

Review

Was Hamlet a level 5 leader? A critical analysis

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This paper is what can be described (in a positive sense) as a hybrid. This is because it analyzes the character of Hamlet in terms of his leadership qualities which means that it also explores the world of organizational behavior. In fact what the paper does is an analysis of one of Shakespeare's most famous protagonists and then draws the specific leadership traits he exhibits. It does this by drawing heavily on the play itself to make the points. More specifically, it looks at the character of the Prince of Denmark in terms of the leadership typology created by Jim Collins, the specialist in organizational development and behavior. Collins coined the term Level 5 leader based on his research of visionary companies. A Level 5 leader according to Collins is one who combines the paradoxical traits of personal humility and professional will. This does not mean that he or she is a weak person. On the contrary the professional will drives them to extraordinary lengths in order to benefit the organization. But at the same time they do not thrust themselves into the limelight. They are thinkers who know what is best for the company and then go about to deliver what is required. The question the paper explores is whether Hamlet was a genuine Level 5 leader or was he some other type of leader masking as a Level 5.

Key words: Level 5 leadership, leadership, crisis, organizational development.

INTRODUCTION

It may seem audacious (for want of a better word) to try and possibly analyze if one of Shakespeare's most well-known and complex characters can be labeled with a term which is usually found in books and journals devoted to management, and more specifically, studies relating to leadership and its ramifications. But then, it is said that Shakespeare is for all times and does not necessarily belong only to the Elizabethan age; if this is accepted then this study loses some of its strangeness. And there are quite a few papers in existence which look at the management related lessons which can be pulled out of Shakespeare's plays, including leadership.

In the past few decades, we have seen a lot of growing

interest in the study of emotions and their relevance to leadership. From Peters' and Waterman's book on the subject (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Peters, 1987) on passion and commitment, through Goleman's (1996, 2004) work on emotional intelligence, a lot of writers have come to the conclusion that understanding the emotions is a *sine qua non* of understanding leadership and of leading effectively. A good leader has to have his or her emotions under control to be effective and also have the ability to read the emotions of the people he or she is leading. On another plane, works which are inspired by psychoanalytic ideas constitute an important part of this literature. Authors such as Hirschhorn (1988, 1998) and Kernberg (1998) have used psychoanalytic concepts to unravel certain of the complex emotions and dynamics associated with leadership.

In another related area of work, authors have used the

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classics of literature as a means of accessing certain of the more subtle, intractable and complex themes of emotions and leadership: the mythology of ancient Greece as well as the tragedies and comedies of Shakespeare, in particular, have been used. Shakespearean plays are in fact of great value to understanding organizational concepts as they articulate many issues which normally a writer exploring the nuances of leadership (to name one aspect of organizational behavior) may not touch. And as an added bonus, the audience can see the concept being enacted on stage which we feel drives home the point very much more sharply. The spoken word when combined with action can make an indelible impression on the viewers' minds.

The specific link that is being analyzed in this paper relates to leadership styles and how they are closely linked to the personality of the individual. The inherent personality of a leader has its say on how the leader behaves and reacts to circumstances. As an example, if there is a crisis the leader may either lose his temper or try and resolve the problem in a more mature way; it is the personality which will determine the response. Again, response times to incidents will vary with one person being more comfortable in doing something immediately in order to solve a problem, diffuse a crisis or start on a project. Another person will be more comfortable in fully analyzing the situation and then making a response. There is no right or wrong ways to this as it will depend entirely on the person and the circumstances. A Level 5 leader however, is a unique phenomenon as will be seen from the next section. His or her reaction to a situation will not be that of the 'ordinary' leader, however capable the latter may be.

THE LEVEL 5 LEADER

The concept of Level 5 leadership was 'discovered' inadvertently by Jim Collins, one of the greatest thinkers of our time, and his team, while researching on the question "can a good company become a great one, and, if so, how?" This was in the year 2000. Even though efforts were made not to fall into a leader centric trap, the team found that it was impossible to ignore them. The researchers found that all the companies that have managed to go from good to great and stay at that high level for 15 years had leaders who showed certain common characteristics, some unique and elevating qualities or style that helped them to take their companies from good to great.

