What Leadership Lessons Can We Glean From Star Trek?

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Abstract

In this research review paper, the authors examine the leadership of Gene Roddenberry's Star Trek and put forth several key lessons to be gleaned for businesses and ways to be earth-friendly. Some of these key leadership lessons from the bridge of the spacecraft include being pro-active and planning ahead to change and improve, being green and universe-friendly, being ethical and socially responsible as well as being of high integrity and self-disciplined. True, Star Trek is an adventure, a science fiction, but the key lessons and the benefits here are real.

Introduction

The core of *Star Trek* is its six television series: *The Original Series*, *The Animated Series*, *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, *Voyager* and *Enterprise* (Star Trek Voyager, 2014; Star Trek Deep Space Nine, 2014; Star Trek, The Next Generation, 2014; Snyder, 1995).

The *Star Trek Movies* have their origins in 1968, when creator Gene Roddenberry announced plans to produce a prequel modeled after the television series. The concept resurfaced temporarily in the late 1980s, but was rejected in lieu of other projects by Roddenberry. Following the critical and commercial failure of *Star Trek: Nemesis* and the cancellation of the television series *Star Trek: Enterprise*, franchise executive producer Rick Berman and screenwriter Erick Jendresen wrote an unproduced film, titled *Star Trek: The Beginning*, which would take place after *Enterprise*. However, after the split between Viacom and CBS Corporation, former Paramount president Gail Berman convinced CBS to produce a feature film. Orci and Kurtzman, both fans of the *Star Trek* series, were approached to write the film, and Abrams was approached to direct it. Kurtzman and Orci used inspiration from novels, graduate school dissertations, as well as the series itself (Pascale (2007).

What the authors like about *Star Trek* is that it presents a positive, rather than a dark or bleak, picture. And indeed the future explores the use of technology for the betterment of humankind. Being comfortable with technology (or information technology: IT), humankind must indeed "embrace technology" to cure all known organizational ills and IT, a tool, needs to be made to work (Jack Welch, cited in Crainer, 2007: 78). And interestingly, *Star Trek* also provides a social commentary on today's modern society issues, and brings to the spotlight, challenges that our society faces and has to overcome.

Paper's Aim and Objective(s)

The *Star Trek* series, an American science fiction entertainment franchise created by Gene Roddenberry, altered the face of science fiction on television and in the movies. This was a ground-breaking event in entertainment, with millions of fans faithfully following the adventures of the characters in Roddenberry's future universe (Ray, 2009). And this tips the authors to select and examine *Star Trek* to gather and collect various leadership lessons and learning; after all, *Star Trek* also pioneered and foreshadowed various technological innovations that are now in common use.

The paper's overall objective is to examine the leadership qualities and ways of *Star Trek* and in the main, puts forth several key leadership lessons to be garnered for managing people and businesses as well as for humankind. True, *Star Trek* is an adventure, science fiction; however, the key lessons and the benefits as highlighted here are real. What comes next are what the authors deem as the key leadership lessons – just the salient or critical few – for businesses, communities and overall for humankind:

1. Being Pro-active and Planning Ahead as well as Planning to Change

Ralph Waldo Emerson (cited in Peale, 1993: 62) highlighted that, "The world belongs to the energetic", and in the *Star Trek* series, this is applicable and true. Leaders should truly be pro-active. They must. And they must also plan.

"Jack Welch is restless… …GE changes and then changes again". (Crainer, 2007: 41). "Energy motivates" (Jack Welch, cited in Crainer, 2007: 50). As in Jack Welch's "Never sit still" (Crainer, 2007: 43), it can be taken that the brave men and women of *Star Trek* are proactive, and that is their forte. Captain Jean Luc Picard, for example, said these wise words, "We must anticipate, and not make the same mistake once." (Eaton, 2009). *Star Trek's* brave men and women always plan ahead, plan to change, knowing fully well that, as in all businesses or entrepreneurial ventures, failing to plan is planning to fail. In this connection, Maxwell (1993: 73) pointed out, "(true) not all change is improvement, but without change there can be no improvement."

