Sideways Leadership: Perceptions of the Senior Pastor's Transformational Leadership Style and Its Relationship to Church Effectiveness

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SIDEWAYS LEADERSHIP: PERCEPTIONS OF THE SENIOR PASTOR'S TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO CHURCH EFFECTIVENESS

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abstract

What if research could demonstrate how a more collaborative or transformational approach to church leadership had a positive impact on the overall effectiveness of the church? Would pastors adjust their leadership style, and would seminaries expand their pastoral training curriculum? Research continues to affirm the importance of leadership in the health and effectiveness of organizations from multiple contexts. Everything from schools to politics shows the need for leadership. Yet, little quantitative research has been done to see the impact of leadership within the church arena. Is it possible that leadership style correlates to the effectiveness of corporate America but has little correlation within the church? Should seminaries continue to focus on training pastors for exegetically-correct sermons and leave void the need to nurture and guide people to meaningful relationships within the community? Should pastors continue to lead parishioners from an authoritative position that their seminary-trained expertise might dictate, or should pastors collaborate with lay leaders to jointly develop a church atmosphere that reflects shared values developed through a collaborative approach?

introduction: transformational leadership

In the twelfth century the French philosopher Bernard of Chartres had written, "We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they, and things at a great distance, not by virtue of any sharpness of sight on our part, or any physical distinction, but because we are carried high and raised up by their giant size." My personal pursuit of education was founded in the desire to continue the conversation regarding church effectiveness and health. A concept I have learned is wrapped in a much larger framework—the *missio Dei.* I hope this article will add to the conversation regarding leadership within God's mission and help all of us continue to pursue excellence in ministry and life.

My recent completion of research has shown a direct link and connection between transformational and transactional leadership of the senior pastor and the effectiveness of the church. This was not conjecture or opinion; it was research. Like each of you, I devour recent and relevant research regarding the church. I had personally longed to conduct a research project that was not qualitative but quantitative in nature regarding the ecclesial community. So much of Christian literature and leadership development is based on opinion and experience but without the quantitative homework to back it up. So many models that work in one context may or may not be effective in another.

I had hoped to find principles of leadership that applied beyond a specific context and was something more than a sales pitch. The typical sales pitch is, "I've been successful and have a large church, now you can, too." Now before someone blogs or texts me about how important experience is, I believe all of these different resources have valuable lessons and information to offer. My hope was to add to the information from a different viewpoint that was based on research.

This research showed a strong statistical correlation with transformational at 24% and transactional at 25% regression when compared to the effectiveness of the church in eight specific systems as evaluated by Natural Church Development. The urgency to be more effective as a church should already grip us (or why would you be reading this article), but we need greater specificity regarding choices in leadership. We see that leadership is important, but what specific choices can a leader make to engage the church in healthy change?

defining urgency

Nothing changes without urgency. This is a reality important for leaders to acknowledge and understand. Nothing increased the urgency in my own life like the day I was informed that I was not only borderline diabetic, but I also might

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have a form of cancer in my bladder. With three children under the age of nine, and a wife whose greatest fear is for me to no longer be at her side, I found a sense of urgency. This urgency is the difference between, "It would be good for me to lose some weight and eat better," to, "If I do not get healthier, I could die." I was already active and working out; I then had to learn to manage my diet better and go through the process of defeating the cancer.

In the same way, I hope this research brings urgency to the church. Everywhere around us, we see signs of struggling churches while our culture continues to deal with fragmented ideologies all pieced together by the individuals' choices. Belief has become a buffet table experience where we each get our own fondue forks and cook up whatever our heart desires. We need to help leaders navigate our cultural waters within the church (ultimately creating culture where they are) and make effective decisions for long-term health. I believe this research is a part of that conversation.

