

## **A CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON LEADERSHIP ISSUES IN MOVING TARGETS: A LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE**

**Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan\***

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### **Abstract:**

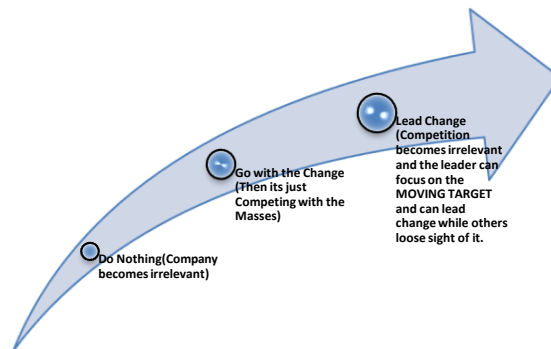
Leaders at times overlook or underestimate the changes around or misunderstand the changes happening around them, the confusion many times looms large for the time spent and the way it is spent today compared to a year ago? then why the leaders are unable to hit at the target. Leaders in reality are surprised due to the surprising changes in achieved targets, compared to the results achieve the last year despite having the same time and resources, or with a reasonable change. They keep asking as why it's getting difficult to hit at the target?. The next examining question on leader is, are the markets are getting dynamic rapidly in its structure, culture or the expectations in services, or is that the leader has lost focus on what makes business profitable? The real reason is that, the targets keep moving, relentlessly.

**Keywords: Moving Targets, Focus, Challenges, Striving, Thriving, Positive Psychology, Competitors, Un-met wants, Strategy, Structure, Culture, Expectations, Services**

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**Introduction:** The ever moving targets stands as the primary question in every leader about coping with the constantly moving target of their business or growth targets. The biggest concern is how to hit the moving target. These days all competitive advantages are fleeting. So the smartest companies are learning to create new one again and again. Even **Leadership is a moving target because of the following due to enormity of relentless change** that is happening around. In these circumstances, there are only three choices for a leader; **do nothing, go with it, or lead change**. If doing nothing while the world around is changing, the leader and the company they lead will become irrelevant. If the leader just goes along with the change, then it's just competing with the masses. If they lead change, then competition becomes irrelevant and it's simple to focus on the moving target while others lose sight of it. In the age of moving target the world doesn't stand still. In particular, more than ever, the world we do business in today is in a constant state of flux, with mergers, new initiatives, etc happening all the time. So if the world doesn't stand still, why shouldn't the same apply to business continuity plans of a leader. A leader needs to be honest on this and the plans and strategies are to be updated be it within the last month, the last quarter or half yearly. If the leader wants them to remain effective and current, the need to audit the plans on a regular basis is to be implemented. As the world doesn't stand still so is the leaders life.



**Figure: 1: Leaders Choices in the Enormity of relentless change due to Moving Targets:  
Concept designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

The leaders personal questions start with, what is the biggest internal or external threat to their business? Is it resources? Is it about moving along or up with change? Is there a lack of focus or diverted focus? Is that the turnover is unexpectedly high, and, is it a complex problem to be understood and solved? Is the bigger challenges of the business is due to new competitors, new expectations, the new changing government policy and the problems with the unstable economy? Further to this the added fears in the leaders start from the analytical side like, are the competitors changed? Are the competitors invisible right now? and finally, are the customer's under-served or un-met wants and needs unfulfilled and are the leaders really addressing them, are which are seemingly looking like the **moving targets** and leaders are natural victims either the challenges thrown or the impact of the moving target on the work towards success, or tumble to pressure as well the confusion to the highest point of nuances created on them by these ever moving targets in leaders business life as well as personal life.