As they carry out their duties – mapping countless soar systems, greetings new species, and establishing ties with civilizations big and small – they live, work, and face the possibility that they could die in space. They boldly go anywhere – where no one has gone before but they plan and in fact, have good systems and are well organized. Interestingly, they also have *The Starfleet Survival Guide* (Mack, 2002).

Incorporated in *The Starfleet Survival Guide* too includes the standard equipment's non-standard uses and unconventional medicine; these are good as they deter, prevent and/or avoid problems from arising as well as to capitalize on any opportunity arising and applying them accordingly. Organized, they plan; they thus plan to change and improve. It is also indeed about moving ahead and creating positive change.

2. Being Green and Universe-friendly

Long-termism needs to be embraced by all of us; one must indeed think long-term.

In In *Star Trek*, the Prime Directive is a universal rule for all Federation explorers that stipulates that they must not interfere with the natural development of any of the planets or peoples they face. In the cases where this rule is tested by circumstances it is never disregarded or circumvented. Interestingly, another, less noticeable, guiding principle is the complete lack of racial, gender or any other kind of bias or discrimination. This is unstated as a Value because it has become a universal principle of Gene Roddenberry's vision of the future of the human race (Warner, 2012).

Akin to the fact that we owe much to our next generations so that they can inherit a clean and green Earth/ nature, the leadership of *Star Trek* embraces the paramount value of being green or earth-friendly, as well as respecting and being kind to nature and our universe. And that is the legacy (we owe to ourselves and our children and children's children) that we need to uphold and live on. Interestingly, the authors interpret this as being epitomized by these conversations between Captain Jean Luc Picard and Riker (*Star Trek: The Next Generation, 2014*):

Picard: What we leave behind is as important as how we've lived. After all, Number One, we're only mortal. Riker: Speak for yourself, sir. I plan to live forever.

Humankind indeed needs to plan well to ensure Earth's greenness. Indeed we need to do our act, contribute and when it comes to being green and should the environment is going to be saved, we must truly believe that each of us will have to take the leadership role and be the home base – undeniably let it begin with ME.

3. Being Ethical and Socially Responsible

Star Trek highlights or examines various ethical issues. One of *Star Trek's* great strengths is putting forth challenging social issues in the context of sci-fi adventure, and giving audiences intellectual conundrums to introspect or ponder over. One fan relevantly spoke of: "Recently my wife and I watched an episode in which a strong desire for security and the preservation of the United Federation of Planets lead to rampant paranoia, military trials, unwarranted surveillance, and fear-mongering ("The Drumhead").

This was followed by an episode dealing with a society that showed their respect for life and the dignity of the aging by mandating the death of their citizens at age 60, and citizens of 'our' society (The Federation) trying to understand and ultimately accept the accompanying ritual ('Half a Life')"

(http://www.treknews.net/2011/11/18/could-todays-television-climate-support-a-new-star-trek-series-editorial/). Indeed as one episode in Star Trek illustrates, Captain James T. Kirk, *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* expresses: "How we deal with death is at least as important as how we deal with life".

Note that from *Star Trek*, we learn that the Ferrengi are a race in interstellar merchants who care about nothing but PROFIT. The Ferrengi are an economic giant and a military mouse

(http://www.scribd.com/doc/74819797/121/Ferrengi, 'False Profits' episode of *The Voyager* series). While their military does boast some decent ships, the focus of the Space Program is to augment their importing and exporting business; their role as interstellar profit seeker has earned them a bad reputation in their galaxy.

On the other hand, unlike the Ferrengi, the *Star Trek* personnel and its leadership are more concerned with being socially responsible; they also show care of the interests of their other stakeholders. Creative, innovative and resourceful, science is thus used and pursued by the *Star Trek* leadership and personnel for the benefits of all, particularly for humankind. And more so, not interfering or disturbing the culture(s) of any civilization(s) (one of the prime directives of the Federation), they ensure the survival, if not, the viability of these civilizations and cultures.

