

Inclusive Leadership and Twenty–First Century Management Skills of Executives Affecting Success in Logistics Service Providers

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Abstract

The purposes of this research were to (1) study the level of executives' inclusive leadership in logistics service providers; (2) study the relationship and influence of executives' inclusive leadership on success in logistics service providers; (3) study the level of management skills of executives in logistics service providers; and (4) study the relationship and influence of the management skills of executives on the success of logistics service providers. The sample consists of the company's top executives, such as the owner, executive chairman, or managers, for 340 people. The variables used in the study consist of three latent variables: the latent variable for business success, the leadership of executives, and 21st century management skills. Data were collected using both paper-based and online questionnaires. Statistics used to analyze the data were percentage, mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution, one-sample t-test, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and path analysis using structural equation model techniques. The results showed executives of logistics service providers had a high level of inclusive leadership. Inclusive leadership did not have a positive correlation with success for logistics service providers. Inclusive leadership had an indirect effect on the success of logistics service providers. Executives of logistics service providers had high levels of 21st-century management skills. Management skills of executives in the 21st century had a positive correlation with the success of logistics service providers, and management skills had a direct effect on the success of logistics service providers.

Keywords: Inclusive Leadership; 21st Century Management Skills; Success in Logistics Service Providers

Introduction

The Department of Business Development (2022) has reported that by 2022, Thailand will have 31,846 logistics service providers. Logistics service providers are a business that is very important to the country's economy because they help support trade and service business operations in both the industrial and agricultural sectors. In 2021, despite the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), among the top 10 rising stars in service businesses, logistics service providers were the eighth rising star (Center for Economic and Business Forecasting, 2020).

Although the logistics service provider is a rising star business and overgrowing, from a comparative study of important information on Thai logistics business from many sources, whether academic reports, books, or the brainstorming of logistics entrepreneurs, it was found that fundamental problems in Thailand's logistics business consisted of four problems: 1) efficiency of transportation and logistics systems; 2) trade facilities; 3) logistics entrepreneurs; and 4) human resources and personnel in the logistics industry (Freight Max Advertising, 2022). The researcher was interested in problems 3 and 4, especially logistics entrepreneurs and human resources in logistics service providers. In addition, inclusive leadership is the appropriate leadership trait for the twenty-first century, as are management skills, because it is the integration of old and new management skills and therefore leads to business success (Singmatr, Meemana, & Kaewin, 2017). Therefore, the researcher was interested in studying inclusive leadership and management skills in the twenty-first century and how they affect business success. It will benefit from developing executives' leadership and management skills to increase their competitiveness and produce good results, as well as steady growth and sustainability.

Research Objectives

1. To study the level of inclusive leadership of executives and the level of management skills of executives in logistics service providers.
2. To study the relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success for logistics service providers.
3. To study the effect of inclusive leadership and management skills in the twenty-first century success on the logistics service providers.

Scope of the study

Population and Sample: The population for study was senior executives of logistics service providers, such as owners, CEOs, or managers of companies that were registered as members of the Department of International Trade Promotion, Ministry of Commerce. The total number of companies was 170 (Department of International Trade Promotion, 2022). Researchers used cluster sampling techniques to collect samples. The sample group for research was 340.

Content of the study: This research aimed to study the relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success for logistics service providers. Independent variables comprised executives' leadership and management skills in the twenty-first century. The dependent variable was a success for logistics service providers (balanced scorecard).

Area: The researcher collected data from a sample group: executives of logistics service providers such as owners, CEOs, or managers of companies located in Bangkok and the vicinity (Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, and Samut Prakan).

Time: The research duration was from July 2021 to July 2022 (1 year).

