A Critical Analysis of the Current Development Pathway within Securitas Ireland and its contribution to Developing Effective Leaders

"As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others" Bill Gates (Kruse, 2013, p.2)

Griffith College   Griffith College

Throughout history, the definition of leadership has ebbed and flowed, with early researchers such as Gemmill and Oakley (1992) suggesting leadership to be an ideology designed to support an existing social order. Bass and Bass (2009) define leadership as 'the ability to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute to the effectiveness and success of the organisation of which they are members' (Bass & Bass, 2009, p23). However, Gates (2016) suggests leaders such as Bill Gates challenge themselves by bringing in fresh thinking and considering opposing viewpoints. Transformational Leaders such as Nelson Mandela who, as Brown (2015) outlines, left his country in a completely different place than he found it have shaped our view on what leadership should be. More recently, Kruse (2013) outlines leadership as being "a process of social influence, which maximises the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal" (Kruse, 2013, p.3).

Leadership Theories Styles and Models

For the individual, understanding the collective is paramount to the success of any team. The leader must adapt to the group they lead. Having the confidence to change their leadership style and an understanding of when to apply those styles in any given situation is key. For an organisation supporting inclusive leadership, this means creating a culture where adaptable leadership is encouraged. A key factor of this inclusive approach is to create effective leaders who put the collective before themselves.
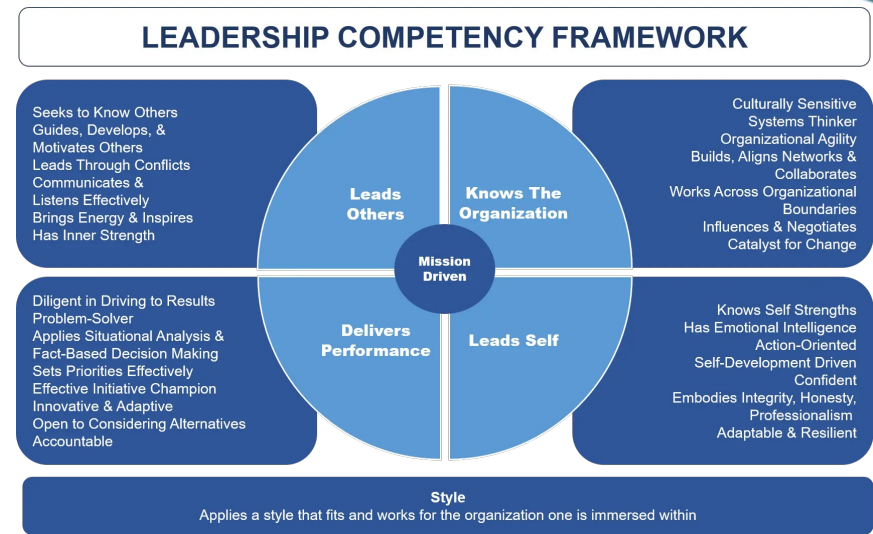

Fig. 3

Fig. 15   Fig.4

Examining leadership styles, theories, and models allow for an understanding of the many different approaches both leaders and organisations can take.

"The leaders who work most effectively, it seems to me, never say "I." And that's not because they have trained themselves not to say "I." They don't think "I." They think "we"; they think "team." Peter Drucker (Source: Influence, 2019)

Research Findings

For organisations to benefit from strong leaders, they must encourage leadership development and provide a framework from within for those leaders to develop. Failing to provide this framework of support may leave an organisation in a position where it may be losing effective leaders and encouraging ineffective leaders.

A further indirect consequence of this lack of focus on the needs of leaders is negative leadership. This is highlighted by Schilling (2009), who suggests that negative leadership is likely to have a negative impact on followers, therefore negatively impacting the organisation in which they operate.

Ineffective Leadership

Highlighted within the FIFA Leadership and Ethics report is suggested FIFA's ineffective leadership at the time wou challenged had the correct supports been in place for oth within the organisation.
Fig. 6

Effective Leadership

According to Heller and Heller (2000), Bill Gates leads through multiple leadership styles, embracing Affiliative, Pacesetting, Commanding, Situational and Visionary Leadership styles depending on the situation in which he is leading. Heller and Heller (2000) further suggest that Gates has *"built a corporate culture where you have all the resources of a large company yet you have that dynamic small-group, feeling where you can really make a difference"* (Heller and Heller, 2000, p.13).

Leadership with Security

- Many of those managers within the security industry have been promoted to leadership positions based upon performance in their previous role
- Individuals are seen as more than capable from a performance perspective, the lack of support or practical advice around softer skills, as highlighted by Tarallo (2022) is concerning.
- The security industry maintains many structured processes that can stimulate commanding or authoritarian leadership styles.

