



THE ROLE OF SOFT LEADERSHIP SKILLS TO REDUCE STRATEGIC PITFALLS

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Article history:	Abstract:
Received: May 10 th 2022 Accepted: June 10 th 2022 Published: July 22 th 2022	The research dealt with soft leadership skills as an independent variable and strategic pitfalls as a dependent variable. A sample of managers working in first-class hotels in Baghdad was selected. The research relied on the opinions of 30 managers. The research problem was diagnosed through field experiments conducted by researchers in first-class hotels in Baghdad. It was suggested that the dimensions of soft leadership skills contribute to addressing weak strategic pitfalls. The research sought to achieve a set of goals, the most important of which are: Describe the dimensions of the research variables and test the correlation and impact relationship between the research variables in the first-class hotels in Baghdad. To achieve these goals, the research relied on the analytical descriptive approach, and the researcher used the questionnaire in the practical aspect of the research, as well as the research and studies related to the subject of the research in the theoretical aspect with reliance on (SPSS) to test and analyze the hypotheses of the relationship and the effect between the research variables. The research concluded with a set of recommendations.
Keywords: soft leadership skills, strategic pitfalls	

THE FIRST TOPIC - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

First: the research problem

Business organizations suffer from many strategic pitfalls that differ in their intensity, frequency and results. Therefore, the main question emerged (the extent of the impact of soft leadership skills in reducing strategic pitfalls), and this question resulted in a set of sub-questions, as follows:

- 1 -Is there a theoretical correlation between the dimensions of soft leadership skills and strategic pitfalls?
- 2 -What is the level of university leaders' awareness, interest and adoption of "soft leadership skills in its dimensions (communication skill, initiative, cooperation and teamwork, skill development and training of individuals) and what are the most prominent dimensions of interest?
- 3 -What is the effect of soft leadership skills in reducing strategic pitfalls?

Secondly, the importance of research

The importance of the research can be highlighted in the following points:-

- 1 -Shedding light on the importance of "soft leadership skills and strategic pitfalls" and their role in achieving what first-class hotels in Baghdad aspire to by supporting its future capabilities.
- 2 -Through the research, it is possible to identify the extent of the interest in first-class hotels in Baghdad and

the level of its capabilities in the field of soft leadership skills and strategic pitfalls.

Third: Research objectives

The research aims to

- 1 -Clarifying the cognitive aspect of the research variables (soft leadership skills, strategic pitfalls) by following up on previous cognitive efforts and knowing the achievements
- 2 -Identifying the degree of awareness, interest, and adoption of the subject of soft leadership skills by the administrative leaders, the research sample.
- 3- Diagnosing the direct relationships between the research variables (soft leadership skills, strategic pitfalls)

The second topic - the theoretical side

First: soft leadership skills

1 -The concept of Leadership Soft Skills

The intense competition witnessed by public organizations has pushed them to grow and create an unstable environment, whether in developed or developing countries. In order to deal with uncertainty, there has become an urgent need for the emergence of new leadership styles that can deal with changes. As leaders employ non-coercive means of influence to direct the activities of their members, not to bring about change in the organization (Arendt & Gregoire, 2004: 395). Among the new management methods is soft leadership as a modern concept presented by (Rao, 2012), as it appears in the form of a leadership style



that is applied through soft skills and personal skills. Which leaders enjoy, which focuses on the human resource and how to manage feelings and attitudes towards the behavior of individuals (Gholami, 2017:3) and says (Marques, 2013: 164) that the personal skills of leaders as an essential part of having a successful leadership, and that soft leadership skills (the skill of self-awareness Motivation, self-regulation, social skills and empathy) are indicators of emotional intelligence, while hard skills relate to long-term vision, analytical and technical abilities, intelligence and thinking are indicators of cognitive intelligence, and soft leadership focuses on attitudes and the behavioral side of the followers (Rao, 2012:28)

2 -The importance of soft leadership skills

(Gholami, 2017:323) and (Rao, 2013: 145) have identified a set of advantages to adopting soft leadership:

1 -His contribution to shaping the personality of individuals and defining their attitudes and behavior, by balancing individuals and the tasks assigned to them appropriately without compromising the goals, focusing on the emotional aspect and taking the position of a partner, and looking at things objectively, in a manner that leads to achieving the desired results.

