

## 15.317

### Background for Leadership Debates, Session 2

As we discussed the first day of class, historically, there have been two schools of thought on leadership. On Friday, we further explore these two views.

1. **Characteristic or Trait-Based Leadership** – This theory argues that there are certain personal characteristics or traits that leaders share in common, e.g., ambition & energy, desire to lead, self-confidence, honesty & integrity, intelligence, ethical values, etc. Proponents believe that they are able to identify certain people in advance as to their leadership abilities based on these traits. Some leaders are born with these characteristics; others develop them over their lifetime.
2. **Situational Leadership** – This theory argues that the situation within which the leadership takes place is as pivotal as the individual's characteristics. It assumes that leaders can and should change their leadership style to fit the personality of the followers, the task, their power, etc. The situation also provides a platform for leadership – it is up to the individual to grasp that opportunity and display leadership.

In class we will debate these two points of views through an in-depth look at two leaders. Everyone should read the background material on both leaders – Bono and Dr. Rene Favaloro.

In class we will watch a short video of each leader prior to each debate. I will then ask two students to take each side of the debate for each leader. Your debating position is determined by where you sit in the classroom:

***Right side (as you walk into classroom):***

Debate 1: Bono was an effective leader based on his personal traits or characteristics

Debate 2: Dr. Favaloro was an effective leader based on his ability to adapt to or take advantage of the circumstances he faced

***Left side (as you walk into classroom):***

Debate 1: Bono was an effective leader based on his ability to adapt to or take advantage of the circumstances he faced

Debate 2: Dr. Favaloro was an effective leader based on his personal traits or characteristics

There will be two debates (one for each leader), each 20 minutes in length, with two-person debate teams for each side of the argument for each leader. The format will be:

- One student will have three minutes to present the traits side of the argument, followed by another student presenting the situation side of the argument
- The second member of the debate teams will be given two minutes follow up for their side of the debate
- There will be seven minutes of Q&A by class
- The class will then vote on which team presented the most compelling argument (three minutes)

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