True, doing business is good, but while doing business, we also need to be socially responsible and looking at the human side of things and not losing our souls. Money or profits should not be our sole aim and purpose; humankind also needs to be sensitive and not callous to the interests and needs of our stakeholders and that of Mother Earth and the up-keeping of the universe and nature. Additionally, at this juncture, it is praiseworthy to highlight what the Dalai Lama (Dalai Lama cited in Facebook, 2014; *italics authors'*) said, that is, "these days, in our materialistic culture, many people are led to believe that money (*profits*) is the ultimate source of happiness. Consequently, when they don't have enough of it they feel let down. Therefore, it is important to let people know that they have the source of contentment and happiness within themselves, and that it is related to nurturing our natural inner values."

4. Being of High Integrity

Dwight Eisenhower (cited in Price and Price, 2013: 143) once said that, "The supreme quality for a leader is unquestionably integrity. Without it no real success is possible." Societies and leaders should act right. And nations and businesses want to stand tall.

Being of high integrity is critical in nation-building and business, and the integrity of leaders or what can be termed as inner leadership (coming from within or inside out) helps to promote trust as well as the people's connection, continued rapport and relationships with their leaders. Integrity encompasses honesty, uprightness and incorruptibility. Of interest, in *Star Trek Deep Space Nine*, Odo (Species: Changeling), the Security chief/ police character is a prime example of good character development and high integrity; and because of his status as an impartial outsider, he was sometimes employed by Bajorans to settle disputes (http://wn.com/odo_star_trek_; Star Trek Deep Space Nine, 2014).

Maxwell (1993: 35) referred integrity as the condition or shape of "being complete, unified". Honesty refers to trustworthiness rather than falsehood, trickery or deception. Uprightness and incorruptibility means that there is no self-gain plus the fact that the leader does not enhance his or her self-interests. Integrity is overall the most important asset that one can possess. (Lussier and Achua, 2007: 34). And integrity and trust is something that is both intangible and money cannot buy! Galvanizing team leadership, integrity and trust also helps to build and foster team development and spirit (Low, 2003).

Contrary to the Ferrengi's "greed is eternal" and the Michael Douglas' character in *The Wall Street*'s "Greed is good", integrity is vital; and in fact, it becomes all the more important in the light of what has been pointed out by Kothari (2010) and Low (2009; 2009a). [Lieutenant Dax (in 'Rules of Acquisition' episode, *Star Trek Deep Space Nine*) spoke of the Ferrengi's "plac(ing) too much emphasis on profits" (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0708593/).

 A very good example of the Ferrengi's materialism ("Nature decays, but latinum lasts forever"; Quark's words in the 'The Jem'Hadar' episode, *Star Trek Deep Space Nine*) and values, that "Greed is eternal" can be seen in *Star Trek Deep Space Nine* episode, 'The Homecoming', when Bajor is in a state of civil war, the Circle strives to get rid of all aliens on Bajor; we see Quark, the Ferrengi's carrying or dragging a bag of gold-pressed latinum bars during the evacuation. Besides, Quark's brother, Rom plays Quark out by selling his evacuation plane's air ticket to others (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0708625/; Star Trek Deep Space Nine; 2014).] Low (2009, 2009a) also spoke of, in last decade, the Enron case in the United States as well as the scams, corporate frauds and the Sanlu milk powder case of People's Republic of China (PRC) where melamine were used as protein booster to increase profits, causing the deaths of several babies because of kidney failures. Kothari (2010) pointed out that the Americans angered by the news of executive bonuses (also, high pay? Additional perks?) in the companies that were being bailed out by the government. Without the billions in government help, most of these businesses would not have continued to exist. Although "many managers of these firms were responsible for their firms' financial decline, they were rewarding themselves as if they deserved high compensations for their disastrous business decisions, policies, and actions". The financial excesses brought these executives worldwide notoriety and public ridicule.