Surveys and Interview Findings

- 36% (n=95) of those participants surveyed only completed one management course
- 22% (n=95) of participants not having completed any management course
- 60% (n=95) of participants in a leadership role for 1 year or less
- 74% (n=95) of participants want more support in the areas of mentorship and leadership development.
- 83% (n=6) of participants only received on the job and informal training
- 58% (n=95) of participants had no formal management or leadership courses completed
- 15% of Securitas Employees are currently in leadership roles

$$Trust \quad T = \frac{Credibility \quad Reliability \quad Intimacy}{C + R + I} \over Self-Orientation$$

Fig.7

Fig. 2

Fig.8

Securitas is the world's leading provider for security services
SECURITAS

– 300,000 people in 50 countries
– Operations in Americas, Europe, Asia, Middle East and Africa.
– Serves a wide variety of industries and customer segments.
– Customer size varies from the "shop on the corner" to global multi-billion companies.
Fig.1

Recommendations for Future research

As Securitas is a global organisation with a footprint in multiple jurisdictions, this research should be replicated by Securitas globally, within these jurisdictions. This will allow for a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to leadership development across the organisation.

Further research should be conducted into the centralisation of leadership training within both Securitas Ireland and Securitas Globally, thus enhancing standardisation across the organisation. This centralisation and the implementation of a framework for leadership development and evaluation will ensure that current and future leaders get the support required to provide the highest standard of service.

Research Approach

- **Is it suitable?** The purpose of this research was to investigate the current development pathway within Securitas Ireland, what impact this current pathway has on leaders within the organisation and how it promotes and supports their development. A mixed methods approach was chosen for this research. This strategy allowed the researcher to collect and collate numerical and narrative data. This was achieved through a survey and multiple structured interviews.
- **Is it Ethical?** Prior approval was sought from the Griffith College Research Ethics committee. During the data collection phase, the researcher fully complied with the approval provided by the Griffith College Research Ethics committee and in line with BERA (2018) guidelines for data collection. All participants were guaranteed anonymity and required to complete a consent form before participating in the research.
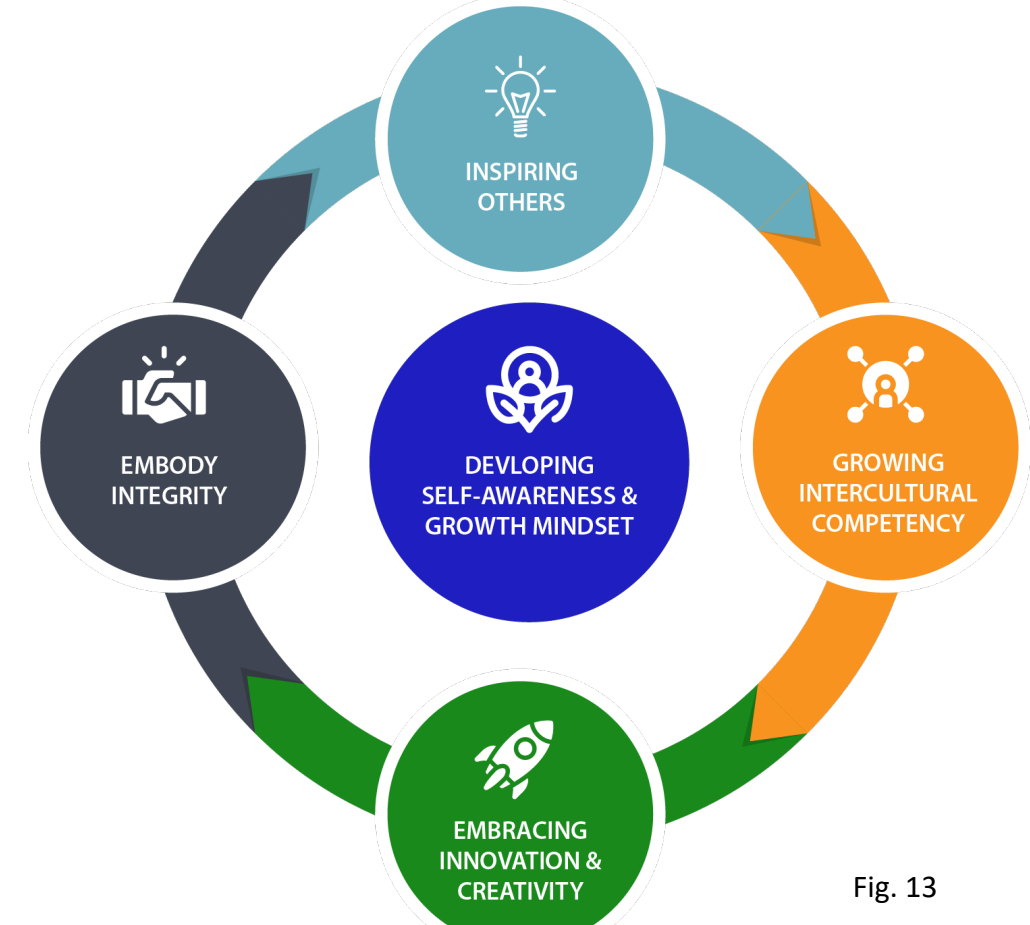