Within my own movement there are those who say, "I am being led by the Spirit," when he or she is actually not completing their own homework. As much as I depend fully on the grace of God and the Holy Spirit, I am fearful this statement is a means for us to allow ourselves an out when we should be taking responsibility. How many times are we making bad decisions or taking ineffective steps in our churches because we are not prepared, studied up, and have not completed our homework? Churches and pastors can do better to take aim and know what is being hit by the church's missional focus. Granted, it is worthy of noting that if you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time. I guess consistency is important.

During my first year as a licensed minister, a startling statistic was revealed to me. Current trends and experience in ministry had shown that within ten years, only one out of ten would still remain in ministry as a vocation. Now fifteen years later my experience has shown the accuracy of this statistic. Many of my friends and colleagues are no longer in ministry as a vocation, and this reality demands attention. Through ongoing dialogue I found that many struggled in the area of leadership and change. Their desire was to lead their church in becoming more effective. The pastor believed leadership, even their leadership, was important among all the variables that led to an effective church. Typically they found themselves frustrated and were unable to execute plans of change.

This was the heart of urgency that moved my journey of leadership. How can I avoid the landmines of ministry? How can I be more effective? How can my church continue to be healthy, grow, and flourish in God's kingdom? And how much of that was my responsibility as a lead pastor? I realized there were thousands of

variables that existed in the equations of leadership, and I wanted to focus my efforts.

core findings

The core of my research has found this truth: the leadership style of the senior pastor has direct impact on the effectiveness of the church. My desire for specificity in leadership style was also quenched. What if 100% of variables that explicate the reason church systems are more effective could be narrowed? What if out of 100% of those variables a lead pastor could know that 25% could be narrowed to one single and important variable? This research indicates a significant statistical correlation between the transformational and transactional leadership styles of the senior pastor and the effectiveness of the church. Each of these leadership elements creates a system upon which leaders can build their choices. A senior pastor can know that if they are more transformational in their approach, their church will be healthier.

Within this study, transformational and transactional leadership style was defined by Bass and Avolio's Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and the Full Range Leadership Theory. The systems of the church were defined by Natural Church Development (NCD) as a means of having specific markers to compare transformational scores of the senior pastor and the church's effectiveness. The author does acknowledge the ongoing debate regarding NCD and is not making a case for or against its scope. NCD does give a framework from which to compare the leadership results. The transactional component of leadership is a contingent reward within the full range leadership model. This is the positive form of transactional leadership as compared with the two negative components which are management-by-exception passive and avoidant.

Avis states that the "Christian mission is an expression of the movement of God toward the world: the church is an instrument of this movement. Mission precedes Church. The Church exists because God's mission—in the profound, nuanced sense of *missio Dei*—is underway."[1] This research is a small part of that ongoing mission and effort to reach the world with the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Understanding the role of the leader is essential to our ability to carry out the ongoing mission God has placed in our hands.

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[1] P. Avis, *A Ministry Shaped by Mission* (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2005), 5.

why transformational leadership

It would seem obvious that leadership has an effect on organizations from all contexts and venues of culture. Research continues to build on that assumption as the impact of leadership is revealed in politics,[2] within the Army and military,[3] in fields of education from the United States[4] to Tanzania,[5] and in both for-profit and non-profit organizations including the world of ecclesiology or church.[6,7] While quantitative research on leadership is ongoing within the business and educational contexts, there remains a question regarding the impact of leaders within the context of ecclesiology. Does leadership from the senior pastor impact the church much like a CEO does regarding the effectiveness of their company? Many hypothesize, and pop-cultural books on leadership continue to appear. Is it possible that leadership affects corporate America but does not have as much impact within the church?