2 -Reducing conflict in the workplace, and thus reducing recourse to organizational policies, as it focuses on individuals, to reduce the process of attrition in the workplace, by enabling workers to achieve a balance between their personal and professional lives.

3 -It gives individuals the ability to manage their time more effectively, where the pressure is less by focusing the leadership on guiding individuals and not tasks, and thus their lives have meaning, by reducing stress and working as a tool to retain workers by enhancing loyalty and belonging and leading to excellence and organizational effectiveness.

4- Facilitating the process of change smoothly and successfully, by reducing individual resistance by effectively managing complexity and uncertainty, focusing on the individual by spreading happiness among stakeholders as they believe in success and in a way that enhances brotherly ties among them and promotes the desired behavior without compromising organizational goals.

3 -Dimensions of soft leadership skills

1 -Communication skill

Communication in general is a two-way process that occurs between two or more parties and it is not a one-way path, in which thoughts or feelings are transferred between two people or an idea is transferred from one person to another (Dixon et al., 2010:37). This skill relates to how the individual communicates with

customers, colleagues and employers, and that the individual who has good communication will be good in the skills of listening, communication, speaking, written communication, non-verbal communication and presentation skills, and any simple error in communication can lead to an unexpected loss for the organization and for the working individual himself. So during communication we need to get the inner touch of every word we speak or write (Pandey & Shukla, 2020: 29).

2 -People development/coaching skill

The leadership of the organization should realize that the effectiveness of transferring skills through employee training is necessary and crucial to motivating employees and achieving job satisfaction (Naong, 2014:369). Thinking patterns, opinions, etc. to be ready and able to move towards realizing the vision and mission of the social system, and the individual learns about leadership that he should be able to achieve the vision he made (Baron & Agustina, 2017:9).

3 -Initiative skill

Initiative skill refers to the official's ability to create the appropriate environment for taking decisions and actions before they are directed or forced (Tang et al, 2013:123). Taking the initiative means doing more than just mundane work duties and adding an unexpected surprise to others at work. Being proactive rather than reactive, thinking ahead and taking action (Muguku, 2017:184).

4 -Collaboration/Teamwork skill

No worker can achieve much in the organization, without working as part of the work team in the organization (Helena & Thomas, 2016:14), and leaders wishing to increase the effectiveness of their organizations must encourage the process of change in the organization through increased cooperation and communication among the members of the organization, This method enables individuals to innovate and discover new ways of thinking, and says (Maxwell, 2009:8) Shared leadership is a critical factor that can improve team performance from the point of view of customers or end users of the team's work. That a team works well when it relies on the leadership provided by the team as a whole rather than looking for a single individual to lead it (Carson, 2007:1231).

Second, the strategic pitfalls

1 -The concept of strategic pitfalls

In the English language, the term (Pitfalls), which explains a bump or trap in which the inattentive falls, or a path fraught with pitfalls, or an underlying danger (Oxford, 2009), and thus the administrative leader has surrounded the requirements for the proper treatment of pitfalls, which enables him to in-depth monitoring of



their course and take preventive treatments in order to control them and reduce the resonance of its risks in order to ensure stability (GODET, 2000: 5) that strategic pitfall are viewed as something that is likely to occur in an expected or unforeseen manner, so hedging from them was capable of planning, so to speak, as they are the subject of a required protection. It can be seen as a positive thing if it represents an opportunity for creativity, and the improvement of bad conditions into better ones (Rumelt,201:11) Strategic pitfalls are a phenomenon that every manager tries to avoid because they constitute a real threat and in order for management to avoid them, they should be aware of the factors And the various processes that push the organization to fall into it (koops, 2013: 12)

2 -Reasons for the emergence of strategic pitfalls

A number of reasons will be put forward, which the researchers identified as (Holt et al, 2017:122)

1 - Misunderstanding: It deepens with missing information and haste by leaders in issuing and implementing decisions.

2 -Misperception: arising from a lack of understanding of the objectives and performance standards, understanding them accurately, and representing them correctly.

3 -Miscalculation and evaluation: represented by exaggeration of self-confidence and the perception that self-ability is sufficient to overcome and confront defeat, and the evaluation process is subject to personal judgment.

