

**THE TRANSITION TO BECOME A LEADER IN THE
ORGANIZATION**



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ABSTRACT

In this study, the transition to become a new leader has been investigated in terms of expectation, preparation, challenges and obstacles, and area of improvement/adjustment that new leaders need to face. The study not only included new leaders, but also added in experienced leaders to compare the similarities and differences in terms of point of view. Previous studies in the literature for authentic leadership and the transition process to become a leader are reviewed. Qualitative research is conducted through interviews from nine respondents who work in the leadership positions from various industries in Thailand. It is concluded that there are differences between expectation, preparation, challenges and obstacles, and area of improvement between the new leaders and professional leaders with experiences. However, there are similarities in the area of improvement and recommendation that both groups share in common. The study also provides conclusions from the findings of the leadership transition and recommendations are provided for new leaders and companies that are seeking leadership knowledge and guidelines.

KEY WORDS: Leadership/ Leadership transition/ Challenge for new leader/ New leader

35 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To kick start a career path in the organization is not only to commit to individual performance, but also a place where everyone tries to contribute towards a common goal. In every organization, there are different positions that are correlated, in which individuals are working together to collaborate across functions. The excellent cooperation between teams will create a strong relationship which leads to company's success. When an individual starts a journey from his/her undergraduate degree to an entry level job, he/she has to go through a big transition from being a teenager to an adult. From the beginning, it needs to start small as being an officer or a subordinate. In this stage, everyone must develop important skills and gain working experience under a leader's guidance. It takes time for each person to develop themselves and become more proficient. And this group of people will continue to be a leader in the future.

To step further in a career advancement, some people in the organizations will transform from being a subordinate to a leader. The promotion can come within the team or outside the organization. The most important thing for a new leader is to clearly understand the vision and be able to explain it to the team. Being a leader requires more responsibility to contribute to good works, motivate team members towards a same direction, and cooperate with other people in various cross-functional teams. Moreover, it requires such experience to create a new relationship to bond and gain trust within the team under different circumstances to create a good performance.

The scope of this research is to understand leadership roles and focus on how a new leader who just get promoted to be hold a leadership position can adjust themselves to the new role. Becoming a leader has always been difficult to handle, especially as part of a new leadership role. The leadership roles do not just come with the title, but also requires greater responsibility for that individual to supervise his/her teammates. From personal observation, now a days there are many young leaders in Thailand. Many organizations have given opportunities and drive their new generation leaders to be the spearhead in a business. To step up to this new position, many people

have struggled with how to deal with them and how to motivate other people to achieve a common goal. Each individual can manage their team members with different set of skill and styles depends on the past experience and personal attitudes.

The reason to select this area of study comes from the researcher's personal experience as moving to the new company and becoming a leader who have four subordinates in the team. As new change takes time to adjust, the new leaders need to learn new ways to behave themselves similar to the combination of competencies that Goleman has mentioned above. The context of this study will focus on the new leaders who just got promoted to be a leader within the current company or moving to the new company in Thailand. Furthermore, the author would emphasize on how the experienced leaders and a leadership coach share their point of view.

This paper will gather information about the authentic leadership, self-leadership, leadership transition, leadership identity development, and leader's contribution for a better performance from the past literature reviews. As part of empirical study, the researcher will conduct an in-depth interview with one young leader with a new position not more than six months, an experienced leader with experience over three years, a leadership coach who experiences in teaching on this area of study. This part will be a primary data to analyze and cover the research scope which will be presented within the study. Afterwards useful findings and recommendations will be given to all those leaders across different organizations who would interest and learn more about this area of emerging interest.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review will focus on the concepts of authentic leadership, self-leadership, leadership transition, leadership identity development and leader's contribution towards better performance. The reason to pick these theories is to understand the concept of how leaders can adjust themselves into a new position and how they overcome the obstacles to get better performance with manageable skills.

2.1 Authentic Leadership

George (2015) described authentic leaders as leaders who have high integrity and commitment to build success for the organization. They also have a purpose and their core values to build the company to meet the need of other stakeholders. Moreover, Gardner, Avolio, and Luthans (2005) mentioned that authentic leadership is a pattern of leader behavior that portrays positive capacity and ethical climate for their self-awareness, moral perspective, information process and relation transparency with the followers. This theory has given readers the perspective on how a good leader should be as a starting point for new leadership adjustment.

Similar to the literature mentioned above, Walumbwa and colleagues (2008) described that there are four factors that can influence authentic leadership, such as 'Balanced process' – the authentic leader will think and analyze information carefully before making a decision; 'Internalized moral perspective' – proceed with the ethical guideline that is set by the organization to control good behaviors; 'Relational transparency' – appropriately present themselves and give information publicly without any undercover or hidden agenda; 'Self-awareness' – realize the strength and weakness of themselves and learn to accept it.

Refer to the good combination of leadership, Goleman (2000) described that successful leaders should have the emotional intelligence competencies to motivate people, which are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills.

- **Self-Awareness:** it can be described as the leaders' ability to know and evaluate their emotion and how it can impact to the work performance, relationship, and limitation

- **Self-Management:** it can be described in various perspectives; firstly, self-control – to keep their emotions under control, secondly, trustworthiness – to display own honesty and integrity to others, thirdly, conscientiousness – to manage yourself and your responsibilities, fourthly adaptability – how to adjust to situation and overcome the problems, fifthly, achievement orientation – to meet the standard that has been settled, and sixthly initiative – to be ready and create new business opportunities.

- **Social Awareness:** it can be described as how the leader can sense other people's emotions and feelings and take their concerns into consideration. Moreover, the leader needs to read organizational situation and navigate to identify how to get through it.

- **Social Skills:** it can be described as how the leader can inspire the vision of the team, send a clear direction and message, and build up a good relationship within the team to collaborate together.

To transform oneself to become a leader is not an easy task in the organization. A good leader would realize a certain goal or direction they will lead people with a purpose. The characteristic of authentic leadership generally includes genuine, reliable, trustworthy, and veritable which can be expressed while they communicate with other people. Authentic leaders will bring along positive thoughts and behaviors in the organization and will outperform others with confidence and resilience while creating a good workplace environment. With these actions, the team members will be able to feel and gain a level of trust with the leader. Authentic leadership can be described as the individuals who have a clear direction on what they think or how they do things. To grow an authentic leadership culture in the organization, the behavior should be cultivated from the top management down to all employees. It will be a great demonstration to show how to become a great leader. As the culture

grows, the organization will create strength and competitive advantage to drive business success alongside with great leaders.