"Level 5" refers to the highest level in a hierarchy of executive capabilities that were identified during their research.

Collins' leadership hierarchy which shows five distinct levels is given as follows:

Level 5- Executive

Builds enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will.

Level 4- Effective leader

Catalyzes commitment to and vigorous pursuit of a clear and compelling vision, stimulating higher performance standards.

Level 3- Competent manager

Organizes people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of predetermined objectives.

Level 2- Contributing team member

Contributes individual capabilities to the achievement of group objectives and works effectively with others in a group setting.

Level 1- Highly capable individual

Makes productive contributions through talent, knowledge, skills, and good work.

Collins emphasizes that one does not need to move in sequence from level 1 to level 5 during the tenure of a person's working life, but says that fully developed Level 5 leaders embody all five levels of the pyramid. Those who worked with or wrote about good-to-great leaders continually used words such as quiet, humble, modest, reserved, shy, gracious, mild mannered self-effacing and understated. They never wanted to project themselves as larger than life heroes but were content to be seen as ordinary mortals. However, they would produce extraordinary results.

In Collins' immortal words, 'they are more plow horse than show horse.'

Level 5 leaders are a study in duality: modest and willful, shy and fearless. It is not that Level 5 leaders have no ego or self-interest. Indeed, they are incredibly ambitious-but their ambition is first and foremost for the institution and its greatness, not for themselves. They were also undeniably humble. They took on the blame when things went wrong and placed the credit on others for success achieved. This attribute was there in great leaders, but we needed a Collins to make us notice it and associate it with great achievers. For instance there was Harry Truman, the unassuming, humble President of the United States who took on the presidency totally unprepared and did a tremendous job of it. He was always ready to take the blame ('the buck stops here'). As to taking credit for achievements he said "you can

Table 1. Summary of the two sides of level 5 leadership.

Professional will	Personal humility
Creates superb results, a clear catalyst in the transition from good to great	Demonstrates a compelling modesty, shunning public adulation, never boastful
Demonstrates an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best long term results	Acts with quiet, calm determination; relies principally on inspired standards, not inspiring charisma, to motivate
Looks at the mirror, not out the window to apportion responsibility for poor results, never blaming other people, external factors or bad luck	Looks out the window, not in the mirror, to apportion credit...to external factors and good luck

accomplish anything in life, provided that you do not mind who gets the credit.” He was a humble person who tried to give his best. In his own words “a perfectly ordinary man - who nevertheless resolved to do his damndest.”

If we go one level deeper in this analysis of a leader, professional will and personal humility are the hallmarks specifically of a Level 5 leader. Table 1 sums up the two sides of this statement.

What comes out is that a Level 5 leader is someone for whom carefully thought out action for specific ends is the be all and end all of existence. To them, the achievement of the ultimate goals is paramount and nothing will prevent them from realizing these goals. They are steadfast, persevering and, above all, tenacious. And it is this tenacity which keeps them going. But if the achievement of goals is of paramount importance for them, what about the means for doing this? And it is here that their uniqueness stands out. Because a Level 5 leader will not to the extent possible ride roughshod over other people and their feelings in order to move forward, they will definitely take infinite pains to initially chart out their plans for action and take care of all possible contingencies. Having done this, there will be no looking back and mid-course changes will be minimal.

This study will now look at the character of Hamlet and analyze whether he was what Collins would have labeled a Level 5 leader.

Here, this study would like to make a distinction between Hamlet as a character and the character of Hamlet. This is not a pedantic exercise and is of relevance to this study. Hamlet as a character belongs to the realms of the theatre. The interpretation of the role, the way the lines are spoken etc will depend on the actor playing the role. What this study will focus on is the character of Hamlet and why he reacts to happenings affecting him in the way he does. And then draw leadership related lessons from these reactions.