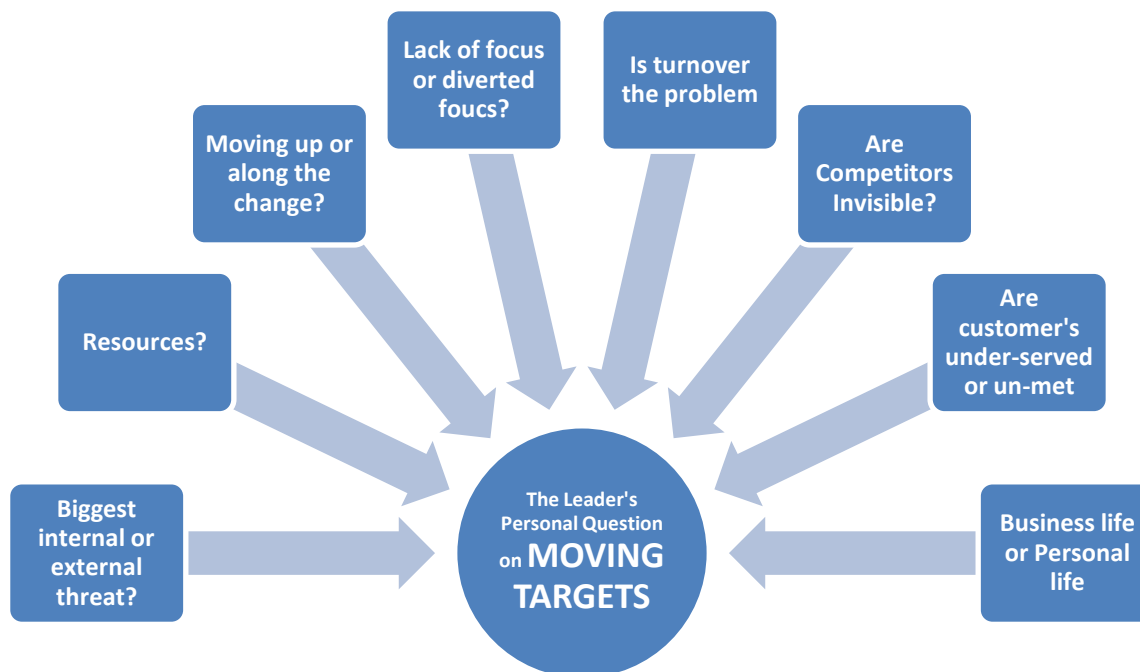
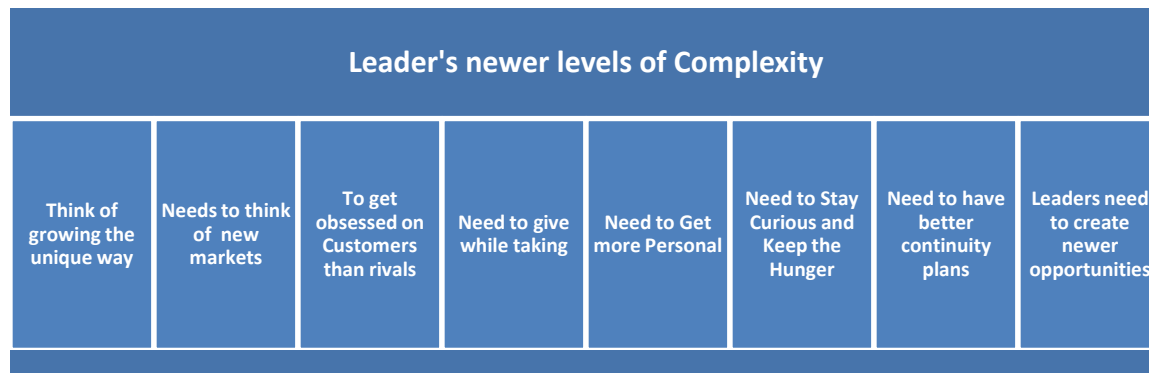


Figure: 2: The Leader's Personal Questions on Moving Targets: Concept and Design: Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

**Leader's challenges with newer levels of complexity: There is no way except to accepting change is the way to lead a company to success, but to simultaneously develop self as leader**

