

Leadership in Cinema



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

(Partnership with Drexel University's LeBow College of Business students
<http://www.lebow.drexel.edu/index.php>)

STAR TREK

Submitted by: Dana D'Angelo with Contributions E-mail: danad@drexel.edu
Studio: Paramount Pictures Released: 2009,
Genre: Action/Adventure/Sci-Fi Audience Rating: PG-13
Runtime: 127 minutes

Materials

Star Trek DVD or online movie access, appropriate projection system, participant note-taking tools, and online readings access to the following concepts and theories (and related online links):

- Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles
http://www.fireleadership.gov/values_principles.html
- Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership
<http://www.leadershipchallenge.com/About-section-Our-Approach.aspx>
- Kirkpatrick and Locke's Leadership Traits
http://sbuweb.tcu.edu/jmathis/org_mgmt_materials/leadership_-_do_traits_matgter.pdf
- Followership
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/garypeterson/2013/04/23/the-four-principles-of-followership/>
- Link to Prezi
<http://prezi.com/biwb-mrn42cf/leadership-in-star-trek/>

Objective

Students will review various leadership theories studied throughout the term and how they are illustrated within the film. Students will then discuss leadership lessons learned through characters in the film consistent with different studies of and theories on leadership including:

- Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles
- Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices of Leadership
- Kirkpatrick and Locke's Leadership Traits
- Followership Characteristics

Plot

(Taken from imdb.com, written by Claudio Carvalho)

“When the Romulan mining ship Narada attacks the Federation starship USS Kelvin, Lieutenant George Kirk substitutes his captain, who is going to meet the Romulan Captain Nero in his vessel to negotiate a ceasefire, in the command of the Kelvin. He orders the evacuation of the damaged starship, including his wife who is in labor while delivering their son James Tiberius Kirk in the hospital shuttlecraft, George Kirk crashes the Kelvin against the Narada.

The reckless and troublemaker Kirk grows up and when he meets Captain Christopher Pike in a bar fight, he is invited to join Starfleet. Meanwhile in Vulcan, the outcast Spock grows-up discriminated against for his half-human condition. They meet each other in Starfleet Academy, wherein Spock accuses Kirk of lack of ethics, cheating a test of command. The trial is suspended with the information that Vulcan is under attack, sending Federation starships to Vulcan, including the recently commissioned USS Enterprise.

Kirk, who is a stowaway, foresees an alien attack and advises Captain Pike; however, the Enterprise is damaged, and when Captain Pike travels to meet Captain Nero, Spock has command and a serious friction with Kirk after the destruction of Vulcan. Kirk is accused of mutiny and stranded on the desert planet Delta Vega. Out of the blue, he is saved from an attack of an alien animal by old Spock who explains to Kirk that Captain Nero blames Spock and the Federation for the destruction of his home planet Romulus by a supernova. Spock explains that he had failed in the creation of a black hole with red matter to consume the supernova and Nero is seeking revenge. Now Kirk has to find a way to save Earth, the next destination of the Narada.”

Characters

James Kirk.....	Chris Pine
Spock.....	Zachary Quinto
Spock Prime	Leonard Nimoy
Nero.....	Eric Bana
Capt Pike	Bruce Greenwood
“Bones” McCoy.....	Karl Urban
Uhura.....	Zoe Saldana
Scotty.....	Simon Pegg
Sulu	John Cho
Chekov	Anton Yelchin

General Facilitation Guidelines

1. Assign readings on leadership styles to be completed prior to class time.
2. Review students' knowledge of different leadership styles and theories before beginning film.
3. Advise students to note instances in which they recognize different leadership styles by marking the example and the character(s) involved. Perhaps include an outline that assists in character identification and duties and/or may be broken up by leadership sect.
4. Show *Star Trek*. Pause after key scenes for discussion to advise and point students in the right direction if necessary.
5. After the film, commence discussion with students to discern their findings. Facilitate the discussion efficiently by focusing on each individual theory for a set and appropriate amount of time.
6. Mediate discussion between students. Correct students if necessary and point out examples on lesson plan they may have missed.
7. Discuss each example so that students develop a clear idea of each style based on each example.
8. After examining ways in which characters used leadership in different situations, discuss whether or not students would utilize the same style in each situation, or whether or not characters could have used different styles to achieve greater success.
9. Introduce debrief assignment to be done outside of class with the use of additional articles linked to in the Works Consulted page.

Breakdown of Leadership Styles and Theories

Students should be able to identify behaviors and actions displayed throughout the film by various characters, particularly Captain Pike, Spock, and Jim Kirk who are the most prominent leaders in the film, that are consistent with leadership principles previously discussed in class. Below is a breakdown of several examples of leadership in the film, outlined according to the different studies and theories of leadership discussed.