Review of the Related Literature

Concept of Success in Business

Success in business means organization regularly evaluates and measures performance to know status of business and can improve some mistakes appropriately. Executives are able to evaluate six dimensions and use appropriately tools as follows (Rigby, 2015); (1) Leadership; use tool called “Declaration of Vision and Mission” (2) Strategy; use tools such as “Core Competencies”, “Strategic Planning” and “Balanced Scorecard” (3) Customer; use tools called “Customer Satisfaction Systems” and “Customer Relationship Management” (4) Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; use tools called “Benchmarking” and “Knowledge Management” (5) Workforce; use tools called “Employee Satisfaction” and “Employee Engagement Systems” and (6) Operation; use tools called “Performance Improvement System–PDCA” and “Supply Chain Management”

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a tool called "Declaration of Vision and Mission." (2) Strategy: use tools such as "core competencies," "strategic planning, and "balanced scorecard." (3) Customer: use tools called "Customer Satisfaction Systems" and "Customer Relationship Management." (4) Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; use tools called "Benchmarking" and "Knowledge Management." (5) Workforce: use tools called "Employee Satisfaction" and "Employee Engagement Systems, and (6) Operation: use tools called "Performance Improvement System–PDCA" and "Supply Chain Management." A balanced scorecard was one of the top ten successful organizational management tools in 2017 (Rigby, 2017). A balanced scorecard is used by top managers to help formulate an organization's strategy and measure their performance from a financial perspective, a customer perspective, an internal business process perspective, and a learning and growth perspective (Kopecka, 2015).

Concept of Inclusive Leadership

Bourke and Titus (2019) defined inclusive leadership as leadership that ensures that all team members feel they are treated with respect and fairness. In addition, they feel valued and part of the team, as well as confident and motivated. Inclusive leaders help followers achieve success, contribute to cooperation, and encourage retention (Zhou, 2018).

The most well-known and recognized research as a foundation for understanding inclusive leadership was "The Six Signature Traits of Inclusive Leadership: Thriving in a Diverse New World" by Deloitte University. It was a study of future leadership styles. Deloitte University has proposed three inclusive leadership practices and six essential characteristics of inclusive leadership. Inclusive leadership practices consist of (1) treating individuals or groups fairly according to individual characteristic; (2) understand individual characteristics, value others, and accept them as members of the group; and (3) take advantage of ideas in diverse groups. Always listen to the opinions of the group for useful ideas that will help you make better decisions. Essential characteristics of inclusive leadership consist of commitment, courage, cognizance of bias, curiosity, cultural intelligence, and collaboration (Dillion & Bourke, 2016).

Concept of Management Skills in the Twenty-First century

In 2011, Drucker said executives must have six managerial skills: decision-making skills, making successful people's decisions skills, managerial communication skills, control and measurement skills, budgeting and planning skills, and using modern tools and information technology skills (Rao, 2021). In addition, in 2010, McNamara proposed six management skills for the twenty-first century: problem-solving skills, planning skills, effective delegation skills, internal

communication skills, meeting management skills, and managing yourself skills (Management Library, 2022).

Based on the analysis and synthesis of concepts of management skills in the twenty-first century by academicians, the researcher presented the concept of management skills in the twenty-first century by dividing management skills into three main groups: technical skills, human skills, and thinking and decision-making skills. All executives must use technical skills, depending on the level of management. Technical skills consist of three sub-skills that executives in the twenty-first century should have: coaching skills, delegation skills, and digital skills.

Managers at all levels need human skills. It is essential to use these skills to communicate with other people smoothly. Human skills consist of three sub-skills: managing team skills, inspiring and motivating others, and communication skills. Thinking and decision-making skills require all executives to think concretely and thoroughly understand the overall work and internal environment. Thinking and decision-making skills consist of three sub-skills: Systematic thinking skills, strategic thinking skills, and problem-solving and decision-making skills (Sharma, 2022).