Hamlet was chosen to be the focal point of the study as he has in him the intelligence, mental complexity and nuances of character which perhaps may qualify him for the label of being called a Level 5 leader. And perhaps unwittingly the reader of the play is drawn to the character and would like to see him as a Level 5 leader.

But then there are other facets in him which are not in terms of what is expected from a Level 5 leader. A second perspective which will therefore be tackled is whether Hamlet only had the ‘potential’ in him to be a Level 5 leader.

THE ANALYSIS – WHAT LEADERSHIP TRAITS DOES HAMLET REVEAL?

Kitto (1956) says that in Hamlet, “Shakespeare draws a complete character, not for the comparatively barren purpose of ‘creating’ a Hamlet for our admiration, but in order to show how he, like the others, is inevitably engulfed in the evil that has been set in motion, and how he himself becomes the cause of further ruin.”

It is the uniqueness of the character which made us focus on him in order to analyze his leadership traits and whether he had the mettle in him to conquer the ‘evil that has been set in motion.’

The world with which Hamlet has to deal with is indeed evil, and the play shows convincingly what may be called the logic of corruption; but the emotions and attitudes that Hamlet brings to bear when he confronts that world are themselves the subject of radical questioning (Knights, 1959). What now follows is an examination of the way Hamlet confronts the world and an analysis of how he reacts to them as a potential leader.

The analysis will be done based on some of the lines spoken by Hamlet in the play. The study will look at where do the qualities of a person described in the lines, or the action points which come out in the lines, or the sentiments expressed in the lines, fall vis-a- vis Collin’s hierarchy. The study will then place Hamlet in the appropriate category in terms of his leadership qualities.

Analysis #1 (Act 1 Scene 4)

Hamlet is talking to his friends Horatio and Marcellus outside the castle. They are discussing the habits of Claudius (Hamlet’s uncle and now the King) and how he is spending the evening in drinking with his friends and staying awake late into the night. Hamlet then says:

*So oft it chances in particular men
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them
As in their birth, - wherein they are not guilty,
Since nature cannot choose his origin, -
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
Oft breaks down the pales and forts of reason,
Or by some habit that too much o'erleavens
The form of plausible manners, that these men
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery or fortune's star,
His virtues else - be they as pure as grace,
As infinite as man may undergo -
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault*

Was Hamlet in these lines unconsciously referring to his own character? Did he know that he has in him 'the stamp of one defect' - a defect which he has been trying hard to conceal or overcome? Or is this what he feels in general about people and it is merely a catchall remark? Had he realized this one fault perhaps when he was in his teens? Had he then wondered how it would affect his role as a ruler?

'The vicious mole of nature' - in whatever form it outwardly manifests itself - which he refers to, could very well be inside Hamlet also; did this then become the cause of all his future course of actions? Does the fact that he was aware of this make any difference? We are of the opinion that it does make a difference. In that case the self-awareness Hamlet had about himself has to color our judgment of his behavior in the later scenes. A leader who is aware of his faults is a valuable one - especially an intelligent one. In this case does the speech reveal the makings of a Level 5 leader? In our view, Hamlet reveals here the basic potentials of a Level 4 leader as he is a person who is aware of his faults, yet capable of, as Collins indicated for a Level 4 leader, 'stimulating higher performance standards.' A Level 5 leader moreover, would not have attributed any reason for action/ inaction on a fault he or she was born with. They are too intelligent for that and again would have the capability to ensure that the fault did not come in the way of their work. However, this speech is only the first analysis and cannot be used to type Hamlet's leadership style immediately. For that the analyses of other statements of his are required. These statements are complex as is his character.