2.2 Self-leadership

To become a leader, it is important to manage their subordinates with a certain direction to contribute towards success. However, there is another important thing that leaders need to learn. They must have good leadership among themselves. Manz (1992) described self-leadership; it is the ability to manage themselves towards a motivation to complete the task with their responsibilities. The category of self-leadership improvement can be summarized as followed.

- Behavior Focused Strategy – it is a strategy to focus on self-assessment, self-rewards, and self-discipline. The leaders should conduct a self-analysis to set up a long-term goal and motivational reward for themselves. Moreover, they should go through the obstacles, reduce self-punishment, and practice their desired behaviors.

- Natural Reward Strategy – it is a strategy to increase self-determination and proficiency through accomplishment. The leader needs to have a commitment, belief, and enjoyment while doing the work. During the working process, rewarding oneself after completing a certain portion will be a nice thing. Then, they can focus on the working aspect that is amusing and enjoyable – this strategy will significantly increase the competency and task responsibility of leaders.

- Constructive Thought Pattern Strategy – it is a strategy to establish the working patterns in a desirable way - by replacing a bad idea to a new constructive idea with positivity through an imagery of good performance. This strategy is to use willpower to view an impossible task as a new challenge to achieve by using behavior-focused strategy to observe and set small goals to achieve first.

Therefore, self-leadership study can be useful to create a perception of control and responsibility with the performance outcome which will be a foundation for leadership.

2.3 Leadership Transition

The leadership transition is a process that is driven by the institutional context with an individual to participate in a leadership role. The transition to become a new leader is intense and stressful when individuals get promoted to become a leader for the first time. The new leader needs to be aware of organizational context, vision, mission, and core values. During the transition process, there may appear certain uncertainties and anxiety effect for the leaders themselves and other members. Leaders do not only focus on their job responsibility, but they also need to think about how to motivate their subordinates to be more productive. The new leaders need to face difficulty to change to new roles and responsibilities.

It takes some time to make changes happen because humans naturally stick to behaviors they are used to. Bridges (2003) gave an explanation about the leadership transition. There are three phases that leaders have to get through during their transition as followed;

- Ending Zone – when they need to let go for the previous responsibilities and prepare themselves for a new situation they will meet.
- Neutral Zone – this phase is very crucial as it is the most difficult part to get through with the ability to replace old behaviors with new ones. Moreover, they need to find a way to reduce anxiety and convert uncertainties to be clearer.
- New Beginning – the new skill development and perspective of the new leaders will emerge through this phase.

It is important to go through these three steps to contribute towards a successful transition. Few organizations overlook the ending zone process as they really want to push people forward to the neutral zone. This action may cause damage to the organization by creating transitional failures. Thus, the organization should give support for the new leaders to make them feel comfortable and relax. Otherwise, the unwell transition will restrain the progress of those individuals' improvement and causes more stress as they step into new roles and challenges.

There is one more point for leadership transition to focus on which is working with the new team. The new leaders need to face with certain behavioral observations such as impression, expectation, leadership development in order to build a productive and successful team during the transition period. Manderscheid and

Ardichvili (2008) described the leadership transition is developed to help new leaders understand the factors to influence successful transition as shown in below Figure.

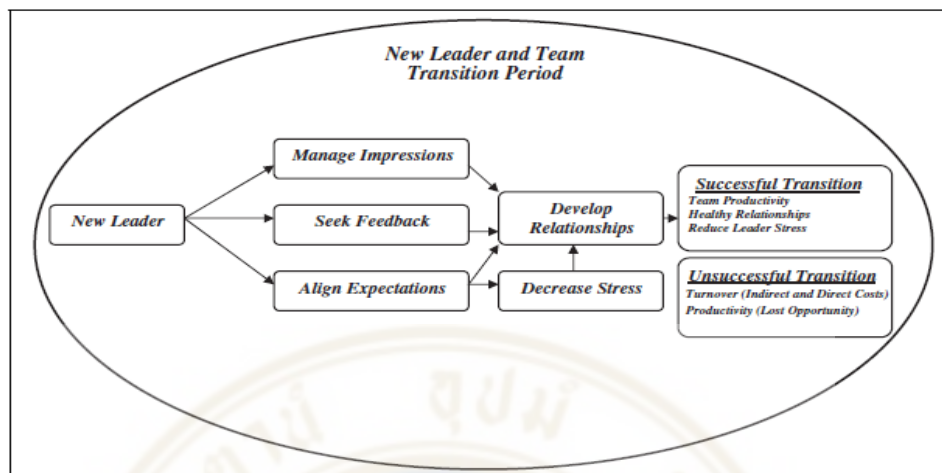


Figure 2.1 Manderscheid, S. V., & Ardichvili, A. (2008). A conceptual model for leadership transition. *Performance Improvement Quarterly*, 20(3-4), 113-129.

The above Figure described on the transition process for new leaders. There are some factors involved with the leaders which are managing impression with a team, seeking for feedback, and aligning expectation. However, increasing team productivity, reducing stress, and having a good relationship among the team can contribute to a good transition for leaders. After all, many organizations still face problems with new leadership transition which can cause job turnover, less job productivity, leadership stress, and unhealthy relationship among the team. As a result, the successful factors for a transition may occur from an individual's leadership style. However, having a smooth transition will require cooperation from cross-functional teams; leaders and human resource teams to guide new leaders through the transitional phase.

2.4 Leadership Identity Development

Komives *et al.* (2005) described leadership identity development (LID) as a model that has been used for professionals who work with students in a college. This model was constructed to understand how leadership is developed as a social identity. There are six stages to develop from awareness and are explained in below Figure.