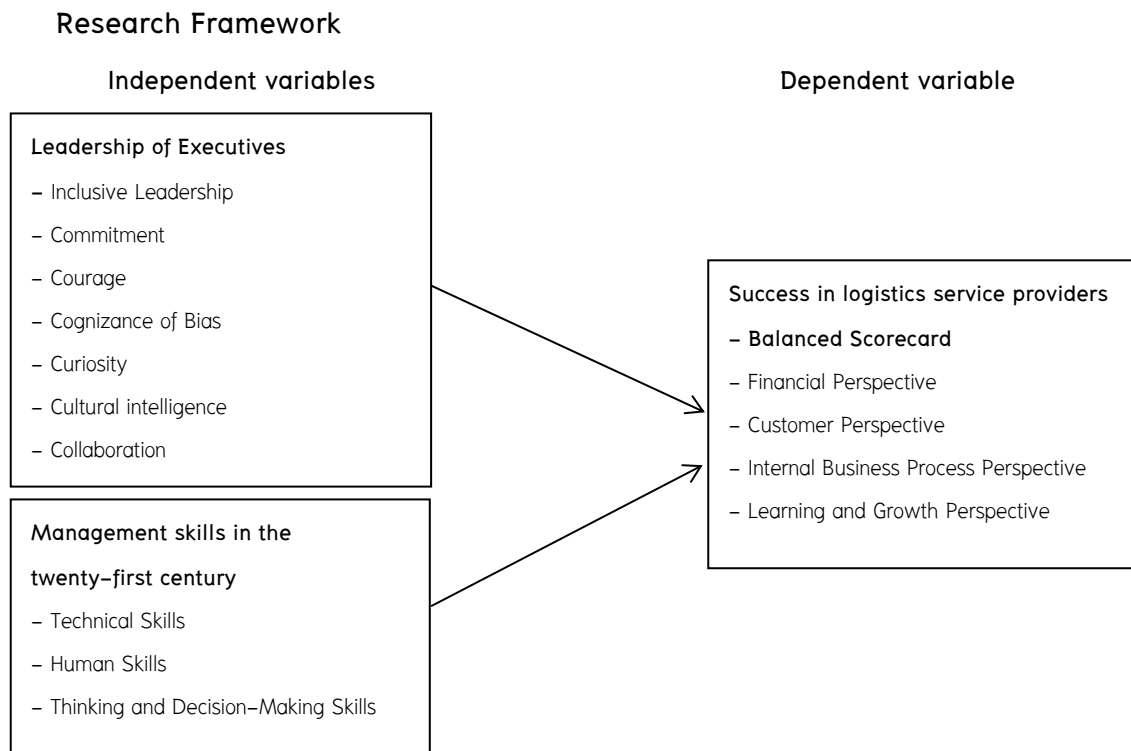


Figure 1. Research Framework

Research Methodology

The population for study was senior executives of logistics service providers, such as owners, CEOs, or managers of companies that were registered as members of the Department of International Trade Promotion, Ministry of Commerce. The total number of companies was 170 (Department of International Trade Promotion, 2022). Executives in logistics service providers were classified into 4 categories as follows: 1) freight forwarding service providers 2) warehouse service providers 3) international freight forwarding agent service providers, and 4) integrated logistics service providers (Department of Trade Negotiations, 2022).

The researcher used cluster sampling techniques to collect samples by following these steps:

Step 1 Divided logistics service providers into two groups: those located in Bangkok and its vicinity (Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, and Samut Prakan) and those located in the provincial areas.

Step 2: Select some groups by drawing lots. We got groups located in Bangkok and its vicinity (Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, and Samut Prakan) with a total of 170 companies.

Step 3 Collect data from a sample group of executives of logistics service providers, such as owners, CEOs, or managers of companies. Each company collected two people. Therefore, the sample group for research was 340.

The researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire is divided into four parts: Part 1: Personal Factors Questionnaire; Part 2: Success in Business Assessment; Part 3: Inclusive Leadership Assessment; and Part 4: Management Skills in the twenty-first Century Assessment.

Result of Path Analysis of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business

A path analysis of the relationship between inclusive leadership and management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business was analyzed by structural equation modeling (SEM), and the model's consistency was checked with the empirical data along with analyzing the direct effect, indirect effect, and total effect of inclusive leadership and management skills in the twenty-first century on success in business. The parameters were estimated using maximum likelihood (ML) with the following analytical results:

Step 1 Setting of model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business

Researcher set model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business shown in figure 2

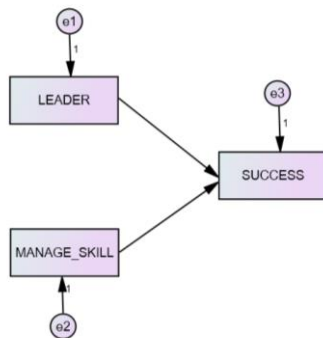
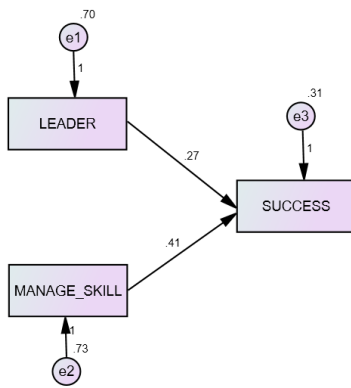


Figure 2 Model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business.