While there are many leadership theories through which this study could look at the senior pastor, transformational leadership is the model of leadership chosen. Transformational leadership is being researched because it perhaps offers the best hope for establishing a need for less top-down, authoritative approaches for senior leadership within the church as well as giving a framework for ongoing collaboration fostered by lay involvement. In essence, transformational leaders empower not only the staff but also the volunteers to create a synergy effect that builds up the body of Christ. This research has provided quantitative data in regard to a senior pastor's leadership style and its relationship to Natural Church Development, which identifies eight specific markers within the church that are important systems for its development and effectiveness.[8]

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Defining leadership. It was a warm afternoon as I drove with my brother-in-law along the back roads of Wisconsin. We were taking our annual tour of his farms along the over 2000 acres of land on which he and my father-in-law work corn and soybeans. I will never forget the moment he showed me an anomaly between two fields. The fields were connected and a part of the same piece of property, but the

2 P. Senior and P. Onselen, "Re-examining Leader Effects: Have Leader Effects Grown in Australian Federal," *Australian Journal of Political Science,* 43(2) (June 2008): 225–242.

3 T. D. Kane and T. R. Tremble, "Transformational Leadership Effects at Different Levels of the Army." *Military Psychology,* 12, (2000): 137–160.

4 P. Hallingers and R. Heck, "Collaborative Leadership and School Improvement: Understanding the Impact on School Capacity and Student Learning." *School Leadership and Management,* 30(2) (April 2010): 95–110.

5 S. Nguni, P. Sleegers, and E. Denessen, "Transformational and Transactional Leadership Effects on Teachers' Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior in Primary Schools: The Tanzanian Case." *School Effectiveness and School Improvement,* 17(2) (June 2006): 145–177.

6 T. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth: History, Theology, and Principles.* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1993).

7 E. Stetzer and M. Dodson, *Comeback Churches* (Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2007).

8 C. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches* (7th ed.) (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2006).

corn on one side was over one-third taller than the corn standing beside it. The healthier corn was my brother-in-law's, and the shorter corn belonged to another farmer. He informed me that they had planted their corn on the same day, yet the other field was a full one-third shorter. He told me that he was not sure what the other farmer was doing, but "he's doing something wrong."

This picture has become a powerful metaphor to me regarding leadership. Like a farmer, a pastor partners with God to grow the fields in front of them. For a pastor, those fields are people, and the growth is the redemptive work of Christ. Like a farmer, we partner with God. We have responsibilities to create the best environment for growth and health for the people we lead. We also need God just like the farmer needs the right amount of water and sun to help the crop grow. Leaders must choose the ways in which we can be more effective to have the best results. The challenge comes in identifying the specific leadership choices that have the greatest impact.

Knudsen challenges, "In the past ten to fifteen years, the model of a CEO or change agent has been prevalent in the literature. More recently, this emphasis seems to be moving in the direction of recommending that local church leaders actually learn how to lead."[9] The quandary is that this conversation is too general in approach. Is the pastor meant to take the principles of CEO's and apply it directly to their way of leading? In Rainer's research he stated, "At the very least we conclude that a visionary pastor is a major contributor to the growth of a church."[10] It is evident that leadership is important, but in what ways can pastors shift their leadership to have an impact on the church directly? Many pastors have clear vision without the traction to get movement within the church to achieve it.

Is there a leadership approach that correlates or has relationship directly with church effectiveness? My current ministry environment (Illinois District of the Assemblies of God) utilizes the Natural Church Development tool to measure church effectiveness. So my question became more specific. Is there a leadership style that correlates and even impacts the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development? Secondary to that correlation is whether it does so in statistically significant ways. Developing as a leader can be ambiguous at best with all the variations of leadership styles and discussions. Should a church leader use transactional, path-goal, servant, transformational, or situational leadership as a way of leading the church to greater effectiveness? Which leadership approach offers the best hope of impacting a church setting? Dumdum, Lowe, and Avolio

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[9] D. Knudsen, "The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Growth in Specialized Non-profit Organizations," (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest, 2006, p. 11.
[10] T. Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth,* 193.

stated that the study of transformational leadership has gained more attention than any other single leadership paradigm in the last decade.[11] For that reason I chose to conduct this research project, and transformational leadership became the model to identify the senior pastor's impact on church effectiveness.