Analysis #2 (Act 1 Scene 5)

The ghost of Hamlet's father has spoken in detail to Hamlet about how he was murdered by his brother, Claudius. After narrating the entire sequence of events, he tells Hamlet to remember him (the father) and leaves. Hamlet's reaction is unique and after saying that that is the only thing he will do in future, he adds:

*Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past...
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter.*

The highly focused thoughts contained in these lines are revealing. One of the traits of a Level 5 leader is the possession of a professional will. From professional will comes steadfast resolve. And from steadfast resolve flows steely determination. What Hamlet reveals in these lines is that he has the steadfastness of purpose to concentrate his thoughts and plan to deliver. However, this is not the inherent problem. What has to be asked is whether Hamlet has the strength of will to convert the mental determination to action. For that in essence is the mark of a Level 5 leader. In fact it is here that, for all his good intentions, Hamlet begins to falter. And that too in a cause which is so close to him, considering the attachment he had with his father. For, if he cannot summon the will to carry forward and put into action what his father's ghost told him, then what else will do so? Why is there a disconnect between something so close to him and what he has just said he would do in terms of translating it into action? Why is it that his love for his father does not goad him into immediate action?

The Level 5 leader is not the type who will have the luxury of mind to ruminate too long; after having spent a considerable amount of time in planning, he or she will then move forward at surprising speeds. Hamlet has made up his mind to take action. But does he in fact do so? This is one of the perspectives through which his character has to be analyzed.

Analysis #3 (Act 2 Scene 2)

Hamlet himself appears to realize this passive inaction taking over his mind and then his body. He has just finished talking to the players who visit his court and is again raving at his uncle. Suddenly, cutting through his thoughts he says:

*Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must (like a whore) unpack my heart with words
And fall a-cursing like a very drab,
A scullion!*

The note he hits is again one of enforced helplessness, what Shelley called 'mind forged manacles.' In fact he reinforces this by saying that if the player (who had just recited some lines from the play they are about to stage) had Hamlet's motive - 'What would he do, Had he the motive and cue for passion that I have?' What must be

the vigor he (the player) could put into the speech? If he has that inherent self-knowledge then what is preventing him from taking it forward through action?

Is there then that stamp of one defect which this study analyzed in the first example coming in his way? A defect he was born with and perhaps is handed down from his forefathers?

The next example is from the speech 'To be or not to be' which comes soon after Hamlet has put in place the additional lines to be recited in the play which is going to be staged.

Analysis #4 (Act 3 Scene 1)

*For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes...*

Is the depression seen in the speech a result of the inaction Hamlet has to undergo till nightfall when the play will be staged? Or is it Hamlet's usual 'over-thinking' which is clouding his mind? From what we have seen in the previous examples, it is tempting to lay the attribute of inaction to Hamlet's own nature. However, there is validity in the argument that Hamlet is going through a mental low at this point because of the post action scenario when he has nothing to do but wait.

But what is interesting from the point of view of this study is the list of items which Hamlet indicates no one would want to bear. These are the whips and scorns of time, the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely etc. But if this is transposed into an organizational context, then these are exactly some of the things which a leader will have to bear and push his or her way through till the goals are achieved. So we come back to what is becoming clearer as we analyze each example is that Hamlet instinctively shuns away from taking on the responsibilities and role of a Level 5 leader (had such a leadership label been in existence at that time). What this study is arguing is that a Level 5 leader does not have the luxury to step back from the scene of action if the scene is not going in his favor. He or she has to take steps to see that the scene unfolds in the way they want it to, or as close to it as possible. By moving back from the scene of action, as Hamlet would have preferred to do, the leader is merely giving in to his or her competitors. And not displaying the professional will, an integral part of Level 5 leadership, required to go forward. And this leads this study into the last analysis which shows Hamlet speaking to Horatio just before the play within the play is to start.

Analysis #5 (Act 3 Scene 2)

*A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well
comeddled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.*

Curiously enough, these lines are again a throwback to the lines elaborated in Analysis #4. If we look for similarities, it will be noticed that Hamlet is again echoing his theme that no one should have the bad fortune to be buffeted by fortune's wantonness; which is exactly the thrust of what he said earlier in the lines quoted in Analysis #4. In brief, what he is saying is that no one should have to suffer being a victim of fate and be tossed around like a ship in a storm; this does not lead to success. Neither should the person have to put up with people who are not in line with his own comfort zones. It is because he feels this strongly that there is the repetition of the theme. It is also a pointer to his character.