<i>LID Stages</i>	<i>Stage Description</i>	<i>Sample Identity Statement</i>
1. Awareness	Becoming aware of how some people lead and influence others. Usually an external other person, like the U.S. president or a historic figure like Martin Luther King, Jr. [<i>feels dependent on others</i>]	A leader is someone out there, not me.
2. Exploration/Engagement	Immersion in a breadth of group experiences (e.g., Scouts, youth group, swim team) to make friends and find a fit. [<i>feels dependent on others</i>]	Maybe I could be a leader.
3. Leader Identified	Fully involved in organizations and groups. Holds a belief that the positional leader does leadership, whereas others do followership. [<i>may be independent from others (being a leader), dependent on others (being a follower), or hold both views</i>]	If I am the leader, it is my responsibility to get the job done. If I am a follower, I need to help the leader get the job done.
4. Leadership Differentiated	Recognizes that leadership comes from all around in an organization; as a positional leader, seeks to be a facilitator and practices shared leadership; as a member, knows one is engaged in doing leadership. [<i>feels interdependent with others</i>]	I can be a leader even if I am not <i>the</i> leader and I see that leadership is also a process. We do leadership together.
5. Generativity	Is concerned about the sustainability of the group and seeks to develop others; is concerned about personal passion to leave a legacy and have one's actions make a difference. [<i>feels interdependent with others</i>]	We all need to develop leadership in the organization and in others. I am responsible for serving the organization.
6. Integration/Synthesis	Leadership capacity is an internalized part of oneself and part of the perspective one brings to all situations. [<i>feels interdependent with others</i>]	I can work with others to accomplish shared goals and work for change.

Figure 2.2 Hall, S. L. (2015). Linking the leadership identity development model to collegiate recreation and athletics. *New Directions for Student Leadership*, 2015(147), 33-41.

Refer to the model, the first stage is to make potential leaders realize that they have an opportunity for leadership. The leadership can be visible from their role models. And it will forward to the next stage to get involved to see what leadership skill they need to develop. The third stage is to make the leadership position become a formal position. Other members in a team will be the followers and it is the time to learn leader's capacity. The key transition is from the third to the fourth stage. The leaders need to ensure that every member is involved in the same page. Members can be empowered to influence changes. During the fifth stage, the leader will develop their own leadership identity and may become a mentor for other new leaders. Finally, the leader will be ready to claim the leader identity in the final stage. They will be confident

to contribute as a good leader in the organization. In summary, to develop the leadership identity is important to engage with the team and other affiliations. It will help the leaders to gain more familiarity and negotiation experience within the organization. Socializing plays an important role in leadership development as it is the ability to work and manage all people across functions.

2.5 Leader's Contribution to Better Performance

To make the best contribution to team members, the leader should be able to manage their subordinate's perception towards acceptance, stress, and opportunity. Sometimes, the leaders must trade off their individual speed with the team action and performance. Katzenbach (1998) mentioned the six steps to aspire team performance as followed;

1. Determine the group's level of commitment: the leader should openly discuss with each member to see the potential value within a group. If the members believe in the value, the leadership role will pay off and they will follow.
2. Do not try to be a team all the time: the leader needs to learn the difference between team effort and the single leader working in a group. Both ways can contribute a good work.
3. Be disciplined, but selective; apply team discipline like sharing a common purpose, having a clear performance goal, having a clear working approach and accountability. Real teamwork needs everyone to understand and apply this concept together.
4. Go beyond your "favorite" leadership approach: the leader can ship in and out for team mode of behavior and vary the role play for each member. Also, a good team should openly discuss for individual experience and know-how among team members.
5. Obtain the right skill mix: the leader needs to vary members in different situations to fit in with the organization's goal and purpose.
6. Concentrate team effort where they count the most: the leader should give attention to the team and ensure everything is applied for a better performance.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Primary Data Collection Method

In the second chapter, the data from secondary sources were reviewed to reflect the conceptual and theoretical aspects of the topic. The leadership transition to become a new leader case studies have not been found much in Thailand. The topic will be examined further by using qualitative research to investigate about personal experience, attitude, and how respondents react to the situation. The in-depth interview method is used for data collection process. The information gathered during the process will be analyzed further to conclude the topic findings. Moreover, the researcher will provide personal experience as being a leader without a subordinate for one year. However, the researcher has recently moved to a new workplace with subordinates for about five months. Based on the study and observation, the researcher will collect and analyze the data together with personal information as well.

3.2 Interview Method

The collected data from this study will be gathered from research questions, in-depth interview, and observation which is conducted by the researcher. Referred to the interview, the researcher needs to interpret conversation with all interviewees based on their previous experience, background, and personality. The interviewees can have the opportunity to reflect themselves through a discussion (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2008). To get started, the interviewer will introduce the research topic briefly and explain the importance on how this topic will be useful to other readers. The interviewer will indicate the length of the interview in advance. In addition, the information that the interviewees share will be kept confidential due to data protection mechanism.

The open-ended research questions and answers are used to investigate and structure further analysis in this study. The interview method will be as followed.

Sample Selection: For this research, the interview will be conducted with nine interviewees which can be categorized into two groups; Firstly, five of them will be the new leaders under one-year experience who just have team members for the first time. Secondly, four of them will be the experienced leaders with relative working experience over two years. Each interviewee is selected based on the period of their experiences through becoming leaders in various industries.

Table 3.1 Interviewee list

Code	Gender	Age	Position	Industry	Experience	Number of Subordinates
A	Male	30	Account Manager	Advertising	5 months	1
B	Female	30	Digital Media Planning Manager	Advertising	11 months	1
C	Male	26	Product Manager	Pharmaceutical	5 months	20
D	Female	38	Audit Talent Development Manager	Audit & Finance	8 months	1
E	Female	31	Digital Communication Manager	FMCG	8 months	1
F	Male	30	Account Director	Public Relation	4 years	2
G	Male	38	Content Partnerships & Acquisition Lead	Content Acquisition	2.5 years	4
H	Female	31	Head of Sales	Advertising	3 years	5
I	Male	27	Consultant Manager	Advertising	2 years	2

Open-ended Questions: In order to understand what the leaders need to overcome for their transition experiences, open-ended questions are provided to the interviewees in order to give them flexibility and ability to answer the questions.

Table 3.2 Open-ended Question List

Finding Factors	Interview Questions
Expectation	1. How long have you been in this position?
	2. What was your expectation as becoming a leader?
	3. What would you like to gain from this position? What were the expectations from your company/your boss?
Preparation	4. How did you prepare yourself for the transition to be a leader? Did the company support you? If yes, how?
	5. Have you ever been to a leadership training before? If yes, what did you learn?
Obstacles/ Challenges	6. How did you feel about becoming a leader with subordinates? How did you manage this initiative?
	7. What were the challenges or problems you faced when becoming a leader?
	8. What was your toughest uncertain situation you been through? How did you deal with it?
	9. Did you face any problem when dealing with your subordinates? How do you solve that problem (such as consulting with your supervisor)?
	10. Do you have any concern when working with cross-functional teams?
Adjustment/Area of improvement	11. How do you gain trust from your team? Is there any particular activity to enhance relationship?
	12. Have you received any feedback from your subordinate? Do you apply those feedback to adjust yourself?
	13. Is there any activity that you and your subordinates always do together?
	14. What advice would you like to recommend to others who just become a new leader?