Wildland Fire Values and Principles in *Star Trek*

Duty

- Be proficient in your job, both technically and as a leader
- Make sound and timely decisions
- Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, accomplished
- Develop your subordinates for the future

Respect

- Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being

- Keep you subordinates informed

Build the team

- Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities

Integrity

- Know yourself and seek improvement
- Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions
- Set the example

DUTY
George Kirk’s Rescue of the Crew of USS Kelvin – When the ship was compromised Kirk, having recently assumed the role of acting captain, made the timely decision of sending his crew out in escape pods while he was left to die. He was proficient as a leader, made timely decisions, and protected the future for all of his subordinates.
Pike’s Leave – When Pike is ordered onto the Romulan ship by Nero, he realizes that he may or may not come back alive. Before leaving, he sets up a plan of action that he makes sure is understood by everyone. While this does not go as planned, he does not leave his team abandoned. He demonstrates timely decisions and subordinate development, along with making sure that the tasks that he sets to them are clear and understood.
Rescue of Sulu – In an attempt to save Vulcan by destroying the Romulan drill that is attacking it, Kirk, Sulu, and Olsen must dive down and stop it manually. Olsen dies on descent, and when Sulu falls after accomplishing his goal, Kirk ignores his own safety and dives after him in an attempt to save him. This timely decision, as well as Chekov’s miraculous mathematical calculations, saves Sulu. If they had not been making quick, timely decisions, Sulu would have died.

RESPECT
Pike’s Recruitment of Kirk – After a bar fight with Starfleet students, Kirk is sat down by Admiral Pike in an attempt to recruit him to join Starfleet Academy. When Kirk scoffs, Pike praises his father, the hero of 800 in his 12 minutes of command. He entices him with the lure of captainship, and successfully brings him into the Academy. He has successfully looked out for the best interest of his subordinate, built his team, and employed Kirk in accordance with his capabilities.
Spock’s Reassignment of Uhura to the Enterprise – As all of Starfleet rushes out to aid Vulcan as it is being destroyed, Uhura is assigned to the Farragut. However,

RESPECT

Spock transfers her over to the Enterprise at her request. He is utilizing his subordinates to the best of their ability, in accordance with their capabilities.

McCoy's Advancement – When the Enterprise is taking hits, Spock on his rounds discovers that the medical bay is leaderless. He also finds out that McCoy has been taking up control since the death of Puri, the Chief Medical Officer, and despite his lack of experience promotes him to Chief instead. Spock knows that McCoy can do the job, that he has been performing the duties without warrant, and understands that he can be best utilized in the position.

INTEGRITY

Uhura's Request of Reassignment – Uhura knows herself and her capabilities well, so when she is assigned a place on the Farragut, she knows better than to blindly accept it. She seeks out reassignment to the Enterprise to allow herself to be used to the best of her capabilities, therefore knowing herself and seeking improvement.

The Story of Spock Prime – When Kirk meets an older, marooned Spock on Delta Vega, Spock tells him about his mistakes. He explains that he witnessed the destruction of Romulus, as well as caused the displacement of both his and Nero's ships in time. He accepts responsibility for what happened, including George Kirk's early death, and seeks improvement through aiding Kirk once more.

Spock Prime's Self-Awareness – When Vulcan is destroyed and Spock Prime consults with Kirk on Delta Vega, he is aghast to hear that his younger self is in control of the Enterprise. He knows himself and instructs Kirk to take over the seat of command because he is too emotional in this moment. He understands himself and how he functions—or, in this moment, how he doesn't function—and seeks improvement through Kirk.