adds an entirely new level of complexity especially for entrepreneurial leaders. The business always grows beyond the abilities of its leader despite aspirations of many leaders to take their companies to the next level, it is mostly never fulfilled if the leaders lack growth personally as a leader. **The changing attitude of people:** Motivating people and creating dynamic business cultures are more complex and challenging than leaders ever imagined, is the reason behind many leaders excel at the start-ups and turnaround situations pushes their skills to the wall, once the excitement of the challenge is behind them. In contrast, some leaders are amazing at refining and growing solid companies. Very few leaders are capable of handling dynamics of leading and motivating people to achieve a shared vision in a variety of business situations will always remain a process of continuous leadership development. **A leaders self motivation.** Leaders need to influence by leading organisation success story. They must accept the simple truth that leadership is a moving target. Only those leaders who are relentlessly focused on the target will surpass difficulties and taste success. **Leaders need to go the Unique route than the usually used : Leader need to create new markets than competing against each other:** Niches are nice, but inventing a new market is a whole lot better edge to a stubborn resolve to "stay crazy" and keep "the suits" away from all creative decisions. It's better to create new markets. **Leaders need to get obsessed on customers than rivals:** a customer anywhere in the world, from the Alaskan tundra to the deserts of Timbuktu, is to be served without hassles 24 hours. Leaders need to look at the dividends of that high level of service, and go a step ahead and extend beyond customer loyalty. That's the only way successful companies raised its earnings outlook in the world of moving targets. **Leaders need to give while getting.** This challenging environment is taking an even bigger leap forward by throwing open-source software, eBay's massive marketplace, and Skype's peer-to-peer Net phone network. In some cases they're finding ways to leverage that cooperative force to huge advantage. **Leaders need to get more personal.** The digital innovation and connectivity through web and just-in-time supply chains, the mass-market era is again fading as customers are making companies to tailor companies' products to their tastes rather than from companies innovation or through research, a consumer just dictates what he wants and when. The companies with personalization, have infinite ways to differentiate, and sustain, says CK Prahalad. **Leaders need to stay curious and keep the hunger:** Today, even the most dominant companies need to stay on their toes. The truth is, there's no final winner in the global game of corporate competition. "All winning does is let you

compete against a whole new set of better-funded competitors," observes Joe Kraus, founder and chief executive of Web collaboration software startup JotSpot. "Competition never ends." **Leaders need to consider the moment of newer opportunity.** Leaders must accept relentless change, succeed in areas outside comfort zones, make decisions that will impact the livelihoods of others, work as many hours, produce measurable results, accept responsibility, handle high levels of stress, know how to manage cash flow, and be held personally accountable for the success or failure of the business that would be the leader job description in the era of moving targets. **Leadership is something you can get better at - but never perfect.** The best leaders work hard at enhancing their leadership skills and step up their game, but mostly when situations push them to.



**Figure: 3: Leaders Newer Levels of Complexity: concept designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

**Objectives: (i) to understand what are moving targets and why.**

**(ii) To evaluate the factors getting affected when targets move**

**(iii) To assess the moving target's positive and negative impact on Leaders**

**(iv) To examine the impact of Positive Psychology in leaders adapting to work on moving targets.**

**Methodology: Meta Analytical Study on Literature Review, Concept Review, Professional Literature and Cases**

**Data : Secondary Data and published sources of qualitative data on interviews, opinions and reports of literature research**

**Problem Statement:** Moving Targets are the norms of the business climate, and it appears that changes to more attractive business destination is not always a good or even transparent process, and leadership at these moving targets is becoming a problem, not only on business terms but on personal terms of a leader.

**Scope of the Study:** To contribute ideas of positivity in handling self as a leaders and trickle down the motivation to actions to compete and perform well even while targets move and unclear.

**Objective: (i) to understand what are moving targets and why**

The impact on leaders due to moving targets and the fear that the competitor or somebody will take it away, due to which the leader starts creating new competitive advantages, over and over, faster and faster is what is together called the moving targets. The organizations now change for social, economic, and competitiveness to protect self. **Leaders need to be looking ahead in the** competitive playing field finally achieve the ever shifting goals. Leaders **innovative practices** and innovative behaviors need to create a place where ideas can flourish. Only innovative changes can help team members remove barriers of creativity by implementing brainstorming or mind mapping to develop ideas to solve business problems. A leader need to lead, develop ideas, create improved teamwork, professional growth, and the ability to network with others within the organization to manage moving targets. Leader need to involve in the open innovation structure though the risk factors quickly stifle progress. The most important function of the leader is to articulate the vision, create opportunities for team members, and determine effective methods to influence employees to perform at optimum levels goal achievement. The leadership role determined by task demands on skills and other resources remains responsible for the overall performance of the team.