Probing Technique: To be able to collect and analyze the data more accurately, probing technique will be used to get more insightful answers from the respondents. The next question will be asked from the current answers to probe and receive a deeper level of information. This technique will benefit the researcher to understand and summarize the findings more clearly. The method will be a two-way communication between the researcher and the interviewees.

Interview: The interview will be conducted via face-to-face discussion between the researcher and the interviewees. The place of interview will be selected upon the interviewees' convenience which will lead to comfortable environment. The researcher will observe the gesture and body language during the interview to reflect the

data collection. The approximate period of the interview will last around one hour for each person with an introduction to the topic, questions, and probing technique.

Research Framework

The overall factor findings will be consolidated in this research framework. The researcher would like to study the transition of becoming a leader with a young leader with less experience and experienced leaders who have worked with subordinates and know how to deal with them which will be illustrated through experience, expectation, preparation, obstacles (self and subordinates), and how to improve themselves (adjustment).

The framework that has been displayed as below shows the process that leader need to go through in terms of adjusting to be a new leader and his/her leadership techniques. On the other hand, the framework will allow the readers to understand the different perspective from experienced leaders as well as from the starters. Each stage of the framework will start from expectation as moving into a new team with new process and environment. Afterwards, the preparation will be about how the new leader has prepared themselves to be ready for the new responsibility. The next one is about the challenges and obstacle the leaders need to face. In this process, new leaders need to face both internal and external challenges. The internal challenge can occur from uncertainties and self-evaluation to a new role. While the external challenge will come from subordinates with the area of trust, relationship, or how to work with cross-functional team. And the last part is related to self-adjustment, which will be further explored in this study findings.

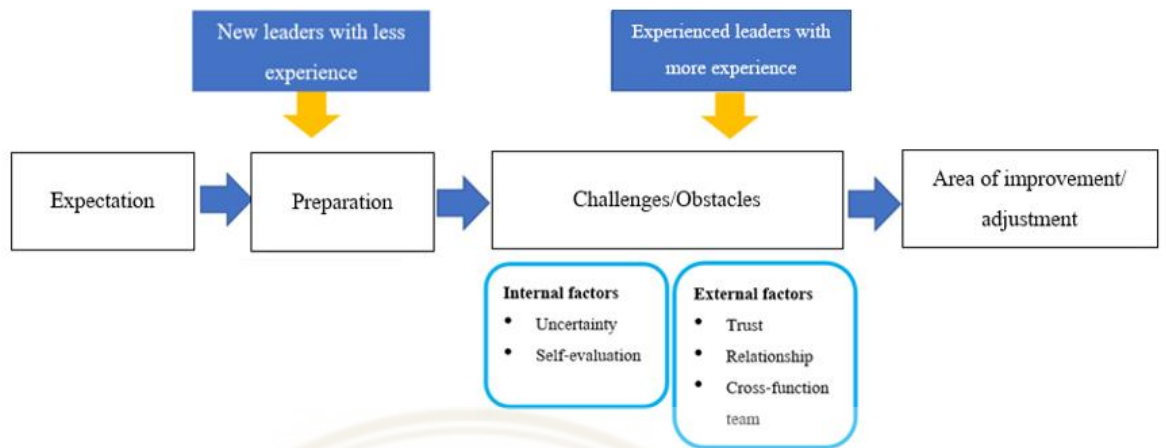


Figure 3.1 Research Framework



CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

After conducting the qualitative research by in-depth interview, the data were collected according to the questions. The research findings are categorized into five topics for instance,

1. Background information of interviewees
2. Expectation
3. Preparation
4. Challenges/obstacles
5. Area of improvement and adjustment

4.1 Background Information of Interviewees

According to the interview, the interviewees were on an average of 31 years old within the range of in between 26 to 38 years. Within this sample group, there is a significant difference in terms of age range with the young leader who was just 26 years old and the senior leader who was already 38 years old. Five out of nine interviewees were male and the rest were female. The interviewees can be categorized into two different groups; Five of them were the new leaders under one-year experience who just have team members for the first time and four of them were experienced leaders with experience of over two years. Among all of interviewees, four of them work in the advertising industry. However, the rest of them are into pharmaceuticals, audit & finance, FMCG, public relations, and content acquisition. The average leadership experience for the new leader group was 7.4 months, whereas, the average leadership experience for the professional leader group was 2.87 years. Four respondents of the new leader group have only one subordinate except Mr. C, who has 20 subordinates who work as sales representatives in Bangkok and Upcountry. On the other hand, all

four respondents from the professional leadership group have more than one subordinates under their supervision.

As mentioned above, all of the respondents have been promoted to a leadership position in different period of time. All of the respondents have at least five-month working experience as a leader. Some of the respondents just got promoted to be a leader for the first time with less than 1 year. However, another group of respondents have been in the leadership positions for a while and overtook a position beyond just a leader. Mr. F has got into the leadership position with the longest period of time, for instance around 4 years. He worked with many public relation companies before moving into his new company.



Figure 4.1 The bar chart to depict respondents with their leadership experiences

4.2 Expectations

In order to understand the expectation of each interviewees, this will elaborate on how they got promoted to become a leader, what they have gained from this position, and the company and supervisory expectation towards their new roles. There are several questions that were asked during this theme and the results are summarized as below.