Hamlet feels that this is what fate has ordained for himself and this is why the oft repeated theme comes out of him that people should be able to control their destiny and not have to struggle to come to terms with people and matters. Hamlet would perhaps have been most comfortable if he did not have to be the scourge and minister of fate, with unwilling responsibilities thrust upon him and that too involving people who are close to him who will have to be tackled in different ways in order to put things right. His heartrending 'The time is out of joint, O cursed spite... 'is a reflection of this and is said soon after seeing his father's ghost. If that is indeed the case, it is tempting to ask - what kind of person would he have been if his life had not been disrupted violently by a series of events over which he had no control whatsoever?

It is the contention of this study that Hamlet is essentially a peace loving person who would have been most content in Elsinore if he could have led a 'normal' life. He would have taken to life in the court without any glitches and continued to have good friends like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. These friendships would have lasted as nothing untoward would have come in the way to test the strength of the bonds. He would have married Ophelia and settled down and eventually taken over the throne. He would have got on well with his father-in-law.

More to the point, his leadership skills would not have been tested under these normal circumstances. Unfortunately for him, palace intrigues came into his life and tested his mettle. And the power of these intrigues is brought out very sharply by Stoppard in his play 'Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead' (1967), where

the two friends are unwittingly drawn into the intrigues and lose their lives.

What the intrigues should have done is bring out the leadership qualities in Hamlet; rather like being tested by fire in a crucible.

CONCLUSION

It will be recollected that Collins said that one does not need to move in sequence from Level 1 to 5 during the tenure of a person's working life, but says that fully developed Level 5 leaders embody all five levels of the pyramid. If that is the case, does Hamlet embody all the five levels of the hierarchy or even a few of the five levels? But firstly, is he a Level 5 leader?

From the lines analyzed in the earlier section, it is clear that he does not have the professional will required to achieve results. He perhaps has the personal humility required of a Level 5 leader, but unfortunately circumstances do not give him a chance to show this side of his character.

It should also be kept in mind that he is a very young person and it would also be asking too much for him to show his leadership qualities so soon in life. Is he then a Level 4, that is, an 'Effective Leader'? According to Collins, this type of leader 'catalyzes commitment to and vigorous pursuit of a clear and compelling vision, stimulating higher performance standards.' Clearly this does not describe Hamlet even though in the first analysis he shows the basic potentials of a Level 4 leader.

If we go back to Collin's hierarchy, a Level 3 leader is a competent manager, a person who organizes people and resources toward the effective and efficient pursuit of predetermined objectives. And a Level 2 leader is a contributing team member, a person who contributes individual capabilities to the achievement of group objectives and works effectively with others in a group setting. From the five analyses made in this study, Hamlet does not fall into any of these categories either.

Perhaps the best that can be said is that he has the potential in him to be a Level 5 leader. But here again, circumstances do not give him a chance to bring these potentials to fruition. In some of the comments made by him, Hamlet reveals, as indicated earlier in this study, that he has the inherent understanding of what it must take to be a focused individual – and a leader of men. True, this is expressed negatively as can be seen in the last two analyses, but the fundamental fact remains that he was aware of his shortcomings and equally aware of a leader's required strengths. Time however, was not on his side in terms of his youth; the words 'The time is out of joint' as revealed by this study, applies equally to Hamlet as an individual and not only to Denmark as a whole.

Is then Hamlet to be placed in Level 1? In Collin's hierarchy, a Level 1 is a Highly Capable Individual – who makes productive contributions through talent, knowledge, skills, and good work. If we put aside our sympathies for Hamlet, and look at the matter objectively, this is where he fits in naturally. He *gives* the impression of being a Level 5 leader because of his lack of aggressiveness; but this is only an illusion. And again, because we would like him to be one and are perhaps transferring our wishes onto the character. Unfortunately, there is no accompanying strong resolve which should be a part of the character of a Level 5 leader.

The stanzas of Carroll quoted in the beginning is meant to show the different types of leaders one comes across in companies. A Level 5 leader is one of these types but is very rare to find; it is the employees' good luck to be able to work under such a person.