Step 2 Harmony assessment of model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business with empirical data

For a harmonious assessment of the model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business with empirical data, the researcher used criteria for consideration, which were the Chi-square statistic, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index: AGIF) Comparative Fit Index (CFI) Relative Chi-square: Chi-square /DF) Root mean square residual Standardized (RMR) and Root Mean Square Error of Approximated: RMSEA. The analysis results are shown as follows:



Chi-square=299.227, df=1, P-value=.000

Figure 3 Analysis of results of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business.

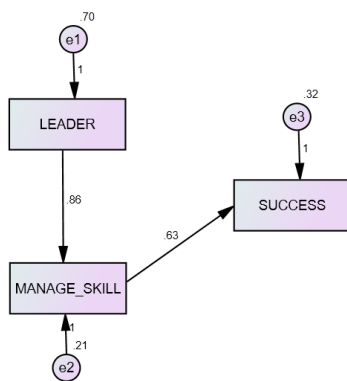
Table 1 shown statistic of harmony assessment of model with empirical data.

Index	Criteria	Statistics derived from the analysis
CIMN/df	< 3	299.227
GFI	≥ 0.9	0.113
AGFI	≥ 0.9	-0.941
CFI	≥ 0.9	0.350
RMR	< 0.05	0.279
RMSEA	< 0.05	1.122

From figure 3 and table 1, it was found that $\chi^2 = 299.227$ with degrees of freedom equal to 1 and a p-value = 0.000, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the model is not in harmony with empirical data. In addition, CMIN/DF = 299.227, which is more than 3, GFI index = 0.113, AGFI index = -0.941, the CFI index = 0.350, which is less than 0.9, including RMR = 0.279 and RMSEA = 1.122, which is more than 0.05, indicating that the model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business was inconsistent with empirical data.

Step 3 Modifying of model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business with empirical data

Because of the model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business was inconsistent with empirical data. Researcher therefore modified the model to assume that inclusive leadership has effect on success in business through mediator variable, which was management skills in the twenty-first century. The revised model is shown as follows.



Chi-square=10.535, df=1, P-value=.001

Figure 4 Analysis of results of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century and success in business (modifying of model).

Table 2 shown statistic of harmony assessment of model with empirical data.

Index	Criteria	Statistics derived from the analysis
CIMN/df	< 3	10.535
GFI	≥ 0.9	0.972
AGFI	≥ 0.9	0.831
CFI	≥ 0.9	0.979
RMR	< 0.05	0.022
RMSEA	< 0.05	0.201

From figure 4 and table 2, it was found that model has a value of $\chi^2 = 10.535$ with degrees of freedom equal to 1 and a p-value of 0.001, with a GFI index of 0.972, a CFI index of 0.979, which is greater than 0.9, and a RMR of 0.022, which is less than 0.05, indicating that the model

of the relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business is consistent with empirical data.

Step 4 Parameter checking

Table 3 shown result of Regression Weight after modifying of model

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
MANAGE_SKILL	<---	LEADER	.864	.035	24.509	*
SUCCESS	<---	MANAGE_SKILL	.635	.043	14.608	*

* p-value<0.05

Table 3 shows that from standardized regression coefficients, inclusive leadership has an effect on management skills in the twenty-first century at a level of significance of 0.05, and management skills in the twenty-first century have an effect on success in business at a level of significance of 0.05

Step 5 Comparison of effect level

From the model of relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business, which was already modified, use this model to examine direct effect, indirect effect, and total effect. The analysis is shown in Table 4.