Sadly so, there are thousands of executives earning high compensations unjustifiably in countless big companies. The reported incidents shed light on how corporate leaders in the United States and in other countries have been enriching themselves, legally or unlawfully, at the expense of consumers, distributors, employees, suppliers, stockholders, and the society at large (Kothari, 2010). These should be rectified or set right; surely leaders must lead the way. Whether in running a business or a nation, without integrity at the top, the organization will ordinarily be short-lived and it cannot survive.

Contrariwise, *Star Trek* leaders show honesty and high integrity; their people could trust what they said because they lived up to the standards they set. Each of them walked the talk (Ray, 2009). *Star Trek* leaders truly often set the examples and show the way. Take the classic example of Captain James Kirk, the first on-screen of the *USS Enterprise*, Kirk was the model of a "lead from the front" commander (Ray, 2009). Next, at first glance, Captain Jean Luc Picard strikes the viewer as a stuffy, 'by the book' prude or killjoy. "His strong points, however, were that he had high ethical and performance standards for the crew of his *Enterprise*, which he applied first to himself, and he recognized his interpersonal flaws and took steps to mitigate them" (Ray, 2009). The latter also reminds us of the words of Confucius, the great Chinese philosopher (551 – 479 B.C.) who spoke of "When you have faults; do not fear to abandon them" (cited in Peale, 1993: 13).

In contemporary equivalents, business leaders indeed need to motivate the talented but unethical employees to behave better. Managers also need to reduce temptations. And help those with weaker self-control by monitoring them a bit more and coaxing them that the company truly values generous, altruistic behaviors. To do this, the leader leads by example. The leader's morality level determines or regulates whether employees see the organization as ethical or unethical (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2014; Harvard Business Review, 2014; Price and Price, 2013; Low, 2013; Low and Theyagu, 2003; Maxwell, 1993).

Fascinatingly we also see Captain Picard indeed serves as a good role model for a focused mission, effective communication and good teamwork (Roberts and Ross, 1995). Here, some critics have indicated that in Roberts and Ross (1995), one does not need to be a born leader to understand, for example, that "if one fails to listen to what another is saying, one will often fail to properly respond to what has been said". But the point here only emphasizes the vital point that indeed the leaders must listen and listen they must! And they must listen well to their people. Talk is really cheap, and in business and in real life, when example-setting (which makes the quality of integrity of leaders float out) is practiced, it secures, if not, enhances the followers' trust of their leaders. One cannot be asking one's followers to 'do as what I say' and 'not to do as what I do' (Low and Theyagu, 2003) and one were to do so, then it becomes one of leadership's common follies or sins.

To underscore, a leader has to truly let his or her actions speak. Ultimately "your behaviour sets the standard." (Price and Price, 2013: 151). And it is worthy to note that a leader gains moral grounds and attracts his followers as a role model of good examples; his or her actions are louder than words. Besides, being upright and not corrupt, (s)he stands tall as a leader and a professional. As highlighted by Low (2006; 2013), role models should be evaluated in the light of honesty and integrity. When it comes with the time that the followers have doubt and question their leaders' honesty and integrity, leaders cannot be role model. And they would be in trouble. Or be diminished!

In this respect, we acknowledge the words of Brent Harris as both relevant and applicable; leaders should really act, bearing in mind: "You can't teach culture. You have to live it. You have to experience it. You have to share it. And, most importantly… (*as a leader*,) you have to show it." (*italics, authors*).

5. Being Disciplined

In reading the lives of great people or leaders, one would find that the very "first victory they won was over themselves… Self-discipline with all of them came first." (Harry S. Truman, cited in Maxwell, 1993: 161).

Interestingly, we see Captain Picard demonstrating effective techniques for balancing personal relationships with duty in his not-so-secret crush (no pun intended) on the ship's doctor, Beverly Crusher (Ray, 2009); as a Captain, he is indeed being disciplined, and this is shown in his leadership example and actions.