Hamlet in the final analysis is a Level 1 leader who unfortunately did not have the supporting circumstances in the court to pull him to a Level 5. It is to his credit that he accomplished what he did given the external and internal obstacles he had to face.

But then, when all is said and done, is there a Level 5 leader in the play? The eponymous title unconsciously focuses the reader's/ viewer's attention on Hamlet the Prince and he is consequently ones unconscious choice as a leader of any type. But in fact, Hamlet has unconsciously identified the person who deserves the label of a Level 5 leader. As we have discussed earlier, Hamlet is aware of what makes a good leader and so he is qualified to make this identification.

Hamlet himself defines a good leader in this passage in Hamlet (Act III Sc. IV):

*Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperions' curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every God did seem to set his seal
To give the world assurance of a man.*

He emphasizes here that the individual must accomplish the virtues of refinement, versatility, and veneration. In *Hamlet*, one character is unique in the way he is represented – Fortinbras. He is a character that has not evolved out of the larger characterization of Claudius and Hamlet in the play, very little is known about him. He is not described elaborately in the play, but his actions are all justified by his motives, and he is a man of action, and most of all a man of integrity, a very essential characteristic of a level 5 leader. We only know that Fortinbras is on a mission to avenge his father's murder

and reclaim what is rightfully his throne. He gathers an army, marches into Denmark and claims his right to be the king, without any hesitation, and with an abundance of refinement. Fortinbras is almost a level 5 leader, and the best character out of the possible choices, importantly Hamlet here, because throughout his journey to avenge his father's death, not once, does he involve other people, or contemplate, or be skeptical of what he is doing. He is well respected and a man of honor. What solidifies Fortinbras' position of authority figure and man of leadership is in the last scene of Hamlet, as he takes his seat as King, he notices the character Hamlet on the floor dead. What is expected is that he would make a mockery of Hamlet, being the son of the man who murdered his father and forever ruined his life, but instead, he does what is most noble in the heart, and states:

"Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage, for he was likely, had he been put on, to have proved most royal; and for his passage, the soldier music and right of war, Speak loudly for him." (Act V Sc. II).

In his closing statement, Fortinbras shows his poise and resourcefulness by honoring Hamlet, and made himself honorable. From whatever little we know of Fortinbras he can be considered a true leader, and the best representation, according to Hamlet's definition.

Going back to our prime argument of whether Hamlet can be considered as a great leader from the play if he had survived to ascend to the throne. Based on his actions throughout the play, it is clear that Hamlet would be a superior leader.

One major point that illustrates why Hamlet would have been a good leader is that he was loved by the common people of Denmark. In Act III, Scene I, Claudius wishes to send Hamlet away to England so that he is out of the way. However, the king acknowledges that there must be a clear reason for Hamlet's departure so that the people do not question it. Claudius decides to send Hamlet away under the pretence of going to collect tribute that England owes Denmark. More evidence can be found in one of Claudius' lines in the latter portion of the play:

*The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them. (4.7.16-24)*

This passage shows that Claudius is aware that the

general public in the kingdom is very fond of Hamlet, and that they will side with Hamlet over the king. Another sign that Hamlet is loved is easily seen in Ophelia when Hamlet is sent away. When Hamlet is gone, Ophelia goes mad, proving that she really loved Hamlet. If she had not loved Hamlet, she would most likely have not gone mad when he was sent away. These examples of the effect Hamlet had on characters' actions prove that he was beloved by many people.

Another reason that Hamlet would be a good leader is that he fights for what he believes in. When Hamlet learns of his father's murder he immediately swears to avenge his death. Hamlet says, "Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift / As meditation or the thoughts of love, / May sweep to my revenge" (1.5.29-31). Hamlet's quest to avenge his father's death drives the play. He wants to set everything right in the kingdom. Hamlet also shows that he wishes to set everything right when he tries to restore a rightful ruler to the Danish throne. He knows that his uncle is not the true king, and when Hamlet is mortally wounded he tells Horatio that Fortinbras should assume the kingship. Hamlet says "I do prophesy the election lights / On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice" (5.2.57-58). This shows that Hamlet is not motivated by selfish means and truly wishes the best for his country, which is a quality of good leadership.

