

# Key leadership qualities for major science events. The case of SCIKIDS Science Festival

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**Abstract:** *The paper describe leadership qualities identified as important by stakeholders of a major science event.*

*Can leadership skills raise a major science event for the community?*

*What are the qualities needed to develop such an event that aims to become a tradition in a unfriendly society as the romanian society?*

*Financial skills, credibility and communication are just a few of the leadership issues identified as important in successfully implementing a major scientific event.*

*SCIKIDS Science Festival, is the largest youth science festival in Romania, celebrating 7 editions. The inaugural event was held on October 2013. In 2019 SCIKIDS Science Festival celebrated seven edition accumulating over 50.000 visitors.*

*This study is based on findings from seven years of practice in science events area*

**Keywords:** leadership, organization, leader, communicate, science event.

INTRODUCTION

Everybody defines leadership differently but I really like the way John C Maxwell defines leadership, "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." Irrespective of how you define a leader, he or she can prove to be a difference maker between success and failure. A good leader has a futuristic vision and knows how to turn his ideas into real-world success stories. In this article, we take an in-depth look at some of the important leadership qualities that separate good leaders from a bad one.

REVIEW OF THE SCIENTIFIC LITARATURE

As Emma Abson pointed out in "How Event Managers Lead: applying competency school theory to event management", we present fifteen leadership dimensions according to LDQ model, identified by Dulewicz and Higgs (2005) in order to understand better the correlations between theory and practice.

Table 1: Descriptive Details of the Research Participants according to Abson, Emma (2017) in " How Event Managers Lead: applying competency school theory to event management. Event Management, 21 (4), 403-419"

Managerial dimension	Intellectual dimension.	Emotional intelligence dimension.
Engaging communication (involves other participants and gains support through personalized communication with each audience)	Strategic perspective (recognizes favorable and unfavorable situations)	Emotional resilience (Keep your interest in the process or need for results in order to defy personal challenges or criticism of others)
Resource management (set explicit objectives. transform longterm goals into action plans)	Critical analysis and judgement (taking responsibility for the impact resulting from the consequences of the decisions taken)	Interpersonal sensitivity (awareness of the needs and perceptions of others about proposing solutions to problems and challenges)
Developing (Support others to take on increasingly demanding responsibilities)	Influence (ability to convince others to change their opinions based on the understanding of their position)	Self-awareness  capable of recognize and controlling one's feelings
Achieving (determination in achieving the objectives and implementing the decisions)	Vision and imagination (clear vision of the future)	Intuitiveness (implementing decisions beyond incomplete information through reason and emotions)
Empowering (encouraging others to spread their autonomy, assuming responsibilities and decisions in the face of challenges)		Motivation (accumulation of clear results and impact through driving energy)
		Conscientiousness  (The ability to mentain a clear commitment to a course of action in the face of different challenges and encouraging others to support the chosen direction)

In a democratic society, the idea that the public should be able to understand the basics of science to make an informed decision is widely recognized (Hodson, 2008; Holliman & Jensen, 2009; Irwin, 2006; Jensen, 2011, 2014a,b).

Science communication involves science practitioners, mediators, and other members of the general public, by peer-to-peer or between groups (Burns et al. 2003).

Through science festivals, science is manifested to the general public in an accessible and interesting way.

Burns et al. (2003), and Jensen (2014a,b) examined why people visit a science festival. According to Jensen (2014a,b), visitors valued the opportunities to attend a science festival, to interact with scientists, and to encounter scientific phenomena. He also reported that their interests and curiosity about new areas of science have increased after their attendance. According to Hyeran Park, Youngmin Kim and Seongoh Jeong, Burns (2019) et al. (2003) categorized the reasons

using the analogy of the letters that are associated with vowel sounds, A, E, I, O, U:

- ⊙ People are Aware of science and scientific research;
- ⊙ People Enjoy science and appreciate it as an entertainment or arts;
- ⊙ The public have Interests in science communication as evidenced by voluntary involvement;
- ⊙ The public have Opinions on science either positive or negative attitudes and;
- ⊙ The public have some Understanding of its content, processes and social factors.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology was based on a study case "Scikids Science Festival" held by the Fascination Association in Romania since 2013. Its slogan is "Together in science"