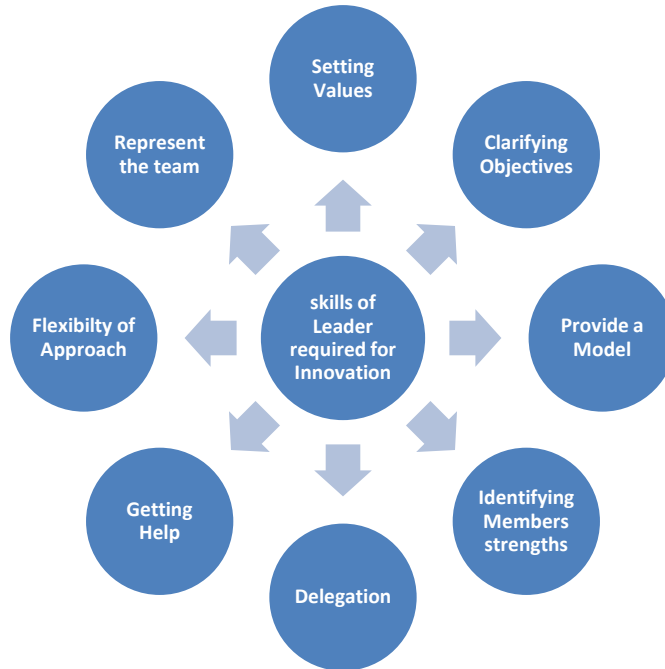


Figure: 4: The Leaders Innovation Skills to Manage Moving Targets: Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan

Setting values: An effective team leader sets values of performance, acceptable methods and member behavior, by **clarifying objectives**. The leader listens, communicates between the organization and the rest of the team by playing a link man role. The leaders guide the organization with team's goals and translate ideas into operationally useful information. Leaders **provide a model** in many respects, especially in managing relationships and setting the kind of group climate conducive to meeting many of the conditions already discussed, the members will regard the leader's own behavior as an appropriate model. The effective team leader is a trend setter in relation to many of those behaviors which effective team members display. Identifying members' strengths is the responsibility for ensuring optimum use of resources with the member's strengths, ensures opportunities are made available for their use. Leaders need **delegate** and encourage team members by providing a supportive, positive, building climate within which team members can experience maximum personal achievement, growth and contribution to the team. The leader need to get help from outside and provide the appropriate resources of realistic limits to existing team competences and recognizing that seeking help under the right conditions is a sign of strength rather than weakness. Flexibility of approach to suit different task conditions is an atmosphere of participation and personal responsibility, team members will look for a leadership style that 'fits' the prevailing circumstances. It is perfectly reasonable for an effective team-leader to be highly controlling and autocratic under difficult or

critical circumstances where a quick response is essential. Team members will not only accept it but expect it. **Representing the team** for the team's objectives, standards, resources and the importance of maintaining a mutual respect and collaborative climate between teams, protects team members against unjustified or irrational attack. **Develops team members;** the team leader, especially in coaching (identifying performance-related and development needs, helps team members identify means of satisfying them). Counseling skills to deal with performance related problems is another crucial skill area. **Feedback:** The team leader emphasis on positive feedback. Even when performance related problems occur, the emphasis is on seeking solutions stands as the priority. **The leader is always available,** there to collect ideas and information sell ideas and influence people, involve people, in decision making, that influence the team's goals. The leader as a **Coordinator** assert self and trust people's reactions to each stage of change, "shock and denial," when business as usual is first disrupted, to "acceptance" and "commitment," as the change is implemented. Leaders manage resistance to change by promoting acceptance and communicate effectively. Talking to all stakeholders and help them assess the various barriers to change, and then plan to manage stakeholders they move the project forward.

Good leaders are often motivated by personal success enjoy getting their hands dirty they acquire the right mindset, and care about how people are treated and never deliberately manipulate or exploit people. Leaders help in the face of confusion, discouragement, and the occasional inevitable failure. A critical mass of leaders with these qualities seems to be vital to any institution pursuing major change. Leaders set goals that make sense to customers and employees to be able to measure results that are in sync with the aspirations and reflect what is going on in the marketplace. **The leaders walk the talk** to excel, particularly in relation to the competition, quality and challenge, the opportunities than rewards behind it. Leaders **reward those who perform, and deal with those who don't** to make a difference and have it recognized and expect others to be treated the same way. **Raise the bar in areas that are lagging** in other areas will become frustrated, even hostile. Leaders are sensitive when some department seems to be protected from the intensity due to pressure and they reward what they seek and **support than when they succeed. They would ask top management** to encourage solicit opinions and encourage public confrontations with those who resist change or would divert or diffuse it to support against them by taking **the** same risks as they expect of **others** to further a cause. **Good**