3 -Dimensions of strategic pitfalls

1 -Driving pitfalls

The leadership process is linked to the existence of a group of individuals, as it is an organizational process necessary to manage (the group) or individuals in an organization with common goals. The way the leadership works, and the group's lack of conviction in the leader afflicts the leadership process with the most dangerous bug, which is the lack of cooperation of subordinates with the leader and the absence of interaction among them, thus confusing the work of the organization and keeping it away from achieving the goals for which the organization was established.

Bryson,2011:353((

2 -The pitfalls of decision

The administrative decision is a logical behavior or behavior with a strategic dimension and a social character that represents the solution, behavior or alternative that is chosen on the basis of a comparison between a number of alternatives and the possible and available solutions to solve the problem. 696)) The decision-maker faces pressures regarding decision-

making during pitfalls, which are represented in the lack of clarity of vision in the difficult situation, the speed of events that require quick decisions to control the situation, the lack of information, and the impact of the decision on the personality of the leader during the problem or crisis because he is usually a different personality In normal circumstances, it is more emotional than it is not possible to guarantee thinking, and the consequences of the continuity of the pitfalls and the exacerbation of their consequences are exacerbated. Where the organization cannot face the pitfalls in the traditional way, but it must be faced in an innovative way characterized by administrative creativity and logic (Waas et al, 2014:5514)

3 -Implementation pitfalls

The implementation process requires a full survey of the skills and capabilities of the senior management members and other members of the organization and determining the extent of cooperation between them. As well as setting policies, designing the organizational structure and spreading a collaborative background inside and outside the organization that enables the achievement of strategic goals, maintains the organization's strategy and prevents it from falling into potential pitfalls.

Brinkschroder (5;,2014) and Swanepoel, 2010:14 (Leonard & Leonard) indicated that sequential executions are subject to pitfalls due to:

A- Protracted internal processes: they may cause delays that may lead to unexpected stages, disturb stakeholders and create an environment of tension and low morale.

B - Obstructing some internal policies between the parties concerned with the success of the project: the many policies and procedures negatively affect the resources and services of the project

C - Maintenance and upgrade lead to complex and innovative applications.

d - Poor appropriate communication between users that allows them to change requirements as more information becomes available during the development process.

DATA ANALYSIS

As shown in Table (1), it is clear to us that the main hypothesis is accepted ($H1: p < 0.01$), which indicates the effect of soft leadership skills on strategic pitfalls. It seems that the coefficient of choice for this model ($R^2 = .422$) was good and acceptable, indicating that soft leadership skills will predict many changes in strategic pitfalls in first-class hotels in Baghdad.



Table (1): Testing main hypotheses

Model	Coefficients		t	Sig.	F	Sig.	R ²
	Beta	Std. Error					
H1	(Constant)		5.700	.000	17.100	.000 ^b	.422
	soft leadership skills	.600	.100	4.200			

a. Dependent Variable: strategic pitfalls

CONCLUSIONS

In the end, the results indicate that investing in soft leadership skills will certainly achieve positive results, but these results will appear after a period of time due to the long time required for the process of acquiring soft leadership skills, in addition to the long period of time for the consequences to appear. To manage soft leadership loan as a positive investment. This study also indicates the need for hotels to focus better on human capital due to the difficulty of the matter, due to the strict and stable laws and procedures related to the dimensions of leadership skills, which give more flexibility to leaders in their focus on managing these skills positively.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Based on the discussed results and conclusions, we propose a number of recommendations that we consider important to enhance the ability to face strategic slippage, as follows:

- 1 -There is a concept that most organizations on the ground do not focus on, which is "soft leadership skills". The management process initially requires organizations to plan and organize appropriately and appropriately to obtain the outputs of that process as required. This makes the non-slip sustainable and positively affects the organizational effectiveness.
- 2 -Communication and communication affect future slippage. So, if it is activated among employees of this capacity or existing employees are trained in it, the results will be amazing at the individual level and then at the organizational level.
- 3 -The inclusion of the training process and how to put it into practice is important and necessary. This is done either by encouraging optimistic, informal discussions through planting agents or experts in this aspect, or formally through motivational courses and seminars to raise employee morale.

4 -Collaboration and teamwork help in overcoming obstacles and successfully overcoming them through knowledge and positive planning for them.

5 -The process of overcoming the strategic slip is very difficult. It's a hard issue on Earth that comes from the difficulty of actually identifying this ability for a person.

6 - From an academic point of view, highlighting the concept of strategic slippage is absolutely necessary. Regarding this study.

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