

Summary of Leadership Approaches

Approach	Time Period	Major Assumptions	Major Criticisms
Great Man	Mid 1800s – Early 1900s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership development is based on Darwinistic principles. • Leaders are born, not made. • Leaders have natural abilities of power and influence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientific research has not proved that leadership is based on hereditary factors. • Leadership was believed to exist only in a few elite individuals
Trait	1907 – 1947	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A leader has superior or endowed qualities. • Certain individuals possess a natural ability to lead. • Leaders have traits which differentiate them from followers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The situation is not considered in this approach. • Many traits are too obscure or abstract to measure and observe. • Studies have not adequately linked traits with leadership effectiveness. • Most trait studies omit leadership behaviors and followers' motivation as mediating variables.
Behavioral	1950s – 1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is one best way to lead. • Leaders who express high concern for both people and production or consideration and structure will be effective. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational variables and group processes ignored; studies failed to identify the situations where specific types of leadership behaviors are relevant.
Situational / Contingency	1950s – early 1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaders act differently depending on the situation. • The situation determines who will emerge as a leader. • Different leadership behaviors are required for different situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most contingency theories are ambiguous, making it difficult to formulate specific, testable propositions. • Theories lack accurate measures.
Influence	Mid 1920s – 1977	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is an influence or social exchange process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More research needed on effect charisma has on the leader-follower interaction.
Reciprocal	1978 – Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is a relational process. • Leadership is a shared process. • Emphasis on followership. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of research. • Further clarification needed on similarities and differences between charismatic and transforming leadership. • Processes of collaboration, change, and empowerment are difficult to achieve and measure.

Adapted from Exhibit 2.1 in *The Changing Nature of Leadership*

Myths and Truths About Leadership

Myths

- Leaders are born, not made.
- Leadership is hierarchical, and you need to hold a formal position (have status and power) to be considered a leader.
- You have to have charisma to be an effective leader.
- There is one standard way of leading.
- It is impossible to be a manager and a leader at the same time.
- You only need to have common sense to learn how to be an effective leader.

Truths

- Leaders are made, not born.
- In today's fluid organizations, leadership occurs at all levels.
- Having a charismatic personality is not a prerequisite for leadership.
- There is not one identifiable right way to lead an organization or group.
- Some leaders and scholars believe it is important to make a distinction between the processes of management and leadership.
- Leadership is a discipline that is teachable.

Adapted from *The Changing Nature of Leadership*