Research method and results. The sample (n) for this study was fifteen senior pastors and churches from the Assembly of God affiliation in the District of Illinois. These churches vary in size (population or number base), location (all within the state of Illinois), ethnic diversity, and years of existence. The quantitative data for transformational leadership was collected between August and October of 2010, using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Natural Church Development surveys were conducted by the churches with assistance from Julie Markese, the Assembly of God church consultant from the Illinois District, during the last two years.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was collected through the Mind Garden online survey tool called Transform. On August 19, 2010, the online tool was sent to the initial eleven churches. Four churches were added in September, 2010, and three more were added in October of 2010. Fifteen of the seventeen churches participated in the study. Two of the churches did not complete surveys by the requested deadline.

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire is a forty-five question survey that requires a minimum of two raters for each leader being rated. Each rater answered a survey regarding the leadership of the senior pastor. Senior pastors varied in demographic background but were all credentialed through the Assemblies of God and leading churches in the Illinois District of the Assemblies of God. Each of these Assembly churches had conducted a Natural Church Development survey in the last two years.

The primary statistical procedure used was a linear regression analysis with the independent variable being the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire average scores in transformational (five I's), transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The dependent variable used was the Natural Church Development average for each church. After the data was received, all NCD and MLQ information was analyzed for evaluation. The NCD averages were used in the initial evaluation of each of the three hypotheses. The fifteen NCD averages of the churches ranged from a low of 44 to a high of 78. These averages were then correlated to the average of the

[11] U.R. Dumdum, K. Lowe, and B. Avolio, "A Meta-Analysis of Transformational and Transactional Leadership Correlates of Effectiveness and Satisfaction," in Avolio, B. and Yammarino, F., eds. *Monographs in Leadership and Management, Volume 2. Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: The Road Ahead* (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 2008).

transformational, transactional (contingent reward), and laissez-faire (non-leadership) leadership scores.

The Natural Church Development surveys were completed by churches during the last two years and then processed to obtain a mean score for the eight markers of church effectiveness. These fifteen scores ranged from 44 to 78. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was calculated through an online software platform called Transform. This is produced through the company that provides the Multifactor Questionnaire license Mind Garden.

Fifteen different churches participated in the survey with a total of sixty raters and fifteen pastors. With both parties taking the survey, a total of seventy-five surveys were taken. All of the scores were then downloaded from the Mind Garden portal site on October 25, 2010. The mean score was found through averaging the total of the leader and all raters who participated. The lowest amount of raters was two, and the highest number of raters for any individual church was eleven. The average Natural Church Development scores were then compared to each leader's average score for transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. These scores were evaluated through descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

Regression analysis. The first hypothesis was focused on the statistically significant linear relationship between transformational leadership and the average score of the eight markers of Natural Church Development. The second hypothesis assessed the statistical significance of the linear relationship between transactional leadership and the average score of the eight markers. Lastly, the third hypothesis focused on the laissez-faire leadership and the statistical significance of the linear relationship to the average score of the eight markers of Natural Church Development. The direction and strength in each of the correlations is of interest. A statistically significant linear relationship was found in both transactional and transformational leadership, while the relationship between laissez-faire leadership and NCD score was not statistically significant.

regression analysis: transformational leadership and NCD

The Pearson's correlation between transformational leadership and the Natural Church Development eight markers average was calculated to be .539 (r = .539; p = .019), indicating a moderately strong correlation between the two variables (See Table 7). In building a linear model, R^2 was .29 and (Adjusted R^2 = .235) (See Table 8). A statistically significant linear equation was found (F (1,13 = 5.3, p = .038); therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, and a statistically significant positive relationship was identified within transformational leadership and the Natural

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Church Development average scores (See Table 9). A church's predicted Natural Church Development average score, given transformational leadership score as a predictive variable, would be NCD Score = 1.7 + (17.7 * transformational leadership score).