Being disciplined is indeed not to be feared. "Discipline describes what we have got to have if we are going to achieve our goals". It's about self-control (Maxwell, 1993).

It is commendable to note that being disciplined is not being straight-jacketed or doing things precisely one way; there is still room or much leeway to maneuver. The *Star Trek* personnel can still be creative and innovative; however, "the discipline button is always on, not off" (Davis and Shrader, 2007: 28). They even go off-record or more so, informally to discuss things openly to brainstorm or to express. And overall, they stay on the course, sticking to their mission, standards and goals as well as objectives to be achieved.

6. Team-playing and Leading with a Diverse Team

This is critical. Today leading and managing a team as diverse as in *Star Trek* – be it in USS Enterprise or USS Voyager – is not that unusual and the TV series/ movies too are a great reminder, especially in difficult times like these, that what is required for any organization or even a nation to succeed and prosper, if not to survive; these issues need to be borne in mind:

> Leadership and vision
> The various types of intelligences
> Competences
> Creativity and innovation
> Diverse views/ opinions and discussions
> Properly recruited and qualified people
> Professionalism
> Delegation and empowerment
> Right technology and processes/ support systems

Now one's business may not have Klingons, Vulcans or Romulans to fight but one's challenges are just as real. It is indeed challenging times like these that necessitate some bold thinking and action and true teamwork if, as Spock or Tuvok would say, one wants to "Live, long and prosper".

The biblical Moses was said to team-leading the Hebrews, he applies "Team Moses"; in the beginning was his mother who hid him from the Egyptian executioners and his sister Miriam, who watched over his fragile basket as it drifted down the Nile. Later it was the Egyptian princess who drew Moses from the river and raised him as her son in Pharaoh's court – she was another player. Next, Moses' brother, Aaron was also an indispensable part of the team. Without him, Moses who was often "halting of speech" would not have been an effective communicator. Aaron also gave Moses credibility among the slaves who would otherwise have doubted the well-bred prince's sincerity. It is also said that the Bible made it clear that Moses could not have achieved his mission without his brother's help (Baron, 1999).

In the same vein, learning leadership lessons from *Star Trek* Captains also include the fact that the *Star Trek* Captains and Commanders are team leaders; they go by team-playing – whether on board the main craft or in the shuttle – connecting and communicating well with their crew members. In one particular episode, 'Melora', *Deep Space Nine*, Doctor Bashir pointed out that "no one on this station is completely independent… in space, we all depend on one another to some degree." (Star Trek Deep Space Nine, 2014;

 http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0708567/). The Enterprise or even The Voyager (Star Trek Voyager, 2014), for example, cannot go or run without the work of an entire team. Captain Kirk has many people he relies on for a successful voyage.

Spock is the First Officer who takes over for Kirk when he is unable to command the ship (Gamache, 2013). Besides, (attempting to) creating an inclusive workplace, *Star Trek* leaders/ commanders certainly seek to make their diverse team members feel at home and motivated, if not inspired.

In *Star Trek*, among the many, one excellent example of a good team leader is Captain Benjamin Sisko, the commander of *Deep Space Nine*, Sisko, a master at effectively motivating and leading a diverse (multicultural) work force, has his greatest strength in his ability to delegate tasks, with full authority, to others, while keeping responsibility for them. He also showed extensive skill in conflict resolution as he maintained peaceful relations between the various species in his quadrant of space (Ray, 2009).

One can also agree with the point Ray (2009) made, that is, *Star Trek* amazingly pioneered a number of television events; including its evolving treatment of women and minorities as well as views on diversity. Capitalizing on diversity and creating an inclusive leadership is one big reason why the Enterprise can go where no man has gone before. And inclusive leadership can actually help one's Company go where it has not gone before too. (Gregory, 2014). In leading a diverse team, one has to respect one's people and build mutual respect among team members while creating a positive climate for diversity. Captain Kirk, for example, understands that each and every team member is essential be it Sulu, Ahura or heavywieghts such as Spock or McCoy; he listens to everyone's suggestion and then applies his mind to find a solution. He has tremendous respect for Spock's scientific prowess and turns to him to get hints to resolve the most difficult problems (Saxena, 2010).