Kouzes' and Posner's Five Practices in *Star Trek*

- **Model the Way:** James T. Kirk is one of the greatest examples in literary, television, and cinematic history of a hands-on leader. This characteristic is ever-present and even amplified in this iteration. Modeling the Way involves leading by example, for a good leader cannot expect anything of his subordinates that he is not willing to do himself. Jim Kirk is extremely action-oriented throughout the entire film and this does not change at all when he finally assumes command of the USS Enterprise. In fact, as these clips show, from the moment Kirk's plan is enacted he and Spock, one of the film's other prominent leaders, are leading the charge in an impossible mission to single-handedly take down the antagonist ship, the Narada. They are the main executors, beaming right into enemy territory to rescue Captain Pike and destroy the ship. With this brave and exemplary example before them, the crew of the Enterprise is rallied behind Kirk and Spock as they come out of hiding to assist in the final assault.
 - Kirk and Spock's Assault:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXy_DO6IZOA
 - The Destruction of the Narada:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl640wi6bX0>
- **Inspire a Shared Vision:** Spock Prime, the Spock from the original universe whose time travel produces the alternate universe of the film, inspires a shared vision through Kirk and Spock. After being marooned for mutiny, Kirk encounters this original Spock, who's coaching manipulates events so that Kirk becomes captain of the Enterprise and Spock becomes his second in command and friend as they were initially destined to do. Spock Prime later acknowledges this by appearing before Spock and telling him that he took a harder, riskier, and more illogical path by remaining hidden until then, so as to not spoil the ultimate collaboration between Spock and Kirk. He goes on to explain that this friendship, as it was in his time, will be an amazing gift to them both. Finally, he tells Spock that for the sake of what he can accomplish on the Enterprise with Kirk, he must remain in Starfleet, instead of taking the logical path and shepherd the survivors of Vulcan's destruction. Through his manipulation of both Spock and Kirk, Spock Prime in a way, makes up for the distortion in time that he unwillingly created, by getting events back on track to the fullest extent that he can.
 - Spock Meets Spock Prime:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ppo5YIYwTM>
- **Challenge the Process:** Because his history is altered by the events of this film, Jim Kirk grows up as a delinquent and a renegade who, albeit his intelligence, displays a great deal of arrogance and a distaste for authority. However, it is his brash personality, when used productively, that allows him to challenge the system and eventually, to correct it. Kirk's arrogance and rebellion first come to a head when he takes the Kobayashi Maru test while at Starfleet Academy. He hacks the simulation, eliminating the challenge of an otherwise unbeatable test. When he is confronted by the Academic Board and Commander Spock, the test's developer about this, he replies that the test is a cheat because it is intentionally impossible to pass, thus challenging the methodology by which Starfleet deems officers worthy of being captains. Kirk challenges the process later in the

film when he advises that the Enterprise pursue the Narada alone, rather than regroup with the primary fleet to have a statistically better chance of succeeding. This is the plan advocated by Spock who takes over as captain upon the capture of Captain Christopher Pike. Spock embodies logic and chooses the path that will be the most statistically preferable. Kirk however, knows that it will be too late to save Earth, the Narada's next target, if the Enterprise breaks off the pursuit to regroup with the fleet. This leads Kirk into a confrontation with Spock that ultimately results in Kirk being marooned on a nearby planet. However, when Kirk returns and takes over as captain, it is his strategy that proves to be the salvation of Earth.

- Kobayashi Maru Test:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDg674aS-F4>
- Kirk's Academic Hearing:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&feature=fvwp&v=qs0J2F3ErMc>
- **Enable Others to Act:** In an act of selflessness and heroism Captain Pike hands himself over to Nero, the film's antagonist and the captain of the Narada as it threatens to destroy the Enterprise. However, knowing that there is a great chance that he will not return, he enables his subordinates to act in his absence. He first creates a clear line of succession, naming Spock captain and Kirk first officer or second in command. He then drops Kirk, Sulu, and Olson to carry on the mission of disabling the drill on Vulcan without him as he travels to the Narada. Although the leadership structure of the Enterprise is usually very authoritarian, with the captain making all final decisions with little to no participative element, Pike is wise enough to enable his crew to act independently when he is clearly in danger of not returning to them.
- **Encourage the Heart:** After saving him from a bar fight, Captain Pike attempts to convince Kirk to enlist in Starfleet so that he does not waste his life and his great potential. Having written his dissertation on the USS Kelvin, the ship destroyed at the beginning of the film, Pike tries to appeal to Kirk through his father's legacy. He emboldens and encourages Kirk by daring him to be an even greater hero than his father was, an element of foreshadowing early on in the film.
 - "I Dare You to Do Better":
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caUo3FQkRPM>

Kirkpatrick and Locke Leadership Traits

- **Motivation:** James Kirk demonstrates leadership motivation when he reaches Captain Pike to tell him about the Romulan attack. Kirk's quick thinking and heroic actions eventually result in him becoming a higher rank, but the higher rank is not what he seeks. Kirk does whatever he can to reach the captain because he wants to save the USS Enterprise.
- **Self-confidence:** James Kirk frequently demonstrates self-confidence throughout the film. The first instance that Kirk demonstrates self-confidence is when he tells Captain Pike that Romulans are going to attack the USS Enterprise. By doing this, Kirk gives away that he has boarded the ship and he puts all responsibility for what the crew is

about to do on himself. Kirk most likely knows that if he is wrong, he will never be able to rejoin the Enterprise, but he is right. In addition, Captain Pike most likely listens to Kirk because of the confidence that he displays.

