Transformational Leadership: What's Your Motivation?

by Eileen DesAutels Wiltshire

Many people often use the terms management and leadership interchangeably, but they are really two completely different concepts. Unlike management, leadership is a vocation rather than a position. While management can be assigned or chosen, leadership is something to which someone must be called. A person who takes a leadership position so they may assume a particular status or control within an organization is a manager—not a leader. While management and leadership have many similar characteristics, the motivations of practitioners are very different.

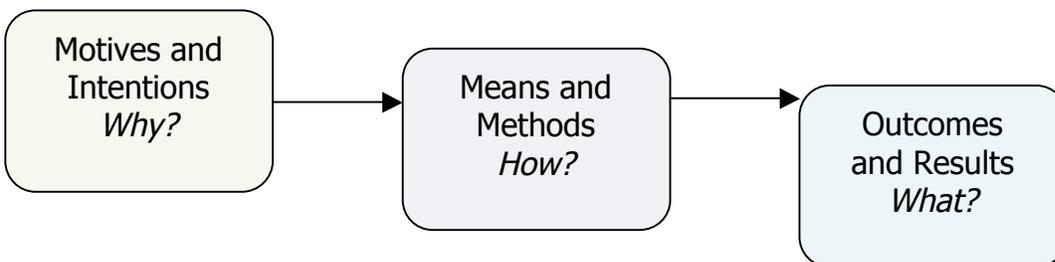| Leadership	Management
• People	• Profit
• Influence	• Power
• Vision and Progress	• Stability
• Relationship	• Status
• Personal Growth	• Production and Performance

According to Daft (2008), the purpose of management is "the attainment of organizational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling organizational resources" (p. 14). Managers seek stability in an organized environment in order to control the organization's bottom line. The motivation for management is power and profit. Leadership is different because it is "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes" (Daft, 2008, p. 4). Leaders provide a vision for the future of the organization and often question the way things are done

because they want to move the organization and its people forward instead of merely maintaining a stable environment. The motivation for leadership is people and progress "by building networks of positive relationships" (Daft, 2008, p. 357).

Dimensions of Leadership

In order to shed light on a leader's philosophy, as well as his or her leadership abilities and practices, all leadership activities should be assessed based three independent dimensions: motives and intentions, means and methods, and outcomes and results (SanFalcon & Spears, 2008). The first dimension answers the question, "Why?" In order to grow and develop their leadership abilities, leaders must be willing and able to understand their own reasons for wanting to lead in the first place. What do they hope to accomplish on both a personal and an organizational level? The second dimension answers the question, "How?" because it focuses on how the leadership is accomplished or expressed in terms of the leader as a person and the structures, processes and procedures that are used by the leader (SanFalcon & Spears, 2008). "In this dimension, the two-fold process of transformation—self and system" is what makes leadership work (pp. 6-7). The third dimension answers the question, "What?" because it evaluates what is actually achieved.

Motives and Intentions *Why?* → Means and Methods *How?* → Outcomes and Results *What?*

A leader's particular leadership philosophy is evident in the way in which each of these questions is answered. The results stem from the methods which are based on the leader's motives; it's a chain reaction. If a leader's motives are negative or self-serving, then his or her methods will be skewed, the end result of which will be disadvantageous for both followers and the organization.

Transformational Leadership

One such leadership philosophy is transformational leadership, which is "concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals" (Northouse, 2010, p. 171). Transformational leadership differs from most other theories of leadership because rather than addressing the exchange or transaction, which occurs between leaders and followers, it focuses on the growth and

development of both. In organic organizations with warm employee environments where there are strong feelings of trust and "members are highly educated and are expected to be creative," the leadership philosophy is more likely to be transformational in nature (Bass, 1985, p. 158). Additionally, when society is facing difficulties and economic or social stresses, and when organizations are challenged with unmet expectations and employee dissatisfaction, "the leadership which emerges is more likely to be transformational" (Bass, p. 154). According to Northouse, this type of leadership "fits the needs of today's work groups, who want to be inspired and empowered to succeed in times of uncertainty" (p. 171).

Motives and Intentions

Change is one of the primary motives behind transformational leadership. According to Daft (2008), transformational leadership is "characterized by the ability to bring about significant change in followers and the organization" (p. 356). These types of leaders intend to stimulate the growth and development of their followers, their organizations, and themselves. When transformational leaders look at their followers, they see the next generation of leaders.

Transformational leadership differs from other kinds of leadership because practitioners demonstrate a real concern for the needs of their followers (Daft, 2008). Winston (2002) asked followers to "consider what it would be like to work for a leader who was so concerned about you that he treated you as a co-worker,... and cared so deeply about you that he made decisions with your best interests in mind" (p. 29-30). That is what transformational leaders do. In addition to ensuring that followers have a positive work environment and are properly compensated for their contributions, transformational leaders strive for followers to feel that they are valued members of the organization. For transformational leaders, followers are more than just employees; they are people.

Transformational leadership focuses on what is in the best interest of the group as a whole, rather than what only serves the individual. There is a team spirit and camaraderie among groups that are guided by transformational leadership. According to Bass (1985), "The transformational leader can move those influenced to transcend their own self-interest for the good of the group, organization, or country" (p. 15). Above and beyond personal performance and achievement, one of the objectives of transformational leadership is for everyone, for the group as a whole, to be successful. According to Senge (2006), while too many people strive for their own personal success at the expense of those around them, in many situations "in order for you to succeed, others must succeed as well" (p. 50).