7. Relating and Ensuring One's Connection with One's People

We have heard so much about relationships in today that one might get relationships has been known throughout history. Lao-Tse (cited in Peale, 1993: 55) highlighted that, "Life is to be in relations". And akin to Jack Welch's "developing the softer side of GE's businesses" and "get intimate" (Crainer, 2007: 61, 63), a leader must really be in touch with his or her people – "(the leader's) most appreciable asset" (Maxwell, 1993: 113) or what Jack Welch called "people power" since "the idea flow from the human spirit is absolutely unlimited" (Jack Welch, cited in Crainer, 2007: 23). He or she must talk, communicate and/ or relate well with them. (Lussier and Achua, 2007).

Armin Shimerman, the actor who played Quark in Star Trek Deep Space Nine interestingly spoke of the importance of relationships even off-stage, he indicated his continued connections or liaisons with fellow actors: "Some of the *Star Trek* people, like Rene (Auberjonois) and Michael Dorn and a number of others, I talk to and see on a regular basis because we all live in L.A. But a lot of friends and colleagues live around the country, and some are around the world. So I don't get to see them very often. So, to be able to reconnect with people who were very important in my life, at these conventions, that's really delightful" (StarTrek.com Staff, 2010).

Along the same line as above, it is truly creditable to note that leaders should not be exclusive; non-successful leaders or in fact, non-leaders are usually cut off from their people. They have no rapport or connections with their people; often, they cannot relate well with their people. It is commendable to note that people are indeed happy when they realize their inter-connectedness with others (Lonely Planet, 2011: 125; also cited in Low, 2014), particularly so, with their leaders. And that they feel happy when their leaders care.

"As captain of this ship, I'm the one who's responsible for everyone aboard…" said Captain Jonathan Archer to Phlox, the ship's physician (cited in Eaton, 2009). Leading from the bridge too entails that the Captains never let their people down ("The team is more important than you… put your people before yourself."; Gamache, 2013); the ship and its crew come before anything else, even before the Captain him(her)self. (S) he is always concerned about the safety of the crew and their well-being.

Price and Price (2013: 74-80) highlighted the critical importance of leaders in terms of inspiring their people by connecting with them through, among other things, learning their names, praising them for their efforts or performance, showing that they noticed when their people weren't around and demonstrating concern when their people aren't their normal selves. Great leaders also make everyone feel like they are the most important person. In their research, Price and Price (2013: 137) reported that successful leaders were also warm and outgoing; they "enjoy working with other people. 90 percent of the participants rated this behaviour as very important to successful leadership".

Moreover, Schlacter (2013) spoke of (leaders need to) "always be listening". The best leaders are always listening to those they are working with. Effective leaders apply this to gain specific insight, gather feedback, or even to find a solution. Listening skills present strong leaders as people who not only care about business, but also people.

One can, in fact, clearly see *Star Trek*'s leaders' connections to or in touch with their people and followers in many ways. One thus sees that *Star Trek* leaders such as Captain Kathryn Janeway, show their connections and touch with their people. Captain of the *Voyager*, lost in the unknown Gamma Quadrant, Janeway epitomizes the leader who is comfortable with change and uncertainty. The authors also agree with Ray (2009) that Captain Janeway showed a steady focus on her mission and the ability to communicate her vision to her followers. Interestingly, we also see, in concrete terms, the ways in which Janeway guides, mentors and integrates Seven of Nine to the *Star Trek* crew; she is also of a listening sort.