**leaders** allow the team to make mistakes and fail along the way in finding the right approach often means taking a gamble on something that was not tried before. Leaders are **consistent in what they do**, explain actions taken that might seem contrary to clear of doubts. Leaders stay in the course that demands time, hard work, and perseverance and **strive to create change leadership opportunities and** take positive steps to create learning opportunities for the growing needs of the stakeholders. Leaders **stay with involvement till down the line with** first-hand knowledge of the efforts and work alongside teams in problem-solving sessions or field pilots. This is more than symbolic participation the best way to understand just how exhilarating change can feel at an individual level. Leaders **build a toolkit for change** with efforts to stall and deal with any loss of momentum, energy and facilitate or augment that efforts can **expand and diversify the skill mix**. Real change leaders believe that top management cannot leave to chance the development of the attitudes, skills, tools, and approaches needed to steer through change. Their message is clear. Any organization facing change pursue a rigorous program to identify, evaluate, develop, deploy, and accelerate the growth leadership capacity and talent for the future.

**Objective: (ii): To evaluate how leader behaviour traps impacts leaders from moving targets:**

The Four basic behavior traps that are deeply rooted in the leadership psyche are extremely difficult to recognize as they serve to protect egos and prevent discomfort. These traps again and again are difficult for the companies to work on moving targets. **Leader's Behavior Trap 1: Failing to Set Proper Expectations**, the leaders announce major directional changes or new goals without spelling out credible plans for achieving them or specifying who's accountable, which sometimes comes as the failure to define requirements turns into anxiety. Considerable thought about setting expectations becomes crucial before issuing general statements. **Trap 2: Tunnel vision on organization goals:** Leaders are naturally preoccupied with the performance of their own work unit, leaders with such singular focus tend to "delegate" responsibility for organization-wide performance upward to already overloaded senior managers, this tunnel vision on the part of leaders are understandable. The trap is that very few leaders are willing to assign a subordinate full responsibility for achieving results that will require substantial input from peers. **Trap 3: Overriding on staff experts and consultants:** Leaders deliver their "product" (such as a new system, organization structure, marketing plan, training program, or corporate strategy)—

and even implement it without assuming responsibility for outcomes. The performance goes with measurable gains as part of the deal. The reason is leaders or team member are over-confident on their own expertise, but they are not so sure about working with the client to produce results, so they limit their commitment. **Behavior Trap 4: Waiting While Associates Prepare, Prepare, Prepare:** Leaders quite often shoot for improvement within existing systems and structures and believe what they are already doing the best they can with the available resources. To safeguard their egos, they conclude that they can't achieve better results without adding something new. They're inclined to make announcements like "Once we get the new inventory system in, we ought to be able to get our inventory turns way up"—providing the illusion that the issue is being handled.



**Figure: 5 : Behaviour traps of leaders from achieving moving targets: Designed by Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

**Counter measures on the behavior traps:** These traps impact on the productivity and confront on the gains of the organisation. The difficult step is getting awareness on the behaviors described above and leaders can push themselves outside their comfort zone, experiment with more-effective methods, and enjoy positive results that yield benefits as stands out as reasonable performance standards.

**Objective; (iii): To evaluate any available strategy that can hit a Moving Target**

Information technology has become a pervasive part of doing business in nearly all organizations that has dramatically shifted roles, moving from automating back-office processes to becoming a strategic enabler of new offerings and new ways of doing business. The capabilities of and connectivity driven by IT have also, changed the fundamental nature of business, causing product life cycles to shorten, lowering switching costs for customers, and increasing the overall uncertainty in which all organizations operate. The failure to quickly respond to change leads to missed opportunities or, worse, to irrelevance. Adaptive Organization is the new way like many corporations, authors, and academics are moving beyond linear, multiyear planning efforts and are instead focusing on the need for flexibility. The result is the "adaptive enterprise." IBM Corporation refers to "on-demand business." Gartner Inc. describes "the real-time enterprise." Whatever it is called, the essential message is that organizations need to rethink how they plan for the future. They need to focus on their strengths and build capabilities to rapidly adapt to changes in customer demand, market dynamics, shifting technology, and other unforeseen events.