regression analysis: transactional leadership and NCD

The Pearson's correlation between transactional leadership and the Natural Church Development eight markers average was calculated to be .550 (r = .550; p = .017), indicating a statistically significant correlation between the two variables (See Table 11). In building a linear model R^2 was .303 (Adjusted R^2 = .249) (See Table 12). A statistically significant linear equation was found (F (1,13 = 5.6, p = .034), therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, and a statistically significant positive relationship was identified within transactional leadership and Natural Church Development average scores (See Table 13). A church's predicted Natural Church Development average score, given transactional leadership score as a predictive variable, would be NCD Score = 18.3 + (14.08 * transactional leadership score).

regression analysis: laissez-faire leadership and NCD

The Pearson's correlation between laissez-faire leadership score and Natural Church Development eight markers average was calculated to be –0.29 (r = –0.29; p = .146) indicating there is not a statistically significant correlation between the two variables (See Table 16). In building a linear model R^2 was .085 (Adjusted R^2 = .014) (see Table 17). The linear equation was not statistically significant (F (1,13 = 1.2, p = .29).

The hypothesis took three forms with each having a null and alternative version. The research results revealed the null was rejected in the initial two hypotheses regarding transformational and transactional leadership. The research did indicate a non-statistical relationship with laissez-faire and its impact on Natural Church Development scores. The test of normality for laissez-faire showed it was not normally distributed. A non-parametric test was run and showed a negative correlation between laissez-faire leadership and NCD results.

There were three research questions. What impact do leaders who exhibit more transformational behavior have on church scores on the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development? What impact do leaders who exhibit more transactional (contingent reward) behavior have on church scores on the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development? What impact do

leaders who exhibit more laissez-faire behavior have on church scores on the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development?

Research question #1. What impact do leaders who exhibit more transformational behavior have on church scores on the eight quality characteristics of NCD?

The research indicated a strong statistical correlation between the two variables of transformational leadership and Natural Church Development average scores (See Table 7). Transformational leadership from the senior pastor does impact the eight markers of the Natural Church Development. Twenty-four percent of the effectiveness of the church can be explained by transformational leadership approaches in this study.

The implications of these findings affect pastors, church leadership (board, deacons), and seminaries. These findings confirm the ongoing conversation regarding the importance of leadership within the church. This study reveals transformational leaders within the church have direct relationship to increasing the overall score in empowering leadership, loving relationships, holistic small groups, inspirational worship services, need-oriented evangelism, gift-based ministry, effective structures, and passionate spirituality. This outcome implies a need to evaluate how pastors train, churches hire, and universities educate.

Research question #2. What impact do leaders who exhibit more transactional (contingent reward) behavior have on church scores on the eight quality characteristics of NCD?

Senior pastors that have transactional components in their leadership style positively impact the eight quality characteristics of Natural Church Development. This indicates a correlation between the leadership style of the senior pastor and increasing the effectiveness of the church. The research in this study revealed that twenty-five percent of the effectiveness in the church is explained through a transactional leadership approach. This study reveals the ongoing connection between leadership and management. Leaders within the church of postmodern society cannot be one faceted. They must be both transformational and transactional, which is a blend of leading and managing.

Research question #3. What impact do leaders who exhibit more laissez-faire behavior have on church scores on the eight quality characteristics of NCD?

The research revealed that laissez-faire leadership had a non-correlative relationship with the eight markers of NCD. The data was not normally distributed, indicating it was not statistically significant. The Spearman-Rho test did indicate the non-correlative connection. This indicates that laissez-faire

leadership is not the style of choice for churches desiring to increase their NCD scores. Laissez-faire leadership is not an effective choice for leadership style.

how to become a transformational leader

Transformational leadership is defined by what has been designated as the five I's. These I's are the building blocks for defining and understanding Bass and Avolio's transformational leadership components within the Full Range Leadership Theory. The Full Range Leadership Theory includes transactional and laissez-fare leadership. For the sake of processing this leadership style, I have constructed the following outline: leading yourself, leading others, creating momentum (inspiring), enabling input (dynamics of team thinking), and managing with excellence (contingent reward and transactional leadership).