Interestingly, to draw the parallels or by the same token, Baron and Padwa (1999: 75 – 79) has highlighted what Moses did. First, one ensures that they know all the qualifications one has for the job. Do not take for granted what that they have heard through the grapevine – as a leader, one plainly tells or informs them. Second, one lets them know what roots one shares with them, even if one has gone far beyond those roots. Lee Iacocca often reminded his employees of his own working-class background, and this is what Moses did when he reminded the Children of Israel about his long connection with the Jewish people. Finally, one should produce results or outcomes. Moses had the advantage of being able to generate miracles, but even if one doesn't have a magic rod that one can use to part the Red Sea, one can win credibility by showing that as a leader, one of the many lessons from the bridge – one is not afraid to roll off one's sleeves or get one's hands dirty and that ultimately one is capable of doing the job.

8. Trusting One's Subordinates and Their Judgment

Instead of barking orders and adopting a central command approach and headquarters mentality, leaders should be more empowering and decentralizing while enabling their people in the trenches to decide their own goals and directions (as can be seen from the "Maquis" episodes in *Deep Space Nine* when Sisko was alluding the fact that earth was the 'problem' as it is easier to be a saint when one lives in paradise and being cut off from the reality of day-to-day on-the-ground living; http://www.tv.com/shows/star-trek-deep-space-nine/the-maquis-2-20855/). Besides, by trusting one's subordinates, one empowers one's people, trusting their judgment. And in most, if not, some ways, as a leader, one would indeed not be micro-managing or constantly breathing down one's people's necks.

Of interest, even Elim Garak, the Cardassian tailor and Promenade shopkeeper of Garak's Clothiers who lived on the station, once underlined to Doctor Bashir that, "Trust is very important." (Episode: Cardassians in Star Trek Deep, 2014; http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0708514/).

And there is this particular episode "Realm of Fear" in *Enterprise – The Next Generation* (Star Trek The Next Generation, 2014), the character Lieutenant Barclay had a suspicion on seeing something while in the transporter, and while unsure of what he had seen, followed it up with an investigation of his own. After experimentation, he had confirmed his suspicions but without physical evidence, and called the senior staff to an emergency meeting in the middle of the night. Although Barclay had a history of being paranoid, he had done his homework and to his mind, had found proof. Instead of dismissing him due to the late hour and seemingly lack of evidence, Captain Picard mobilised his crew, ordering for further investigations with a view of safety and confirmation. Through this, we can see that the trust as a leader of the crew that Captain Picard holds in his crew is crucial in developing a resolution to the problem at hand. Without the trust inherent in his relationship with his subordinates, very little work would be done, and a captain would be entangled in a web of micromanaging and trying to lead the team, hardly an efficient or productive method of working. However, this trust must be tempered with caution as to the motives of the team member also, as it can be misplaced. Thus, while it is important to nurture and foster this amongst the team, time must be taken in order to evaluate the crew's judgment and competences.

9. Recognising Diamonds in the Rough, Valuing Talent in People

In *Star Trek* leadership, there is this characteristic focus on people. Ray (2009) indicated that, "Their crews were not mere tools to be used to accomplish a mission, but unique individuals, each with a contribution to make."

Hone the ability to recognise talent and to not dismiss people due to preconceptions. In the episode, "Ensign Ro" (Star Trek The Next Generation, 2014), a new crewmember was assigned to the ship, with initial displeasure among the crew members due to reports of her actions made during previous assignments. However, when crisis developed and Ro went to Captain Picard to ask for help, Picard made the decision to go ahead in trusting Ensign Ro due to his own personal experience with her, and not based on reports that he had read.

His trust of her came from his own judgment of her abilities and motives, and not based on negative reports or rumours that he had received. Although wary of any deception, the problem at hand was too great for Captain Picard to dismiss her concerns, and a necessary working relationship was formed. The abilities and potential that Captain Picard saw in Ensign Ro was a deciding factor in keeping her on board the ship in the end, as his own time working with her gave him an insight to her motives and convictions.

Indeed there is a need to look past people's weaknesses. In "Hollow Pursuits" (Star Trek The Next Generation, 2014), the authors see Barclay's lack of confidence impeded him in carrying out his job, but his talent and insights were very useful to the crew. Geordie La Forge, the chief engineer, made the effort to reach out to him despite his personal feelings, and found out more about Barclay, which became crucial in solving the problem at hand.