**Figure 6. Intersection of Business and IT Strategy. Source;wikipedia**

**Objective : (iv) : To verify if Compliance Management can help the Leaders tackle Moving Targets;**

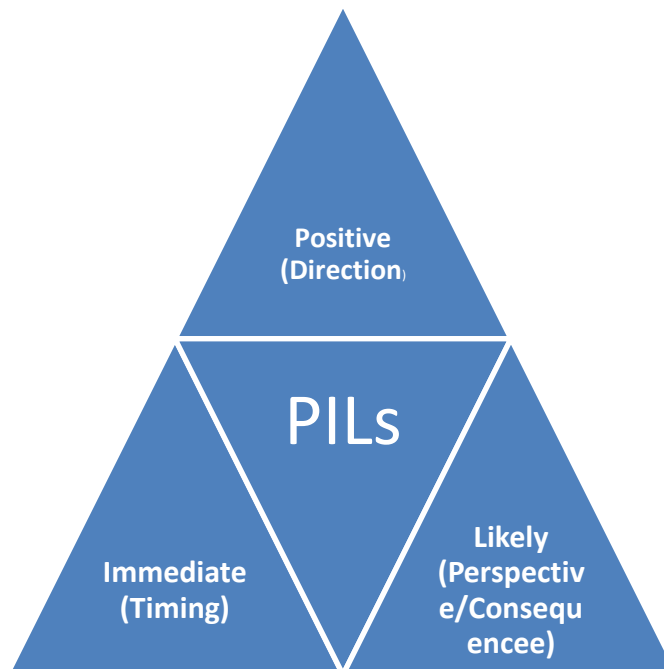
Leaders need to do the most on compliance management obligations used to be tasks that the business world is not static anymore, and slips in compliance can mean big costs to the company. New legislation is continuing to change requirements of business, compliance goal like a moving target. It is possible to hit compliance goal, but it takes extra preparation and strategic planning. Leaders need to educate self on the upcoming changes and prepare employees with the

right tools (i.e. training, financial support, physical/environmental changes, etc.). Every leader has, at some point, felt that everything is harder than it should be and feels the team is stressed from pushing itself harder than normal. Since open communication is compromised due to perceptions about motives or intent a healthy culture like other aspects of business requires constant attention and continual change. The leaders chase an evolving target in a dynamic environment with relationships and expectations changing always. The happenings in and around the environment are with changing and evolving culture leaves with an important choice as to be a victim who complains about the need to constantly address the "squishy stuff" of organizational effectiveness or a leader who builds a nimble organization that is open to new challenges and opportunities.

The three ideas the leaders carry are is **looking outside for help, since** change creates tension, and the natural reaction is to focus internally on how can solutions get better. That's especially true of changes in relationships. The leaders need to stay focused on the vision, and keep everyone moving in a positive direction. **Continually increase the value even at** uncertainty, organizations tend to refocus their attention on confirming and defending their existing value proposition that reinforce the rightness of their actions. A better approach is to focus on what will add value in the future rather than defending the past. Change happens naturally when leaders alter their mindset from maintaining the status quo to looking for new ways to help others succeed. **Leaders need to focus on how and** find the prospect of doing things differently exciting and expend the energy and effort to change. Explaining why the organization should improve how it functions is critical. But still should seek input on two specific areas: (1) how the organization needs to change and (2) how to accomplish the changes that are proposed, the long-term success of the organization depends on maintaining a vibrant culture. It is a moving target, and the leader's ability continually help others hit it will distinguish the organization from the rest.

**Objective: (v) : To examine the application of Positive Psychology on leaders to attack moving targets:** Leaders have an intuitive sense of the importance of behavior in business performance from experience, that it all comes down to not only what their people do or don't do but, just as importantly, what's expected of them and what corporate habits motivate their actions. Typically,

leaders learn from trial and error that some of their people's behaviors produce superior business results and others don't. They also learn that their own behaviors have an enormous effect on their organizations' performance. They begin to realize that ingrained behaviours become corporate destiny. The behavior will be increased, maintained or decreased in the future. Positive consequences, on the other hand, are extremely motivating and can come from a variety of sources: organizational incentives and promotions; supervisors' feedback, praise and thanks; peer recognition and group acknowledgment; and even the self-satisfaction of meeting one's own goals and standards or from hitting process-performance targets or sales quotas. How motivating are these positive forces? As we noted earlier, consequences that are encouraging and reinforcing have about four times more impact on motivating desirable behaviors than discouraging ones, research has found. Maximizing this positive effect depends on how closely organizations match good behavior with good consequences. Three factors are key. **Direction:** Does the consequence affect the performer positively *or* negatively or is it delayed or likely or unlikely to occur? The most effective consequences are positive, immediate and likely (PILs).



