

Leadership: A Very Short Introduction  
By Keith Grint

What is leadership? Are leaders born or bred? How do leaders lead? In this *Very Short Introduction*, Keith Grint considers these questions, prompting the reader to rethink their understanding of what leadership is. He examines the way leadership has evolved over time and explores how it is perceived, and used, in society today.

Questions for thought and discussion

- Is leadership just a way of displacing responsibility for collective problems onto the shoulders of individuals?
- What is leadership?
- Since leadership competencies are always related to individuals why do we need to worry about followers?
- Why don't we have any followership courses?
- Is transformational leadership really the key to organizational success?
- Since organizational success and failure are usually the consequences of collective action and inaction can we really measure the influence of individual leaders?
- If collaborative leadership is the future, and women are more collaborative than men, why are women still so underrepresented at the top levels of organizations?
- If the success of leaders is determined by their 'correct' reading of the situation, why is it that 'incorrect' readings don't always result in leadership failure?
- If leaders who took their country to war were required to put their own children on the front line would we still have so many wars?
- What is the role of a belief in destiny in the success of leaders?
- Do the followers of what we regard as 'unethical' leaders regard them as unethical?
- Has leadership changed across time?
- Is leadership culturally shaped or biologically determined?
- Why are so many of our examples of leaders drawn from the military?
- If charisma is objective can you recognize charismatic leaders who don't speak a language you recognize?
- Is Plato right in his assumption that our leaders should be appointed experts not elected politicians?
- If democratic leadership is so important in stabilizing failing states why isn't it important to stabilize failing corporations?
- Is democracy the best system of political leadership or the best system for removing political leaders?
- What is more important to leadership, knowledge, skill or wisdom?

Other books by Keith Flint

Grint, K. *Organizational Leadership* (with John Bratton and Debra Nelson) Mason: Southwestern/Thompson Press (2005)

Grint, K. *Leadership: Limits and Possibilities*. London: Palgrave/Macmillan. (2005)

Grint, K. *Beyond Command: Perspectives on Air Force Leadership* (edited with John Jupp) London: HMSO (2006)

Grint, K. *Leadership, Management & Command: Rethinking D-Day*, London: Palgrave/Macmillan (2008).

Grint, K. (ed. With Stephen Brookes). *The Public Leadership Challenge*, London: Palgrave/Macmillan (2010).

Grint, K. (ed. With Alan Bryman, David Collinson, Brad Jackson and Mary Uhl-Bien) *Sage Handbook of Leadership*, London: Sage (2010)

Grint, K. (ed. With David Collinson & Brad Jackson) *Sage Major Works of Leadership*, London: Sage (2010)

#### Further Reading

Burns, J. (1978) *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row)

Heifetz, R. A. and Linsky, M. 2002. *Leadership on the Line*. Cambridge. Mass. Harvard University Press.

Jackson, B. And Parry, K. (2007) *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Studying Leadership* (London: Sage)

Machiavelli, N. 1998. *The Prince*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Rosenzweig, P. 2007. *The Halo Effect*. London: Simon & Schuster.

Tacitus. *The Annals of Imperial Rome* Oxford: Oxford University Press