"Manager," "Leader," or "Manager-Leader"?

Based on an excerpt from the "Role of the IBM Manager" paper, 1998,
by Bob Willard during his Leadership Development role in IBM Canada.

Our use of terminology is often inconsistent

We often use the terms "Leader" and "Manager" quite interchangeably. "Manager" is more likely to appear on a business card, though - that is, "Manager" is used as part of job titles more often than "Leader" and implies accountability for both people and business processes. Managers get business results.

The "Leader" label is often applied to famous leaders like Kennedy, Martin Luther King or Gandhi, and to business leaders like Jack Welch at GE or Lou Gerstner at IBM. In organizational hierarchies, the people at the "very top" are often referred to as "leaders." In team-based organizations, "leaders" and "leadership" can be applied to anyone.

What the literature says about leading and managing

Terminology in the area of leadership and management can be a semantic mine field. Thousands of articles have been written about managers, leaders, and executives. There has been an explosion of books, videos, and speeches about leadership, especially in the last 15 years. Authors include Chris Argryis, James Belasco, Warren Bennis, Ken Blanchard, Peter Block, Jim Clemmer, Daryl Conner, Stephen Covey, Stan Davis, Edwards Deming, Max DePree, Peter Drucker, Charles Handy, Elliott Jacques, Rosabeth Kanter, John Kotter, Jim Kouzes & Barry Posner, Henry Mintzberg, Gareth Morgan, Tom Peters, Steve Rayner, Peter Senge, Marti Smye, Don Tapscott, Quinn Mills, Marvin Weisbord ... and many others.

Although most authors are less than crisp in defining their terminology, the literature is helpful. Drawing from the essence of what the experts say, here are some overall distinctions between leading and managing:

- Leading is *setting the direction*; managing is getting us there.

- Leading focuses on the *long-term horizon*; managing focuses on short-term results.

- Lead *people*; manage tasks, processes and systems.

- Leading is *coaching, empowering, facilitating, serving*; managing is planning, controlling, directing.

- Leading is doing the *right things*; managing is doing things right.

- Lead *change, between paradigms*; manage the status quo, within paradigms.

- Lead *situationally* with *earned power*; manage from positional power.

- Leading supports the *untidiness of innovation*; managing craves order.

- Leading *inspires faith* in new directions; managing demands proof.

- Leading *relies on trust and influence*; managing relies on power and control.

Both-and, not either-or

Too easily, we infer value judgments to these characteristics. As Warren Bennis wisely points out, we do not need leading or managing - we need *both*.

This desired blend of leading and managing is further reinforced by a Joel Barker quote at the end of his video, "The Power of Vision":

"Vision without action is only a dream;
Action without vision is just passing the time;
Vision with action can change the world."

HI	Plan, Control, Direct "Run," Administer	**COMPLETE MANAGER-LEADER**
M A N A G E		
	(Abdicate)	Envision, Influence, Challenge, Engage, Encourage, Model
LO		

LO **L E A D** HI

The reality is that "complete managers" are required to lead and "complete leaders" are required to manage, as is acknowledged in the Bennis model. For that reason, we use the compound term of *manager-leaders* in this paper to refer to the people who are accountable for managing business processes and people processes to deliver business results. This duality is supported by hundreds of books and articles about outstanding leadership and management - outstanding leaders are also outstanding managers, and vice versa.

In typical organizations, "manager-leader" could apply to people who are often called "managers," "team leaders," "first-line managers," "second-line managers," "senior leaders," or "executives."
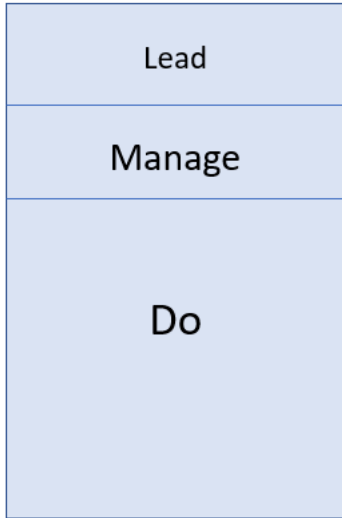
Leadership = Leading + Managing + Doing

Building on the manager-leader term for Warren Bennis' "Complete Leader" label in the top right-hand quadrant, above, "Leadership" includes leading, managing, and doing. Our working definition of "Leadership" is:
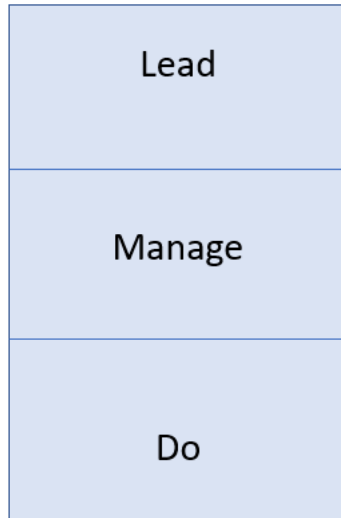
Leadership is the ability to effectively set/reset direction and model interpersonal behaviors (Leading), to align/manage business and people processes to accomplish desired business results (Managing), and to contribute personally to desired business results (Doing).

That is, manager-leaders also appropriately pitch in and use their vocational expertise - they *do*. So do executives. It is important to acknowledge that the job of any professional, first-line manager, team leader, or executive is a combination of varying degrees of leading, managing, and doing. The degree to which each of our jobs reflects these three roles varies by the situation and job level, as is shown in sample mixes in the figure below.

	Professional	Manager	Executive
Lead	Lead	Lead	Lead
Manage	Manage	Manage	Manage
Do	Do	Do	Do