks, while leading others to complete their assigned tasks and duties.

What are the benefits of technology leadership?

With the help of technology, leaders can view the number of tasks accomplished by team members in real time. It also helps them communicate any change in the tasks they are doing, no matter where they are. It has brought a good amount of change in how leaders communicate and deal with their employees.

What is included in the IT profession?

An IT job is any position that involves the implementation, support, maintenance, repair or protection of data or computer systems. Those involved in development, deployment or support of the systems or applications others use are the most common examples of IT jobs.

What is IT professional skills?

Professional skills are abilities that can help you succeed in your job. A professional skill describes a habit, personality trait or ability that positively affects your performance in the workplace. Having such skills can benefit people in nearly all job positions, industries and work environments.

In most cases, the prime responsibility of a technology leader is product delivery, both on time and fully functional. Needless to say, IT leadership is crucial for any business to succeed. So who is a technology leader and what skills should he possess? How well should he understand the technology to be able to align the business and technology strategies? In what way do his personal qualities drive the workforce efficiency? What skills and qualities should he develop to become a better IT leader?

The Impact of Leadership on IT Compared to Management and the Importance of IT Leadership

Leadership is more important than management in IT. Today, IT leaders must be equipped with the correct leadership skills, knowledge, and abilities to cope with the demands of IT.

Leadership, not management, is the vital force that organizes and motivates the organization to accomplish its company objectives

Leadership maximizes productivity, shapes and promotes a positive and harmonious culture. IT leadership involves taking the initiative to undertake new methods without being afraid of failure; this is very important in order to cope with the multifaceted technological changes in the IT industry. It is about building capabilities to turn technology into business solutions that enable the business to achieve its objectives and strategy.

An IT leader not only possesses wide-ranging leadership skills but has detailed technology-related knowledge about the mediums, tools, strategies, and competencies existing in this culture. An IT leader also has the knowledge on how to utilize and assess these tools, and also has the awareness of the impact of these tools on the future of the organization.

What an IT Manager should do to become an IT leader?

Managing people is a necessary skill to succeed in IT. However, in order for a company to succeed in the IT industry, a manager should be a leader. If you desire to climb the ladder to becoming an IT leader for the new millennium – a globe of enormous technological advancements and high technology tools – develop and pursue these strong leadership skills:

1. Be self-aware

Before you can look at yourself in the perspective of your subordinates and your company, be a self-aware leader, you need to know who you are.

2. Learn to listen, work with other people and delegate

The range and profundity of IT mean that no single individual can know it all. An IT leader must know when to keep quiet and surround himself with subordinates who balance his strengths and weaknesses.

3. Develop great communication skills

The ability to communicate is an essential skill required to be a great leader. As an IT leader, you will work with employees from different departments and all walks of life. You must be proficient enough to clearly express your message.

4. Be authentic

Leaders know their personality, characteristics, style, and purposely desire to lead instead of attempting to be an unfortunate imitation of somebody they admire.

5. Create a safe-to-fail atmosphere

Generating an environment wherein employees are supported to take chances and open with failure provides employees with self-confidence to try new things, and this can spur innovation.

6. Be adept at problem-solving

An IT leader is a problem-solver at heart.

7. Generate a collaborative environment

An IT leader must discontinue being an individual contributor. This means that getting their work done must be integrated with the help of others.

8. Be empathetic

A great leader must be capable of metaphorically put himself in others' shoes to fully comprehend their point of view.

9. Be action-orientated and selfless

A leader is enthusiastic to do something for the overall good of the organization.

10. Be bold, visionary and spiritually-grounded

A true leader is well-equipped to face the challenges of the 21st century. IT Leader is a business leader.