The uniqueness of SSF was the active participation of sixty student volunteers in every edition

Table 2 Scikids Science Festival during the years

year	days	name	theme	visitors number	parteners number	science hours	ambassadors artists	volunteers	Budget euro
2013	2	The power of lemons	electrical phenomena	600	13	120	3	15	5000
2014	2	The power of oranges	electrical phenomena	6000	15	256	5	30	10.000
2015	2	The Coolest Meeting with Science	Newton's second law	8000	23	384	7	40	15.000
2016	2	Old Science vs New Science	mechanical phenomena	8000	25	416	15	50	15.000

2017	2	FIVE in Science	physics and chemistry	7000	31	388	20	60	15.000
2018	2	100 years of science in Romania	the Coanda effect	10000	35	432	25	60	20.000
2019	2	A Fun Reaction-150 years of Mendeleev Table	The Periodic Table of Elements	12000	35	435	25	60	20.000

TOTAL	visitors number	parten- e r s number	science hours	ambas- sadors artists	volun- teers	editions	days	Budget euro
	51600	177	2428	100	315	7	14	100.000

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the discussions with the science event are now presented through the discussion of key themes . Each of the 15 dimensions identified by Dulewicz and Higgs (2005) in their LDQ were expressed by the manager of the science event.

According to Abson, Emma (2017) in “ How Event Managers Lead: applying competency school theory to event management.

Event Management, 21 (4), 403-419” there were six key leadership practices of business event manager. These six key leadership practices were ranked by the questioned managers as most important and identified as frequently occurring or emphasized as important during the thematic exploration. In the following we'll try to understand the correlation of this items with the Scikids Science Festival.

Table 3 Correlation of the High-Ranking Leadership Practices with Scikids Science Festival

	Managerial dimension	Intellectual dimension	Emotional dimension
Ranked #1	<i>Engaging Communication</i> Communicating a clear vision to all the participants. Interconnecting <del>organizers, partners,</del> artists, volunteers with the public <i>Credibility</i>		
Ranked #2		<i>Strategic Perspectives</i> In order to ensure <del>an</del> sustainable event it's important to develop a commercially minded even if the thematic of this event isn't a commercial one.	
Ranked #3		<i>Critical Analysis and Judgement</i> The skill of problem solving in a <del>fastchanging</del> environment to be able to produce a workable solution for all the stakeholders involved in the festival	
Ranked #4	<i>Resource Management</i> planning what it need to be done, when needs to be done and delegating who will do it during the annual edition it's an important leadership skill in order to complete the tasks of the festival		
Ranked #5			<i>Emotional Resilience</i> From the first edition to the seventh, the emotional resilience could be actually the most important skill that influence the event to last during the years. Threats and uncertainties follow the leader throughout the editions of events, and the emotional resilience is the only response for continuity
Ranked #6			<i>Interpersonal Sensitivity</i> The communication process is a complex one and involving a huge number of people working together during the festival (several hundred) for tens of thousands of visitors. Empathy and a properly reaction accordingly to their needs for getting the best results represent also a must leadership skill

## LIMITATION

The key limitation of this study is that we have only one event with 7 edition that we analyzed it.

## CONCLUSION

To join the elite club of good leaders in events area, you must have all these qualities but if you lack some of these qualities, then you might struggle to make the mark in

the world of leadership. You will have to set a good example for others to follow. That is where your commitment, passion, empathy, honesty and integrity come into play. Good communication skills, decision-making capabilities and emotional resilience also play a vital role in success and failure of a leader. Lastly, innovation and creative thinking, as well as the futuristic vision, are a couple

of leadership qualities that make up good leaders.

The meaning of this study was to understand leadership practices within the unique context of a science event management.

To become successful leaders, they must evolve into teams, motivate and empower others, share, care, and delivery the event until the end.

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