Fig. 13

This research approach outlines leadership development and the key roles on which this development should be focused.

Further examining the components of leadership, how a leadership framework can be applied to develop leaders in these critical appointments and how to best measure the effectiveness of those leaders within the organisation.

Recommendations for Leadership Development

SIRL as an Organisation

Great Places to Work

Great places to work is a company that works with organisations to assess the people and cultural challenges that organisations are currently having. Great places to work programs provide support to assess the current people practices within an organisation (GPTW, 2022). These assessments are conducted through surveys and feedback from employees. Analysis of this data allows for discussions surrounding the organisation's future people strategy. GPTW will then create an action plan and framework for the organisation to improve its people practices. It is recommended that SIRL should align itself with GPTW. SIRL will be afforded the opportunity to survey employees with a view to uncovering tangible insights that can be used to improve its culture. Furthermore, this alignment will benchmark SIRL's performance against national and international best practices.
Fig.9

Mandatory Induction Training

Resulting from the high number of managers currently fulfilling leadership roles without any formal management or leadership training, it is recommended that SIRL adopt a mandatory induction raining module for new managers. As outlined by Tarallo (2022), practical advice for managers around coaching, engaging team members, mitigating bias and overcoming challenges within a security setting is not always forthcoming. Lordanoglou (2018) argues that effective leadership development within an organisation should start early and involve individuals at every level. By introducing a mandatory induction module which will incorporate basic management skills and competencies along with networking, peer discussion and crisis management, SIRL will give newly promoted managers a solid foundation on which to build. Setting them on a pathway to success.
Fig.10

Mentorship programme

It is hoped that the introduction of a mentoring program will support those new to leadership roles. Being mentored by more experienced leaders, those new leaders will be provided with guidance and feedback. This is highlighted by Fletcher and Mullen (2012) who outline the mentoring relationship as one which encourages learning and socialisation through guidance and feedback from the mentor to the mentee. This approach will help in the development of new Managers, Supervisors and Teal Leads.
Fig.14

SIRL Management, Supervisors and Team Leads

Formal Management and Leadership Training

If those successful in securing a leadership role within Securitas do not have any formal Management or Leadership training, it is recommended that they should complete some formal training in this area. It would be beneficial for SIRL to have some form of affiliation with a third-level institution that can provide courses in Management and Leadership. This direct link would bridge the gap in formal qualifications for those in Managerial and Leadership roles within SIRL.
Fig.11

Networking with peers

Informal working lunches would be beneficial for new Managers, Supervisors and Team Leads. Time spent in this non-intrusive setting will make those new roles more comfortable, also affording them the opportunity to network. Weekly stand-up meetings could also be implemented as a form of structured training and Support.
Fig.12

SUMMARY

The role of a security officer has changed enormously over the last decade. From the old view of a lone security officer operating on a post to the modern-day reality of those performing roles in highly diverse teams with the expectation that they can communicate and adapt to changing situations in a high-tech environment. Furthermore, those in leadership roles are expected to be able to lead these teams. But What support are those leaders given, and what tools do they have to deal with the ever-changing environment in which they lead.

Securitas has a global footprint, partnering with multiple blue-chip companies such as Facebook, Microsoft, LinkIdn and Amazon. With 355,000 employees globally. One hundred ninety of its 1400 Irish staff have responsibility for leading others. SIRL operates in an environment where one-third of its workforce is in leadership positions, yet it has no framework for leadership development or evaluation. Key aspects that support leaders at all levels are missing leaving a void. Furthermore, there is also the possibility that good leaders will leave due to the lack of support. Introducing an inclusive leadership model would see Securitas promote and develop effective leaders from within. Embracing the demand for mentoring and guidance SIRL would support those in leadership roles at all levels.

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