Working Together as a Team

When I was a youth leadership team member at my church years ago, we were having some issues with divisions among the teenagers in the group. One of my co-leaders, Patty J., suggested we play a game with them called *Win as Much as You Can*. We divided the kids into groups of four. Each member of each group was either on Team A, Team B, Team C or Team D. We then drew a large chart to keep track of each team. Each person was handed a red card and a black card from a standard deck of cards as we explained how the results of each round would be scored.

For each of the four rounds, everyone put down either their red card or their black card. If everyone in the group put down their red card, then each person would lose one point for their team. If all but one person put down a red card, then the people who put down the red cards would gain one point for their team, but the person who put down a black card would lose three points for their team. If two people in each group put down each color, then the people who put down red cards would gain two points for their team, but the people who put down black cards would lose two points for their team. If one person in each group put down a red card, but the other three put down a black card, then the person who put down the red card would gain three points for their team, but the people who put down the black cards would lose one point for their team. Finally, if everyone in each group put down a black card, then each person would gain one point for their team. The one rule was that each person could only speak to members of their own team, either A, B, C or D, but not to other people in their group.

Cards	Red Score	Black Score
4 Red - 0 Black	-1	-1
3 Red - 1 Black	+1	-3
2 Red - 2 Black	+2	-2
1 Red - 3 Black	+3	-1
0 Red - 4 Black	+1	+1

Scores were tallied for each round and then team totals were added up at the end of all four rounds. The catch was that after the initial tallies, all four teams' scores were added together. The point of the activity was that in order to get the most points, everyone had to put down a black card so that

each team would get one point. Anything else, meaning that someone chose to be selfish, would cause the result to be negative. This demonstrated the need to work together and not be selfish; something which transformational leaders strive to achieve within their organizations. This activity worked well in our youth group and could be used by transformational leaders to demonstrate these same principles to their teams.

Means and Methods

During economic downturns, such as the United States has been facing for the past several years, organizational leaders should be transformational in nature in order to "provide new solutions, stimulate rapid response, develop subordinates, and provide reasons for coping… engage in inspirational leadership to mobilize volunteers' time and energy" (Bass, 1985, p. 157). Three methods which are used by transformational leaders are inspiration through charisma, displaying consideration for followers as individuals, and providing intellectual stimulation (Bass). Transformational leadership is more likely to appear in organizations where "the task requires cooperative efforts among subordinates" because the leader needs to "clarify the larger objectives and to develop… the motivation to achieve" (Bass, p. 166).

Transformational leaders encourage followers to think beyond themselves to higher-order considerations through clear articulation of expectations and justification of those expectations and by serving as role models of what they expect from followers and subordinates (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders also accomplish this task is by sharing "power with organizational members to achieve" mutual goals, rather than operating through a hierarchical, top-down leadership model (Daft, p. 242). According to Ballou (2011), "Effective leadership inspires effective work from those whom you lead. The output of the team is in direct proportion to the clarity of their vision about roles, responsibilities, and functions as a team" (para. 4).

Outcomes and Results

According to Daft (2008), "An emphasis on control and rigidity serves to squelch motivation, innovation and morale rather than produce desired results" (p. 9). This means that the transformational leadership characteristic of sharing power rather than clinging to it can be more effective in today's global organizational climate. "The use of intimidation and manipulation [are] obsolete as [a] means of driving the competitive spirit" (Daft, p. 10). For organizational leaders to be successful, they must work with their team members in a cooperative environment instead of using command and control methods.

One desired outcome of transformational leadership is for followers to develop into the next generation of leaders. "Transformational leaders change followers so that they are empowered to change the organization" (Daft, 2008, p. 356). Transformational leaders strive to set the example so followers will want to become like their leaders. By "build[ing] their organizations with many strong leaders who can step forward and continue the company's success long into the future" (Daft, p. 14), leaders encourage the growth and success of their subordinates in order to have a greater impact on the organization as a whole.

"Employees like to have leaders who care about their work and who care about them" (Winston, 2002, p. 18). Subordinates who believe their leader truly cares about them and "has their interests at heart are willing to commit themselves to corporate tasks" (Winston, p. 29). When followers fervently support the organization's goals and objectives, they try harder, strive to please their leaders, and, in the end, are more effectual in their work. "Transformational leadership may result ultimately in a higher level of satisfaction and effectiveness among the led" (Bass, 1985, p. 32). Since most organizations truly desire effective and successful employees for the overall success of the organization, the use of transformational leadership methods provide a win for both the organization and the individual leader and followers.

Conclusion

There are many different leadership theories from which to choose. Each theory has its own supporting philosophies. Scholars and practitioners alike cannot come to a consensus regarding which is the most effective in any given situation. Therefore, leaders must decide for themselves which style they will use in their organization. This choice is made partially based on why they want to lead and what they hope to accomplish through their leadership. As these are personal preferences, leadership is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor and should not be treated as one. Not everyone, not even every manager, has what it takes to be a successful leader. But through successful leadership, leaders, followers and organizations can all thrive.

About the Author

Eileen DesAutels Wiltshire is an experienced administrator and Christian educator who possesses degrees in Biblical studies, youth ministry and Christian education, and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in strategic leadership.

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