Leading self: idealized influence through attributes and behaviors. A mentor in my life had challenged me that the first person you must lead is yourself. If I am not personally healthy, how could I lead others to health? If I was not recharged and personally challenged, how could I lead an organization to be the same? Transformational leadership in definition reinforces this encouragement to lead self first. Two of the five components of transformational leadership are idealized influence through behavior and idealized influence through attributes.

Idealized influence is created by the leader's ability to become a role model for those they lead. Idealized influence with attributes occurs when those who are led view the leader's actions and leadership with emulation. As those who are led see attributes they value, they continue to connect with the vision and mission of the organization because of the role model the leader has become. This type of leadership "shifts follower self-interest toward the interest of the greater good."[12] This attribute is a vision and mission function of a leader which is essential for transformational leadership to take place. Kim, Dansereau, and Kim noted that "theories of charismatic leadership include vision or mission as being the most critical variable in defining charismatic leadership."[13] This is an important component of transformational leaders. This is the leader's ability to link the led to

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[12] J. Antonakis and R. House, "The Full-Range Leadership Theory: The Way Forward." in Avolio, B. and Yammarino, F., eds. *Monographs in Leadership and Management, Volume 2. Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: The Road Ahead* (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 2008), 9.

[13] F. Kim, F. Dansereau, and I. Kim, "Extending the Concept of Charismatic Leadership: An Illustration Using Bass's (1990) Categories," in Avolio, B. and Yammarino, F., eds. *Monographs in Leadership and Management, Volume 2. Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: The Road Ahead.* (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 2008), 147.

the vision, create unity toward a greater purpose, and is essential in creating a transformative process.

Conger and Kanungo emphasized that the personal identification (role model) from the follower to the leader is a central way in which a transformational or charismatic leader influences the followers around him. This influence is also increased because of the followers' connection to the overall group and their need to stay connected.[14] Kark and Shamir stated that "Another underlying process that might account for the exceptional effects of transformational leadership on followers' perceptions and behaviors is social identification."[15]

A question arises regarding what may cause this kind of idealized influence where the follower emulates the attributes and behaviors of the leader. "Among the things leaders do to earn idealized credit is to consider the needs of others over personal needs, often willingly sacrificing personal gain for the sake of others."[16] The belief of the follower is that the perceived gain of the leader is not a selfish one, but for the greater good. This perception leads to an inevitable connection to not only the cause but also the leader themselves, causing influence from the leader to be idealized. That effect does not come from a one-time charismatic moment but is developed over time. Avolio challenged that a transformational leader must be consistent over time and can "be counted on to do the right thing, demonstrating high standards of ethical and moral conduct."[17] This consistency is part of the transformative process that creates the idealized dynamic. Before an image of saintly personality is created, transformational leaders will not use power for personal gain, but they will use the power that is at their disposal. Ultimately, idealized influences with attributes regarding the leader "are positive personal characteristics of the leader that are socially constructed in leader-follower relationships."[18]

In the same way, the consistency of the leadership presented creates an idealization, not only in the attributes or qualities of the leader but also in the behavior itself. This behavior is tied to the actions of the leader and their ability to show their "values and beliefs, their sense of mission and purpose, and their ethical and moral orientation."[19] The follower is looking for proof that the leader does not

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[14] J. A. Conger and R.N. Kanungo, *Charismatic Leadership in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publishers, 1998).

[15] R. Kark and B. Shamir, "The Dual Effect of Transformational Leadership: Priming Relational and Collective Selves and Further Effects on Followers," in Avolio, B. and Yammarino, F., eds. *Monographs in Leadership and Management, Volume 2. Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: The Road Ahead.* (Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, 2008), 70.

[16] B. Avolio, *Full Leadership Development: Building the Vital Forces in Organizations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999), 43.

[17] Avolio, *Full Leadership Development,* 43.