10. Being Willing to Take Risks

Captain James Kirk (cited in Eaton, 2009) spoke of, "The man on top walks a lonely street; the 'chain' of command is often a noose." Captain Kirk (cited in Knapp, 2012) also pointed out that, "Risk is our business. That's what this starship is all about. That's why we're aboard her."

And in *Star Trek Deep Space Nine*, (Sisko, in 'Sacrifice of Angels' (http://www.sjtrek.com/trek/quotes/S_DeepSpaceNine/) asserted that, "There's an old saying, "Fortune favors the bold…" Indeed successful or good leaders should also be willing to take risks as well as biting the bullet – decide and act. They should be thinking on their feet, innovative enough to be daring to venture and also to try out things. Captain Kirk once said (cited in Eaton, 2009) that, "Without freedom of choice, there is no creativity". The authors too like or better appreciate this particular trait of Captain Kirk, that is, he is an out of the box thinker (Ray, 2009), Kirk never lets rules or regulations keep him from getting the job done.

Whenever an interesting or challenging mission comes up, Kirk is always keen and ready to put himself in harm's way by joining the Away Team. With his boots on the ground, he is always able to make quick calculations of the situation, leading to better results. At least, superior for everyone with a name and not wearing a red shirt; Kirk was very much a hands-on leader, leading the frontline of his crew as they explored interesting and dangerous situations (Knapp, 2012). Here, the authors agree with Bul-Godley's (2012) reference to business; one is certainly referring to the Company's front desk, shop/factory floor and also the interface with its customer on the odd sales call. The leader must not be deskbound or cut off from the happenings on the ground. After all, it is a good way for the leader to both observe the operational challenges first hand and the real time performance of their teams. And it is also about knowing one's business inside out, not losing touch with the Company's core customer, one's competences and of course motivating one's employees.

From the rash Kirk to the stolid Picard, a common trait of each of these captains was the courage to "go where no one had gone before", and more importantly, the ability to make decisions with whatever limited information was available to them. In modern parallels, with such leaders around, businesses and organizations can be game to take risks, be eagerly creative and even innovative to strive, make willing attempts and advancements, thrive and succeed.

Ray (2009) indicated that the newest of the on-screen *Enterprise* captains, Jonathan Archer was chronologically the first, commanding earth's first deep space exploration mission. He had to 'write his own book' (Star Trek The Next Generation, 2014). Having only the most general of directions from his superiors, and no knowledge of the conditions he would face until events happened, he had to constantly think on his feet.

Figure 1 Summarizes and Shows the Key Leadership Lessons Gathered from Star Trek

Concluding Remarks

In the 21st century or in the future, all, if not many of us, face numerous borders or boundaries. As we get ready or plan to go where humanity has never gone before, it might just be useful to dust off those old *Star Trek* DVDs, or dig a book or two off the shelf, for a refresher course and reminders on what it takes to be an effective or a successful leader in the face of unknown challenges.

Of significance to note is that nothing in the future exists without something in the ideal leadership and in the existing practices; and what the authors have really done is to highlight or extend some of the existing practices that are idealized or played in the *Star Trek* leadership. In short, they are in fact presenting the obvious, if not, the evergreen practicing principles of leadership.

Then again, be it as it may be, to borrow some words from Knapp (2012) – All of us can apply the key leadership lessons embodied here, we can use them in our own lives. As a leader, one needs to constantly remind that one needs to keep exploring and learning. One needs to ensure that one encourages creativity and innovation by listening to the advice of people with vastly different opinions. One needs too to occasionally get down in the trenches with one's team members so as to understand their needs and earn their trust and loyalty. One too needs to understand the psychology of one's competitors and also learns to radically change course when circumstances dictate. By following these lessons, we can lead our organizations into places where none have gone before.

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