4.2.1 Expectation for Becoming a Leader

Regarding to the interview, seven out of nine respondents answered that they expected to get promoted to be a leader with appropriate experience and timing for their career path. However, there are 2 out of 9 respondents who were not expecting to get promoted. Miss H had mentioned that *“I got promoted accidentally with a situation as the previous leader has just resigned. There was no one in the position at that moment. Among the team, I was the eldest. So, my supervisor tried to motivate me to take a new role. That was why I was promoted at the first place, which was beyond my expectation. However, I tried to figure it out by myself at the beginning.”* While Mr. I expressed that *“My supervisor resigned and I was not expecting to get a promotion. However, I got it because I had more experience compared to others in the same age at that moment and I would like to accept it because I got a salary raise.”*

The rest of the respondents had their personal motivational reasons to get promoted to a leadership position which can be summarized into two groups;

1. Desired promotion to a certain career path within the same organization- Three out of Nine respondents got promoted in the current organization. As discussed with them, they have highlighted the key reasons such as, firstly, they had enough potentiality and capability to undertake a new position. Secondly, they have showed outstanding performance compared to other employees at the same level. Apart from this, Miss B confidently mentioned that she had a clear personal goal and timeframe to achieve this position while Miss D said that she needed to switch to the new HR department for a new role as part of her job rotation and learning new skills. Although she was satisfied with the promotion, she still had unsecured feeling towards this role due to a drastic shift into a new team.

2. Desired promotion to a different organization– Four out of nine respondents got promoted in the new organization to get a higher position. As discussed with them, they have key reasons to get the promotion. For instance, first reason is that they seek for more difficult challenges and responsibilities in the new position (All four of them). Second reason is related to having subordinates to manage. Thirdly, higher salaries and bonus and lastly, unsatisfaction from their current job and want to change to a new role. From the above explanations, it can be concluded that there were both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors behind each respondent’s decision.

3. Desired promotion to find more suitable position – During the interview session, Mr. C has mentioned “I want to get promoted and change my job responsibility as well. I used to work as a sales representative for a pharmaceutical company before. I did not want to please customers anymore because they were emotional sometimes. What I wanted to do is to work in a marketing role. I just want to meet only key persons that I need to.” So, to get promoted to a leadership position, Mr. C’s case was different from other respondents.

4. Desired promotion to find challenges in a smaller organization - There is another interesting expectation from Mr. F’s case in which he mentioned that he would like to move to a smaller company with more difficult challenges and responsibility to improve personal skills and achieve a better work profile. To move to a smaller company, he would have an opportunity to meet new clients and handle a scope of work with more details.

4.3 Preparation

In order to understand the preparation and how the interviewees have prepared themselves before becoming a leader and what kind of support they received from the company; the researcher has developed two questions to ask the interviewees and the results are summarized below.

4.3.1 Lack of Prior Preparation

The interviewees were asked if they have prepared themselves before becoming a leader. Six out of nine respondents mentioned that they did not prepare anything much. They have received limited advice from their previous supervisors. Basically, it was a learning by doing experience.

4.3.2 Preparation by Self-learning

While the minority three out of nine respondents have prepared themselves before becoming a leader to match with the organizational requirement. Mr. A emphasized to the researcher, “*At first I would seek for the leadership skill requirement*

and prepare myself in advance and try to encourage my subordinates to follow the guidelines.” Mr. C mentioned that he has a clear goal that he would like to change a job responsibility. So, what he did was observing the role of marketing and asking people in this position so he could gain more experience. Lastly, Mr. F has prepared himself very well by reading books and listening to podcasts on leadership management. He also tried to identify tricks and tips to become a productive leader; for example, encouraging everybody to come up with ideas before a meeting to avoid wasting time and utilize efficient time management skills.

4.3.3 Leadership Training

The interviewees were asked if they have joined a leadership training before becoming a leader. Three out of nine respondents joined the leadership training with their current workplace. Miss H and Mr. I joined the training bootcamp that was organized by an external party and his organization has encouraged him to attend that training event. The training was about giving task to practice and workshop and how to lead team members towards company’s vision and mission. Mr. G mentioned that he has participated in a leadership training in his company. There was a project to practice and pitch in a management session, so he got an opportunity to train with his supervisors and pitch his ideas to seek for feedback. The respondents who has previously joined the training mentioned that it was a great opportunity to see, learn and observe leadership scenario that they have faced earlier.

The rest of the respondent group never joined a leadership training before and haven’t received any support from the company and they wish to attend similar training workshops to develop their leadership skills. However, they have mentioned that they may get to learn it by practically doing it.

4.4 Challenges and Obstacles

In order to understand the challenges and obstacles that each interviewee face as becoming a leader for the first time and how they deal with the problem and tackle the situation; five questions were asked to them and the results can be summarized as below.

4.4.1 Stress and pressure at a new position

The interviewees were asked how they feel as becoming a leader for the first time and how they manage that certain feelings. Eight out of nine respondents mentioned that they felt stressful and pressured due to insecure emotions and new role transition at first. To manage people for the first time were not easy. It was a crucial time to make those members trust in their leaders. Miss B mentioned *“I was very proud of myself at first however I was in shock as well. I tried many different ways to deal with my subordinates. I was either soft sometimes as well as aggressive. I was under stress in the first two weeks. However, I needed to pull myself together.”*

While Mr. F emphasized *“I was stressful but I didn’t want my subordinates to lose faith in me. What I did was hard-working, detail-oriented, and being responsible for subordinates; for examples; if anyone has a compliment, give a credit to subordinate. If anyone complains, admit it myself.”* Mostly, the respondent group mentioned that they needed to play the role of a role model for their subordinates. They needed to complete their own tasks and allocate appropriate task to subordinates as well. Few leaders managed this feeling by consulting with other leaders with more experiences to find a way to handle and to more knowledge and be a good example to the team.

While only one respondent, Mr. C mentioned that he felt neutral about becoming a leader because he already prepared himself and he had such a strong goal to achieve.

4.4.2 Age gap is the major challenge among the new leaders

The interviewees were asked what kind of challenges/ problems they faced when becoming a leader. Four out of nine respondents mentioned **the age gap between them and the subordinates**. This problem reflected on how they view the world differently. Mostly, subordinates in young generation tend to have their personal thoughts and did not listen and follow the leaders much. Their perspectives towards way of thinking were different. The subordinates had strong opinion and belief in themselves. Sometimes they did not agree to the reason that their leaders tried to provide them with adequate support. Miss D mentioned *“My subordinate just graduated from a university. She had her own personal view and did not listen to what I tried to explain.*

It took me long time to figure a way to talk to her. I think it is about the gap between us.” Mr. G explained *“I tried to create a culture that everyone is equal. However, some of my subordinates did not agree with my reason. I think it is due to age gap between us.”* In addition, Mr. F mentioned that he had a problem with age gap with his subordinates as well. His teammates were older and did not listen to him. At the moment, he had to deal with the situation and completed the task from his side.