- Simulation:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bDg674aS-F4>
- **Cognitive Ability:** Uhura leads with cognitive ability because she is using her knowledge to make decisions. She was one Spock's top students and is available to provide valuable information to the USS Enterprise with her knowledge of many other languages. An example of where she leads with her cognitive ability is when she confronts Spock for not putting her on the USS enterprise. She lists reasons why she belongs there and proves to be useful throughout the journey.
 - Uhura Changing Spock's Mind:
<http://youtu.be/3Mxru4FJEIw?t=44s>
- **Drive: Spock** demonstrates drive when he chooses to return to his home planet Vulcan while it is under attack. Spock's confidence that he can save other Vulcans leads to him saving lives of people from his planet. He chooses to take initiative when no one else will go to the planet because it is being destroyed, and risks his own life. Although Spock does not successfully save his mother, he proves to have the energy, ambition, and motivation to lead and rescues the Vulcan High Council.
Honesty and Integrity: Captain Pike demonstrates honesty and integrity throughout the film because he continuously recognizes the good that James Kirk could do for the USS Enterprise. Captain Pike leads Kirk to join Starfleet because of the potential that he sees in Kirk, even though others refuse to see it because of his devious actions. Captain Pike also demonstrates integrity when he is being tortured by Nero and will not release any information about Starfleet. Despite being in pain, Pike continues his duty as a captain of Starfleet and does not say a word.
 - Captain Pike Motivating James Kirk to Join Starfleet:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caUo3FQkRPM>

Followership

From various readings, it is imperative that followership leadership is based on trust, stability, compassion, and hope. Followership leaders ask the questions, "why would anyone want to follow me?" and seek to tailor their direction on that principle. As stated in the "A Fresh Look at Followership" article, "the effectiveness of a leader is to a great extent dependent on the willingness and consent of the followers". Students should be able to understand that a leader isn't a leader without followers - how is this evident in *Star Trek*?

- **Trust:** To start with, Captain Pike has full support of his crew. They do what is asked of them because they trust him. When Uhura is promoted to the deck, the cadet she replaces gracefully steps down when Pike asks her, knowing that having her replace is better for the mission. Furthermore, Pike establishes key trust relationships with Spock and Kirk, instilling in them the same value, even if they (or we) don't realize it right away. He promotes Spock to Captain and Kirk to First Officer entrusting them with the rest of the crew. While trust is a turbulent issue for Kirk in the beginning (namely with Uhura),

he gains her's and the rest of the crew's trust when he accurately predicts the Romulan siege and credits her with discovering their dialect. On the other hand, Spock and Kirk do not have trust in each other. It is only when Spock Prime makes himself known to Kirk that Kirk changes his feelings about Spock, eventually learning to believe in him. Spock does the same and the two risk their lives together to save Earth and the Enterprise from the Romulans.

- Spock Not Caring About the Odds:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vfmxDCEFNq>
- **Compassion:** Compassion is an interesting topic to discuss regarding the follower-leader relationship. There doesn't seem to be too much prevalent at first, especially with the emotionally void Spock. However, Kirk gains compassion for Spock losing his planet, again through Spock Prime - he shares his pain, and in a weird, but ultimately good way, uses that understanding to take over the Enterprise for the betterment of the crew and mission. Two other characters that exemplify compassion for their leaders are Uhura (for Spock) and McCoy (for Kirk). Uhura comforts Spock upon the destruction of his planet, when he has declared he's emotionally compromised. She asks what she can do, to which Spock responds that everyone should keep "performing admirably." McCoy also feels compassion for Kirk when Kirk becomes temporarily grounded during the Enterprise's unplanned maiden voyage. He feels sorry for him, and obligated to take him on board (by intentionally making him sick).
 - Spock Emotionally Compromised:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9vHopyEtzs>
- **Hope:** This characteristic is evident in all of the captains and their crew. The members of the bridge are given hope when Pike sends Kirk and Sulu to disarm the Romulan's attack on Vulcan, and when Kirk takes over the Enterprise and plans the counterattack. One of the key moments of developing hope (and trust) between Kirk and Spock's relationship involves their infiltration of the Romulan ship. Spock recites some statistics about how their chances of survival are next to nothing, but Kirk replies with a "don't worry, we'll be fine" phrase. Through his positive attitude, Kirk has not only empowered his crewmembers - Uhura, Sulu, Chekov, and Scotty - but also created a sense of hope through their empowerment. Chekov is able to cover several positions, filling in when needed. Without Kirk in the new alternate reality, Scotty would not have been involved in the Enterprise or discovered warp beaming in the first place - instilling confidence and hope in him.

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Contributions to this document were made by the following students in LeBow College of Business at Drexel University enrolled in a course titled Leadership in the Movies in the spring of 2013 facilitated by Professor Dana D'Angelo:

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