

**IDENTIFY AND CATEGORIZE THE LEADERSHIP
QUALITIES THAT ENHANCE EMPLOYEE
PERFORMANCE OF IT PROJECTS
IN SRI LANKAN IT SECTOR**

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Degree of Master of Business Administration in Information Technology

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University of Moratuwa

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own work and this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any other University or institute of higher learning and to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where the acknowledgement is made in the text.

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Date

The above candidate has carried out research for the Master's thesis under my supervision.

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Dr. Chandana Gamage

Date

ABSTRACT

In any organizational context, leaders have the ability to make a profound effect on the work of an individual, a team, a departmental or the overall organization. Hence, they need to be adaptive, rationale, and be able to apply various leadership strategies depending on the situation for achieving the best results from the subordinates as stated by Goleman. This line of thinking further supports the concept of Horner that states “leaders were born not made”. An integrated definition to leadership has been mentioned by Winston and Patterson, according to which a leader is a person who inspire and influence the different kinds of followers towards the achievement of one generic vision and mission while continuously motivating them emotionally as well as physically. Leadership has evolved through many eras and accordingly it demonstrates several types of leadership qualities which have been shaped by the organizational and societal contexts in those eras. Some of the qualities of such leadership include delegating, supporting, coaching, directing, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism etc.

As previous research literature proves that these leadership qualities can influence the performance of individuals or groups, this study focuses on identifying the leadership qualities that will enhance employees’ performances in Sri Lankan IT sector. After reviewing several previous research work, six main leadership qualities were selected for this study by incorporating few leadership skills into certain smaller groups, which include personalities and behaviors, interaction/ interpersonal skills/ team player, communication/ feedback, situations/ nature of task, experience/ expertise/ competency and organization/ project culture. Accordingly, the independent variable of the study was the leadership qualities, which has again been derived from sub variables and the dependent variable was the performance of employees and projects. The data were gathered through survey questionnaires and through personal interviews, by creating a sample of IT professionals covering many of the projects based IT companies in Sri Lanka.

Key Words: Leadership, Leadership Qualities, Performance, IT Sector, IT Projects

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List of Abbreviations

Acronym	Definition
IT	Information Technology
SLASSCOM	Sri Lanka Association of Software and Service Companies