4.4.3 Toughest situation for the new leaders

The interviewees were asked what kind of toughest uncertain situations they went through while becoming a leader. Five out of Nine respondents had their toughest situation **regarding to dealing with their subordinates**. The situations of each person varied differently.

Personal Issues: Miss B mentioned that she needed to go through a difficult time during her transition. While she had her own problem, she also needed to help her subordinates to solve problems and be a consultant for 24 hours.

Overloaded work & Unavailability to train subordinates: Mr. F mentioned that he went through a situation that everyone in his team gave up. He and his supervisor needed to work longer hours during that difficult time. While he needed to coach his subordinates as well. And Mr. I mentioned that he was too busy to focus on his own task. So, he did not teach his subordinates properly. As a result, his subordinate felt lonely and did not have a clear direction to move forward.

Convincing subordinates: Miss D mentioned that she had no primary skills at first. She did not know how to explain and convince her subordinates to trust. Later, she realized what she needed to do was to tell the purpose of work, why it was important, and how it could contribute to the team.

Job allocation: Miss H had the toughest situation that one of her subordinates could not portray a good performance at one account and her management assigned that she needed to switch this person out and assign another person with better performance. She had a very difficult time to decide what she should do. Finally, her decision was to talk with her subordinate and explained why she did not get this job. So, she would not get upset so much.

Middle person between management team and subordinates: Miss H had a problem that this position was a middle person between management team and subordinates. She needed to handle the situation when her subordinates were having a problem. It was to her duty to compromise every party.

However, there was not just only the tough situation with subordinates. Four out of nine respondents had their toughest situations **regarding their supervisor and company issues.**

Expectation towards company performance: Mr. I mentioned that he went through tough situations when the company sales declined and had intense moments with the management team. So, he needed to brainstorm with team and come up with a backup plan to solve the problem such as pitching with more clients. Just alike Miss E, she went through a difficult time that she needed to choose the right direction for her online campaign strategy. She was pressured to make a decision that would affect trust from other people.

Expectation from supervisor: Mr. C had a different problem with his supervisor when he became a leader. His boss always had high expectations from him to gain more revenue. So, the reasons put him in a stressful position.

Uncomfortable to work with supervisor: Another situation is with Miss D. when she moved to a new department, her supervisor was actually her friend. She had a concern that sometimes her supervisor treated her as a friend and sometimes as a subordinate. So, it was difficult for her to adjust herself into a leader role.

4.4.4 Concern with cross-functional teams

The interviewees were asked if they had any concern when working with cross-functional teams. Mostly, seven out of nine respondents mentioned they did not have any problem or concern working with cross-functional teams. They mentioned that their organizational structures were well set up and they did know how to cooperate with other team members. The system has been set up for each team to communicate by online working platforms if they would prefer to seek help and task responsibility from other teams. On the contrary, there were two persons facing the problems with cross-function teams. Miss H mentioned that each team saw their goals as the most important

contribution. So, they would think other's problem was not a big deal. So, they might not see this as the first priority to solve. Therefore, she tried it by herself. lastly Miss E also mentioned that her team and other team were different in terms of personality and working style. So, she needed to adjust herself to work with other parties.

4.5 Area of improvement and adjustment

In order to understand the area of improvement and how the interviewees have adjusted themselves during the transition to become a leader; questions were asked and the results can be summarized as below.

4.5.1 Skills to develop to be a leader

From the interviews, all nine respondents have mentioned about the skill and experience they wished to gain from a leadership position in different skills which are leadership skills, people management skills, financial skills, client service & presentation skills, negotiation skills, and staff training skills.

Leadership skills

Leadership skill, there are five out of nine respondents mentioned that they wish to gain this. Miss B mentioned that at first, she used to work by herself with no team member. Currently, she needs to help her subordinates solving problems because they were afraid to make a decision by themselves. Miss B would like to be a good leader who tells a clear goal and standard and make it reachable for her subordinates. She would like to supervise her team into a right direction. Similar to Mr. I, who mentioned that his subordinates did not listen to him at the beginning. They did not respect him very much because they were around the same age. He needed to portray a leadership role to be a good example to them. Afterwards, he set up a team structure and allocated clear responsibilities for each person. Mr. I would like to gain credibility to become a new leader.

People management skills (Psychology), There are four out of nine respondents mentioned they wished to gain this. Miss B mentioned that she needed to find the personality of her subordinates; how can she groom a person into a good career path. However, she needed to know their limitations. She would not set too high expectation from her subordinates. She needed to learn how to deal with subordinates who is six years younger than her. They have different perspective to see the world. therefore, Miss B had to find the right way to motivate subordinates and use empathy to understand that everyone is different.

Professional skills

Financial management skill, there is only one respondent who has mentioned about this. Mr. G has mentioned that he expected to know more about this to manage the organizational budget effectively. He worked as a procurement team. So, the important skill is to negotiate with other parties.

Client service & presentation skill, there is only 1 respondent who has mentioned about this. Mr. F expected to gain more advancement in client service skills in terms of negotiating with clients, building relationships, and presentation skills – how to pitch a good work in front of a client.

Negotiation skill, there is only one respondent who has mentioned about this. Mr. C mentioned that he expected to gain this skill to negotiate and give product knowledge to his suppliers and clients to buy his products. Moreover, he expected to use this skill to talk with professional curators and invite them at the seminars.

Training skill, there is only one respondent who has mentioned about this. Miss D is currently working in the talent development area, she mentioned that she expected to gain a training skill for professional audit in order to be more proficient in their skills.

4.5.2 Sharing personal experience to gain trust with subordinates

The interviewees were asked how they gain trust from their team members and they had any activity to enhance relationship. Five out of nine respondents mentioned that they always shared “Personal story or experience” with subordinates. This approach would make their subordinates feel relaxed and open up with more conversation topics apart from work. Miss H mentioned that she always had a good solution for her teammates when they had faced problems. So, they got closer in a relationship bonding. While Mr. A mentioned that he would discuss about entertainment and topics related to hobby in order to enhance relationship with his subordinates.