**Figure: 7 : The Positive Psychology Pyramid for Motivating Leaders Achieve Moving Targets: Concept Designed : Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan, Director, Adithya School of Business**

**A systematic approach to changing behaviors is the key** insights emerging from behavioral science is an understanding that the way in which company's targeted results as its processes to hit the target, behaviors thus have to be aligned tightly with strategy and rigorously managed to

achieve performance goals. Relatively few organizations make a consistent effort to lead and manage for the behaviors they need. Successful ones that do so begin by identifying the critical few behaviors needed to reach their strategic and operating objectives. They then thoroughly prepare and equip leaders at all levels to deliver those essential behaviors, the ones that make things happen. **Behaviors that most affect results are** the most direct impact on the specific business results they aim to achieve, like a desired change involves revamping the organization's decision style from consensus to participative management, anticipated behavioral shifts that might include the actions of Involving the right people in the decision-making process (according to their qualifications and the amount of flexibility the situation allows). Listen carefully to and consider the ideas of others by practicing attentive listening and note taking. Demonstrate others' acceptance of new ideas by repeating their input. Explain the rationale behind the decision to those who offered input. Leaders need to **identify who performs them:** To change ineffective behaviors, companies also need to reinforce the desired new corporate traits by making sure that they are consistently displayed by the people who matter the most. In decision making, for example, the clandestine undermining of agreements not only has to stop, it has to be replaced by wholly new and open behavioral traits. Fortunately, there are proven methods to do this reliably. **Leaders develop a step-by-step plan to shape new behaviors:** Often the gap between the current and a desired behavior goes widely. Successful organizations shape their behavior progressively. These companies also prepare and equip leaders at all levels to deliver those behaviors, and they ensure that leaders manage consequences and reinforce key performers. They move to a participative management style, a person formerly assigned delegation authority will need to learn how to step up and actually make decisions—a difficult task for someone accustomed to relying on consensus. **Leaders devise ways to measure both the behaviors and successful results** by effectively changing ingrained behaviors is actually one of the best leading indicators of the eventual success of change-management efforts with tools that set metrics and then track progress. Leaders **sustain the results through positive reinforcement by** developing a staged plan to shape new behaviors, devising ways to measure behaviors and results and, finally, ensuring a virtuous cycle through positive reinforcement. The rewards will be well worth the effort. When the right behaviors become habitual, when they are consistently modeled by leaders, and when they are reinforced by policies and adopted by all, they create the kind of human willingness to perform great things.

**Conclusion and Suggestions:**

Leaders should reflect behaviors that inspire and motivate people to change. Though motivation factors vary across an organization, there are many leadership qualities common to successful leaders. Leadership qualities that influence goal achievement include the ability to create a clear vision, the ability to understand organizational culture, the ability to focus on performance development, and the ability to encourage innovation. The ability to influence the leadership skills meet organizational demands is a complex element of the overall leadership development picture. Leaders are tasked with effectively guiding organizational goal achievement, while considering team member skills necessary to produce the desired output. Making the Vision to flourish for goal achievement. Awareness of the organizational vision provides a directional compass for each contributor within the organization to follow. Depending on the level of leadership, many leaders are not responsible for creating the vision for the company. Articulating the vision, by aligning team members to operational strategies, taking steps necessary to achieve company priorities linked to the vision. Coaching is the consideration of leaders who motivate the workforce to achieve success is coaching and performance development. The leader should engage in observation and performance discussions that are critical to ensure that desired behaviors are demonstrated. Frequent performance assessment is a means of identifying what skills the team member demonstrates and those areas that require additional focus. Leader makes things happen by translating general concepts and plans into practical working brief. Thorough, determined and full of common-sense working on practical level. Usually self starters who are quite single minded contribute on a very narrow front. Since the only aspect permanent in the world is change and leaders definitely are struggling to juggle, and term them moving targets, which is to be taken positively and this study would try to resolve this by using application of positive psychology to improvise performance or atleast provide suggestions to strive and thrive while targets keep moving.

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