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Transformative Leadership in Research Administration

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Who's in the room?

Debra Schaller-Demers, MSOM - NYC

Mark Hochman, PhD - Tasmania



Show of hands:

- Geographical Section
- Type of Institution
- Role
- Number of direct/indirect reports

Leadership Theories



- Leaders are born – **naturalistic theories** – inherent qualities

Think about essential leadership qualities – we will come back to this

- **Functional leadership** – it's what they do, i.e., leadership can be learned
- **Situational leadership** – people can be leaders in specific situations but not in a different environments
- **Transactional vs. transformational leadership** – the relationship between the leader and the followers

Transactional vs. Transformational

Transactional leadership emphasizes organization, performance evaluation and rewards, and is task- and outcome-oriented.

Transformational leadership focuses on motivating and engaging followers with a vision of the future. Transformational leaders influence people to speak, act and think in ways that make positive difference in their own lives and the lives of others.

In your experience, which type of relationship do leaders in Research Administration have with their staff most often?

Transactional or Transformational

Transactional vs. Transformational

Aspect	Transactional leadership	Transformational leadership
View on people	As performing tasks	An important resource to grow
View on future	Short-term, goal and result focus	Long-term strategic, visionary
Involving others	Little involvement, very directive	Lots of involvement, very participative
Time to implement	Fast	Slow
How to motivate	Incentive focused	Inspirational and engaging

<https://www.leadershipahoy.com/transformational-leadership-what-is-it-pros-cons-examples/>

Daily Habits of Exceptional Leaders –Pt 1

Do these align with your idea of essential leadership qualities - are they essential for the Transformational Leader?

Effective Communicator *“The more elaborate our means of communication, the less we communicate.”*
– Joseph Priestley

Courageous *“Courage is the first virtue that makes all other virtues possible.”* – Aristotle

Adhere to the Golden Rule +1 *“The way you see people is the way you treat them, and the way you treat them is what they become.”* – Jon Wolfgang von Goethe

Self-Aware *“It is absurd that a man should rule others, who cannot rule himself.”* – Latin Proverb

Passionate *“If you just work on stuff that you like and are passionate about, you don’t have to have a master plan with how things will play out.”* – Mark Zuckerberg

Humble *“Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less.”* – C.S. Lewis

Daily Habits of Exceptional Leaders – Pt 2

Do these align with your idea of essential leadership qualities - are they essential for the Transformational Leader?

Generous *“A good leader is a person who takes a little more than his share of the blame and a little less than his share of the credit.” – John Maxwell*

Infectious *“The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision. It’s got to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion. You can’t blow an uncertain trumpet.” – Reverend Theodore Hesburgh*

Authentic *“Just be who you are and speak from your guts and heart – it’s all a man has.” – Hubert Humphrey*

Approachable *“Management is like holding a dove in your hand. Squeeze too hard and you kill it, not hard enough and it flies away.” – Tommy Lasorda*

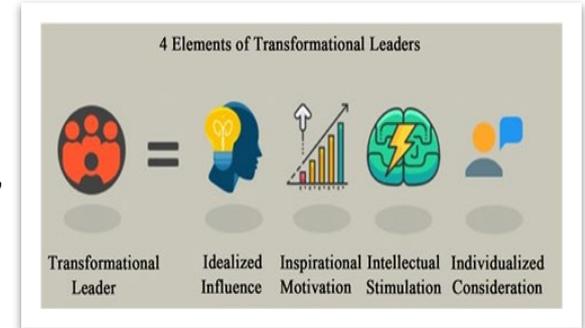
Accountable *“The ancient Romans had a tradition: Whenever one of their engineers constructed an arch, as the capstone was hoisted into place, the engineer assumed accountability for his work in the most profound way possible: He stood under the arch.” – Michael Armstrong*

Purposeful *“You don’t lead by pointing and telling people some place to go. You lead by going to that place and making a case.” – Ken Kesey*

Transformational Leadership

“A management style that give employees more room to be creative, look to the future, and find new solutions to old problems”

OR “Creating significant and beneficial change along with team members”



- **Individualized consideration** — listening to employees’ concerns and needs to provide adequate support. What motivates one person may not motivate someone else.
- **Inspirational motivation** — articulating a unified vision that encourages team members to exceed expectations. They understand that the most motivated employees are the ones who have a strong sense of purpose.
- **Idealized influence** — modelling ethical behavior. Their moral conduct earns a necessary level of respect and trust.
- **Intellectual stimulation** — challenging assumptions, taking risks and soliciting team members’ input and ideas. Empowering employees to ask questions, practice a greater level of autonomy and ultimately determine more effective ways to execute their tasks.

Problems with transformational leadership

- Too much dependence and/or loyalty on (to) the leader
- **Resistance to change**
- Lack of focus on outcomes (people doing their own thing)
- **Can be focussed on short terms gains rather than long term institutional goals**
- Big picture thinking causes lack of focus on the detail
- **Requires more frequent communication amongst team members**
- Causes burnout amongst employees

Examples of transformational leadership

Buy-in for university research infrastructure

The problem: Research infrastructure underfunded

Research infrastructure requirements misunderstood

Siloed approach between Divisions – Research, Property, IT

Physical space and IT infrastructure unavailable in timely manner to support RI

No replacement plan for research infrastructure

The solution: New standing committee with senior executives from all Divisions

Information on HR and physical infrastructure sent to Property/IT at application stage

Mapping of existing and required research infrastructure assets

The outcome: All players on same page

Development of a 5 year university wide research infrastructure plan

Research infrastructure delivered in timely manner

Research gets access to much larger capital pools in Property and IT

Examples of transformational leadership

Making RCR Education Required for all grad students and postdocs

The problem: Various US federal requirements

Too difficult and costly to run separate programs

Socializing the importance of RCR to help build and sustain a culture of integrity

The solution: A one stop shop approach for all RCR requirements

Engaging faculty and administrators to be ambassadors and champions of the program

The outcome: Greater acceptance and compliance

Providing safe spaces for difficult conversations – proactive support vs. reactive consequences

Transformational Leadership – Take aways

- Think systems not issues
- The power of collaboration and synergy
- The need to establish a research enterprise that will serve as a foundation upon which others can build and adapt to current climate
- Some of the disadvantages are real – the need to inspire and bring diverse stakeholders along...

Remember those essential leadership qualities – what will it take?

Questions? Closing Comments?



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