4.5.3 Being a role model for subordinates

On the other hand, four out of nine respondents tend to gain trust by being a role model for their teammates. They would work very professionally, so their subordinates would look up to and respect them. Mr. I mentioned that *“I would perform my best to achieve sales target. So, my subordinates would see me as a role model.”* While Mr. G emphasized *“I would give an opportunity for everyone to show their performance. And I would also give tricks and tips to them as well as I tried to be a leader who is to everyone’s opinion.”*

4.5.4 Receive feedback from subordinates

The interviewees were asked if they have received any feedback from their subordinates and how they have applied those feedback into their leadership mechanism. Nine out of nine respondents mentioned that they have received feedback from their subordinates either on work management or emotional engagement. For work management, Mr. F emphasized *“I got a feedback that I was too detail-oriented and bossy. I needed to give more room for my team to think deeply as well as I needed reduce my expectation from my subordinates. Firstly, I was in shocked to receive this feedback as I did not expect my subordinates would come to talk to me. I tried to do self-assessment and I found that I was too strict to deal with. However, I tried to reduce my expectation and be more open with my team mates.”* On the contrary, Miss H & E received the same feedback that they were not detail-oriented. They just looked at the big picture and forgot some small details while making the work happen, which deals to sudden hiccups during the process. Their subordinates came to them to talk in

evaluation process after they gave the feedback to subordinates first. After they received the feedback, they tried to adjust themselves into the directions they have received.

For emotional engagement, Miss H received feedback that she treated her subordinates differently. She did not love everyone equally. She tried to talk in more details to find out the situation behind. The situation occurred because one of her subordinates did not get a project equally like other team mates because her performance was not very good. So, she was under stress and tried to solve a problem by allocating a small project to this subordinate first. In the meanwhile, Miss B received a feedback that she was ferocious and unstable sometimes because her personal work was overloaded. So, she realized and accepted it was her fault to be like that. As a result, she tried to calm herself down and tried not to scare her subordinates.

4.5.5 Recreational Activity

The interviewees were asked if they had any particular activity with their subordinates. Seven out of nine respondents mentioned that they always participated in recreational activities with their subordinates to create a better relationship and reduce the intensity at work; for example, they always went for dinner in the evening, shop and hang out together to build a good relationship. These activities would also make them friendly, not just being stuck into a relationship as a leader and subordinates. This approach let the team mates to be more open to their leader. Few respondents mentioned that there was a team building activity for their companies to join every year. It allows everyone to participate in ice breaking activities and allow each person to talk and get to know other colleagues from different departments. It creates a lasting impression about how the subordinates perceive their daily work and this also improves the internal working experience. However, there are two out nine respondent who did not have any activity with their subordinates at all. They only talk and engage with each other during working hours and only discussed on topic related to work.

4.5.6 Recommendation to be a good leader

The interviewees were asked what advice or recommendation they would give to others who just transformed to be a leader for the first time. All of the

respondents had shared their beneficial recommendations which can be summarized in this research as stated below.

1. Create a visible and clear goal and try to achieve it together in team.

2. Be a role model, which can start by being responsible and disciplined first which can create an example for subordinates to follow further and deliver works professionally.

3. Be positive and have the eagerness to learn. A good leader needs to evaluate themselves all the time and try to have empathy with others.

4. Finding a right approach to deal with your subordinate. Each individual has different personality and attitude towards individual person and towards work.

5. Open up to receive comment or feedback from your subordinates.

6. Keep up with the trend and stay updated to reduce issues related to generation gap.

7. If you do not like something that you have experienced before, try not to do it with your subordinates.

The difference between new leaders and experienced leaders can be summarized in below Table.

New leaders under one-year experience	Experienced leaders
1.Preparation	
-No experience in leadership training or are not prepared for a leadership role.	-Joining the leadership training and are well-prepared for leadership management such as; reading books and listening to podcasts
2.Problem	
-Face more pressure towards new role transition	-Face more difficulty to adjust with age gap
-While being a leader, they need to face problems	-While being a leader, they need to face problems
1. Personal issues	1. Overload of work & unavailability to train subordinates
2. Convincing subordinates	

3. Expectations from supervisor	2. Job allocation
4. Uncomfortable to work with supervisor	3. A middle person between management and subordinate
	4. Expectation towards company performance
3.Areas of improvement	
-New leaders would like to develop more skills towards leadership and people management skills	-Experienced leaders would like to develop professional skills such as financial or presentation skills

Figure 4.2 The figure to depict respondents with their leadership experiences



CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

In this research paper, the study on the transition to become a leader in an organization is investigated through the background of nine leaders, their expectations, preparation, challenges and obstacles, as well as on the areas of improvement. The sample interviewees included nine respondents which can be divided into two groups Firstly, new leaders under one-year of experience and secondly, Experienced leaders with experience of over two years to see if they have similarities or differences on how to pass through the problem while becoming a leader. The results are summarized on the research framework of the study as shown in Figure 5.1.

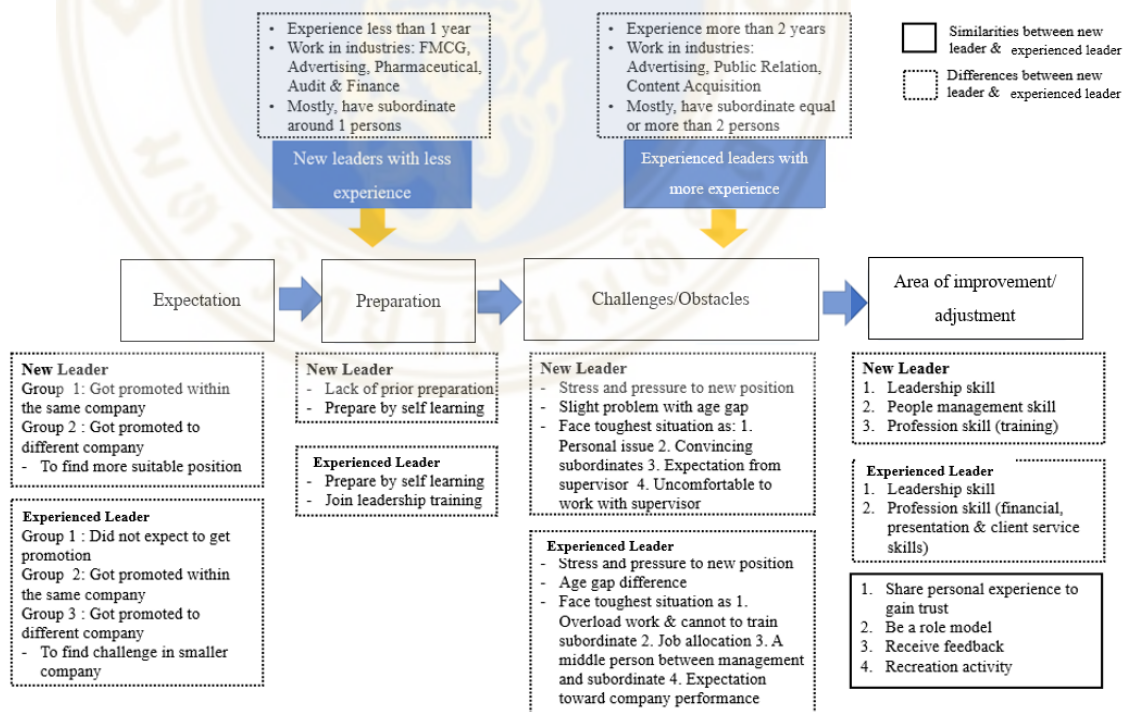


Figure 5.1 depicts the similarities and differences between new leader group and experienced leader group which are displayed by full lines and dot lines.