Table 4 shown analysis of results of direct effect, indirect effect and total effect between variables

Dependent Variables	Effect	Predictor Variables	
		Inclusive Leadership	Management Skills in the 21 st Century
Management Skills in the 21 st Century	Direct effect	0.864*	0.000
	Indirect effect	0.000	0.000
	Total effect	0.864	0.000
Success in Business	Direct effect	0.000	0.635*
	Indirect effect	0.548*	0.000
	Total effect	0.548	0.635

* p-value<0.05

From Table 4, it was an analysis of the results of the relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business. The researcher

therefore proposed the effect of predictor variables divided into 3 parts: Direct effect (DE), Indirect effect (IE), and Total effect (TE), as follows:

1. Variables that had a direct effect on management skills in the twenty-first century.

1.1 Inclusive Leadership

The results of the research found that inclusive leadership had a direct effect on management skills in the twenty-first century with an effect value of 0.864 at the level of significance of 0.05 without an indirect effect on management skills in the twenty-first century, which made the total effect 0.864.

2. Variables that had a direct effect on success in business.

2.1 Management skills in twenty-first century

The results of the research found that management skills in the twenty-first century had a direct effect on success in business with an effect value of 0.635 at the level of significance of 0.05 without an indirect effect on success in business, which made the total effect 0.635.

3. Variables that had an indirect effect on success in business

3.1 Inclusive leadership

The results of the research found that inclusive leadership had an indirect effect on success in business with an effect value of 0.548 at the level of significance of 0.05 without a direct effect on success in business, which made the total effect 0.548.

From the analysis of the relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business according to research assumptions, it can be summarized as follows:

Assumption 1: Executives in logistics service providers had a high level of inclusive leadership.

The results of assumption testing revealed that executives in logistics service providers had a high level of inclusive leadership, which was consistent with the assumption.

Assumption 2: Inclusive leadership has a positive correlation with success for logistics service providers.

The results of assumption testing revealed that inclusive leadership had no positive correlation with success for logistics service providers, which was inconsistent with the assumption.

Assumption 3: Inclusive leadership has an effect on success for logistics service providers.

The results of assumption testing revealed that inclusive leadership had no direct effect on success in logistics service providers, but inclusive leadership had an indirect effect on success in logistics service providers, which was consistent with the assumption.

Assumption 4 Executives in logistics service providers had high levels of management skills in the twenty-first century.

The results of assumption testing revealed that executives in logistics service providers had a high level of management skills in the twenty-first century, which was consistent with the assumption.

Assumption 5: Management skills of executives have a positive correlation with success in logistics service providers.

The results of assumption testing revealed that the management skills of executives in the twenty-first century had a positive correlation to success in logistics service providers, which was consistent with the assumption.

Assumption 6: The management skills of executives had an effect on the success of logistics service providers.

The results of assumption testing revealed that management skills of executives had direct effect on success in logistics service providers, which was consistent with the assumption.

Conclusion

1. Results of the basic data analysis of the sample

Results of the basic data analysis of the sample of executives of logistics service providers, including owners, CEOs, or managers of the company There were 238 samples, consisting of 128 males (53.8%) and 110 females (46.2%), most of them aged 41–50 years old with a master's degree. Most current positions were those of managing directors, and most of them had more than 10 years of work experience.

2. Results of the analysis of the relationship between inclusive leadership, management skills in the twenty-first century, and success in business

The results of the data analysis of three latent variables and eight observed variables revealed that in the overview of success in business, executives' opinions were moderate. When considering each aspect, it was found that opinions were at a moderate level in all 4 aspects, sorted from the average to the least, namely learning and growth, internal processes, customers, and

finances. When considering observed variables, it was found that, in terms of finance, executives had an opinion that their business had increased revenue from products or services.

In terms of customers, executives had the opinion that customers were satisfied with their products and services. In terms of internal processes, executives were of the opinion that their businesses could deliver products and services on time. In terms of learning and growth, executives believed that they strived to retain quality employees by associating performance with rewards or incentives.