A good quality in a leader is to seek a second opinion before taking action. Hamlet clearly shows that he would not have acted rashly were he Denmark's leader. Even his father shows that Hamlet never acts without thinking when he tells Hamlet not to think about what he is to do. When Hamlet finds his uncle praying, he refuses to kill him on the spot because he wishes to have his uncle die in the same manner as he killed his father. If Hamlet rushed into action without considering what he should do, he would have killed Claudius then, but since Hamlet restrained himself, it proves that he thinks logically and does not rush into situations. The biggest proof that Hamlet seeks conferment of his actions comes in the form of the play within the play. Hamlet has the players act out his father's death and he and Horatio watch the king's reaction to see if he is really guilty.

*I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming (3.2.80-88)*

In these lines, Hamlet asks Horatio to watch his uncle with him. This way, if his uncle is disturbed by the perfor-

mance, then Hamlet will know for sure that Claudius is guilty. If his uncle is unmoved, then it proves that the ghost was really an evil spirit intent on destroying Hamlet. This type of forethought proves that Hamlet carefully considers his actions. This careful consideration is an important part of being a good leader.

In closing, there are many points that show that Hamlet would be a superior leader. Hamlet was loved by the people of the kingdom of Denmark. If he were merely sent away by Claudius, the people would have been moved to a possible revolt. Hamlet always fights to restore order and avenge his father throughout the play, and he always fights for what he believes is right. Also, Hamlet never rushes into a situation without carefully considering it. These qualities are essential to good leadership. Hamlet possesses the skills to be a great Danish leader.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe in his 'Wilhelm Meister Apprenticeship' written in 1796 states: "Shakespeare sought to depict a great deed laid upon a soul unequal to performance of it... A beautiful, pure, noble and most moral nature, without the strength of nerve which forms a hero, sinks beneath a burden which it can neither bear nor throw off; every duty is holy to him – this is too hard. The impossible is required of him. How he winds, turns, agonizes, advances, and recoils, ever reminded, ever reminding himself, and at last almost loses his purpose from his thoughts, without ever again recovering his peace of mind." Goethe's noble but weak-willed hero has had long critical and theatrical popularity. It is to be regretted that his other insight into the play has been less observed: "the hero has no plan... but the piece is full of plan...as it is fate that draws the plan...the work is tragic in its highest sense, and admits of no other than a tragic end."

Hamlet had once been a model human being, a being disillusioned in life by the double blows of his father's death and mother's re-marriage, his over sensitivity towards these aspects of his existence has warped his nature into an equally extreme insensitivity to all those whom he suspects of any kind of impurity. His final actions are his most life-affirming, his restraining of Horatio from committing suicide and his continuing concern for the welfare of Denmark. The tragedy of his death is that it comes at the moment when "he was likely, had he been put on, to have proved most royal." Destroyed and redeemed by the same brilliance of perception, the story of his growth as an individual is from the depths of a self-destructive negation of life to a new affirmation of the providential sanctity of life. At the end, this redeems him.

Shakespeare is justly famous for the words he sets upon the lips of dying men. Hamlet says:

*If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity awhile, And in this harsh
world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story (3.2)*

According to Wilson (1950) he never betters these, which tells us Hamlet's story as Horatio cannot tell it, and tells us too that, duty now performed, he no longer fears what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil.

When we look at all the above elements and correlate each aspect to the facet of Level 5 leadership, we can summarize that he could have been a leader worthy of that level if the circumstances were different. Jim Collins has mentioned that many a leader whom he found to have the characteristics of Level 5 leaders are the ones whose circumstances made them that. Hence defining or training an individual to be one may be a difficult proposition. Hamlet had the potential but things were different. Many of our leaders have the potential but life may have treated them differently. Had life delivered a much softer fate but not an oft-walked path then things would have been much different.

Stultum est timere quod vitare non potes. - It is stupid to be afraid of that which you cannot avoid.

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