The conclusion from the research study can be summarized as below;

Findings in relation to Literature Review

1. Authentic Leadership

Researcher can feel the good spirit among the respondents. Most of them have shown commitment to drive their members to the right path in their own ways.

- Miss H is a type of leader who has good social awareness to manage her subordinate's emotions in a positive way although she was struggling with a difficult situation. *"I am a middle person between management team and my subordinates. When there is a change in an organization, the commission they give to my subordinate is lower. I need to motivate my team to understand about the situation – communicate with them to avoid resignations and turnover."*

- Mr. G is another leader who lead his team members with a good leadership mindset. He opens up to everyone's opinion and willing to give chance to everyone to enrich their potentialities and skills. *"I would like to see my team members happy in what they do and involved in. Everyone helps each other to find a solution when we face problems."*

- Mr. C is a leader who set himself as a good example to drive subordinates to achieve the same goal. *"I need to achieve the sales target to enable my subordinates to see it as an example. I also have a solid plan for my supervisor. So, they know the goal is attainable and they can achieve it too."*

2. Self-leadership

Some of the leaders has their own personal style to develop their leadership mindset and behavior as discussed below.

- Mr. F at first struggled in a leadership role. However, he used behavior-focused strategy to elevate himself to better fit into a new position by reading books on leadership, listening to the podcast – how to manage subordinates, and listing what he needs to do in each day to keep track of everything.

- Miss B also used behavior-focused strategy to adjust herself into the new position. She learns for improvement by listening to media like podcast or motivational techniques by other speakers.

- While the other two strategies which are Natural reward strategy and Constructive thought pattern strategy haven't been much applied for these group of interviewees.

3. Leadership Transition

Researcher can feel that all of them faced similar difficulties and obstacles to from being a team member towards becoming a leader. Some of them prepared themselves prior to undertaking position. However, some of them did not prepare anything at all. So, most of them need to face uncertainties and anxiety during this period. After going through this, many leaders found their ways to develop relationship with team members and eventually reduce their stress.

- Miss D did not prepare anything because she was still working in the same scope of work. However, it was not easy to have younger subordinates for the first time. She thinks that her subordinates were difficult to handle where she was upset with herself and had low self-esteem that she was not capable of doing this at the beginning.

- Miss H also did not get much support from her supervisors when she got promoted to be a leader. *"I got some advice from my boss. And they told me what I need to do."*

- Miss B was in shock at first when she became a leader. She needed to find a way to manage her subordinates. *"I tried many ways to talk with my subordinates – either a soft or aggressive approach. It was very stressful at the beginning, however I eventually developed skills through learning and observing their behavior."*

4. Leadership Identity Development

The researcher identified that some of the interviewees have gone through the development to improve their leadership styles;

- Mr. F would like to enhance his faith by being a hard-working person as a role model, paying attention to details, and as being a leader, when there is a compliment – he would give a credit to his team. If there is a mistake, he would admit it himself.

- Mr. I changed himself in to be more disciplined by being a good example to his subordinates. When he was a normal staff, he used to go to office very late. However, when he stepped up to be a leader. He needed to be punctual to be a good example to be followed by their subordinates.

5. Leader's contribution towards better performance

From researcher's point of view, each leader has their personal style to make a contribution to their team members as followed;

- Mr. A would seek for skillset that the organization needed and he would get close to his subordinates by making a friendly relation. However, he will use his experience to teach and supervise his subordinates and listen to the problem – and ask if there is anything the subordinate would like to learn from him.

- Mr. C has a clear mindset that a good team need to have a commitment from both side between a leader and subordinates. A good leader needs to show how to do a good work, not just assigning the work to the team.

- While Mr. G is the leader with open minded approach. He would learn special skills and personalities from each of his subordinates and give them the opportunity to make decision.

As per the result mentioned above, there are still limitations of this study with the sample size limited to nine respondents. The research can be conducted with more respondents to see more accurate results according to the literature. To get further different perspective of leaders, the respondents may include interviewees from different industries.

5.2 Recommendations

The recommendation for transition of new leaders and companies can be summarized as below.

Recommendations for New Leaders

1. To reduce the anxiety and insecurities, new leaders may prepare themselves to learn more about leadership and management skills by reading books, listening to podcasts, or talking to experts who have been in the leadership position.
2. Joining a leadership training if there is an opportunity being offered.
3. Be a good leader means being a good example to the subordinates.
4. Be a good coach to your subordinates. Do not leave them behind.

5. Try to communicate with subordinates consistently to work towards the same direction. Listen to what subordinates share with you.

6. Use empathy to deal with subordinates – try to put yourself on someone's shoes.

7. Share your leadership experience with other colleagues is a good way to exchange different perspectives to handle the situation.

8. If any problem arises, new leaders may consult and discuss it with supervisors to get the guidance on how to handle the situation.

9. Apart from work, sharing personal stories is a good approach to enhance relationship and make your subordinates feel more relaxed.

Recommendations for Companies

1. Providing leadership training or program to new leaders either inside the company or train by the expert outside of the company.

2. Setting up ice-breaking activities between new leaders and team members to get a chance to know each other better at the beginning.

3. Setting up meeting between new and experienced leaders to share their tips and recommendations to new leaders.

4. HR department from a company should be able to guide a new leader with all the basic information of subordinates, so the leader would find an appropriate way to deal with their subordinates as each team mates possess different personalities.

5. Checking up on new leaders if they encounter any problem during their first phase of leadership.

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