In the overview of inclusive leadership, executives' opinions were at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that opinions were at a high level in all six aspects, sorted from the average to the least, namely cognizance of bias, collaboration, curiosity, cultural intelligence, commitment, and courage. When considering the observed variables as a whole, it was found that executives had an opinion about treating subordinates with justice and always honoring them.

In the overview of management skills in the twenty-first century, executives' opinions were at a high level. When considering each aspect, it was found that opinions were at a high level in all three aspects. Human skills had the highest average, followed by thinking and decision-making skills and technical skills, which had the same average. When considering observed variables as a whole, it was found that executives had an opinion about the importance of teaching methods, processes, and techniques to employees in order to develop good skills.

Discussion

The researcher discussed the results according to research assumptions 1, 2, and 4 as follows:

From assumption 1, the results of assumption testing revealed that executives in logistics service providers had a high level of inclusive leadership, which was consistent with the assumption. Shambaugh (2017) said inclusive leadership resulted in increased operations. When employees feel that leaders focus on their work, they will be more energetic and creative in their work. In addition, Muchtar et al. (2021) found that executives should be open to the diverse or biased opinions of others and be ready for discussion, debate, and the exchange of ideas within the team. Executives intended to share information, news, and knowledge equally without discrimination.

From assumption 2, the results of assumption testing revealed that inclusive leadership had no positive correlation with success for logistics service providers, which was inconsistent with the assumption. Inclusive leadership had no direct effect on success in business because it had an effect on success in logistics service providers through other mediator variables, as seen from a study by Daya (2014, as cited in Kuknor & Bhattacharya, 2019), which concluded that inclusive leadership had an effect on success in business through organizational climate, organizational communication, and transparency in human resource operations.

From assumption 4, the results of assumption testing revealed that executives in logistics service providers had a high level of management skills in the twenty-first century, which was consistent with the assumption. According to the study by Moore and Rudd (2005), human skills, technical skills, and thinking and decision-making skills were very important for running a successful business. Executives, middle managers, and first-line managers in large, medium, and small businesses valued and accepted technical skills as one of the most important skills (Moore & Rudd, 2004). Academicians accepted that thinking and decision-making skills were the most important skills for CEOs in all types of organizations (Hicks & Gullet, 1975; Katz, 1955, as cited in Moore & Rudd, 2005).

Recommendation

In the next study, other variables such as organizational culture, organizational climate, followship, and followers' learning may be added in order to fully enhance understanding of operational guidelines aiming for success in business. In addition, observed variables, such as inclusive leadership, should be studied thoroughly to extend the study of this variable to latent variables. Also, have observed variables as sub-types of leadership that are specific to the organizational context in order to be able to analyze relationships and effects in detail and in a consistent manner with current business situations. Finally, this research was quantitative, and the data was collected using a questionnaire. It had limitations for collecting in-depth data and may lack some important details. Therefore, in the next research, qualitative research may be conducted to discover other variables or factors to make studies more detailed and complete.

New Knowledge

The application of research results contributes concepts of agility, creativity, and networking as follows:

1. "Agility" is the ability of the organization to change quickly and succeed in a rapidly changing environment. Executives need to manage people as their best assets in order for organizations to operate quickly and have competitive advantages by managing through core capabilities. Executives should use thinking and decision-making skills to identify core capabilities, then use human skills, technical skills, and thinking and decision-making skills to build core capabilities that are practical and communicated to people in the organization.

2. "Creativity" is important in dealing with the challenges that organizations must face. Inclusive leadership should create autonomy and delegate difficult and challenging tasks to employees with technical skills. Create teams with diverse ideas for a high level of creativity and give each other the opportunity to help each other, which are human skills. Lastly, executives must think about systems that can support the sharing of various types of information in the organization and solve problems related to thinking and decision-making skills.

3. "Networking" refers to the behavior of creating cooperation both inside and outside the organization to create agility. Executives should use a combination of human skills and technical skills to create networks in both face-to-face networks and social media networks, together with professionalism, which has seven practical guidelines (Bovee & Thill, 2015): (1) work better than others by learning and continuously improving operations; (2) be dependent on others and can be trusted; (3) be able to work as a team; (4) communicate effectively; (5) have social etiquette; (6) make ethical decisions; and (7) be confident and think positively.

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