[18] J. Sosik and D. Jung, *Full Range Leadership Development: Pathways for People, Profit, and Planet* (New York, NY: Psychology Press, 2010), 93.

[19] Antonakis and House, "The Full-Range Leadership Theory," 9.

only speak or say what must be idealized, but he also does it. The led are looking to idealize not only the values of the leader (attributes) but also the actions (behaviors).

Leading others: individual consideration. The second factor in transformational leadership is focused on leading others. This component is called individual consideration. A transformational leader will engage the follower not as a machine, but as a human with an important role to play within the organization. This leader will become a coach for people and develop them through relationship. Employees become something more than a means to an end, or a cog within the machine of the organization. Instead they are humans with felt needs. The end result is the leader's ability to maximize and develop the full potential of the follower. It is not only the development of the organization (the whole) but also of the individual.

This consideration is seen in the ability of the leader to create unique plans of action for each employee to achieve his highest potential. "This outcome is achieved by coaching and counseling followers, maintaining frequent contact with them, and helping them to self-actualize."[20] Kark and Shamir stated that "leader behaviors such as individualized consideration, which prime the relational self, emphasize the distinctiveness of each follower and the unique relationship between the leader and each follower."[21] Another importance of this trait is found in the individualized consideration given to the follower. It also will change the interaction between the follower and leader, making it a unique process. This creates a problem in finding universal definitions of leadership because the dynamic of the leader and the led relationship is always changing. Transformational leadership simply notes that this is a part of an effective leader, taking into account the uniqueness of each person, each organization, and each context. Individualized consideration is seen whenever the leader is taking time to coach, teach, or mentor the follower in a way that takes into consideration their individual needs, abilities, and aspirations.[22]

Creating momentum: inspirational motivation. Most leaders are consistently looking for ways to encourage momentum within their organization. Within transformational leadership this is called inspirational motivation. This inspiration is the ability to motivate followers around common purpose and direction. This motivation does not come solely through clear vision. You may have clear vision, but that does not determine my agreement with that vision. Inspiration begins creating a sense of urgency. John Kotter's eight steps toward change outline this as

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[20] Antonakis and House, "The Full-Range Leadership Theory," 10.
[21] Kark and Shamir, "The Dual Effect of Transformational Leadership," 82.
[22] Sosik and Jung, *Full Range Leadership Development*.

the first step in changing an organization. Without a sense of urgency I may not want to hear the vision because I do not see the need.

A transformational leader will clearly communicate the focused vision. This leader will take action steps regarding that vision and, to be transformational, will also inspire others to take steps of action based upon the same focus. Inspirational motivation is the ability of the leader to inspire followers to accomplish a goal. This type of leader will raise the followers' expectations regarding themselves and elevate them to complete tasks or projects that at some point may have seemed impossible to them.

Kark and Shamir challenge that the inspiration of the follower is created because of the personal influence the leader has on the identity and social connection of the follower. "The impact of transformational leadership on followers' empowerment, which increases both their ability and their motivation, would suggest that transformational leaders produce these effects primarily by priming followers' relational self and identification with the leader."[23] The power of transformational leadership is found in the ability of the leader to find ways of communicating with and inspiring each of their followers.

Inspiration is a process that helps the follower identify with the leader, which then links the follower to mission. Identification occurs through the leader's ability to articulate shared and mutually accepted goals. Through this process the leader creates an atmosphere where the followers have positive expectations regarding what must be accomplished to have shared outcomes. That identification occurs because of the leader's ability to build trust in their followers. Unlike transactional leadership, which does not create central common motivational themes and promote unity, this identifier of transformational leaders is defined by the ability to inspire followers based upon the interest of the group.

Inspiration becomes a powerful force for action within the organization. "Transformational leadership involves motivating others to do more than they originally intended and often even more than they thought possible. This can happen when a person goes from doing a task for the money to doing it because he or she identifies and takes pride in what is produced."[24] Transformational leaders have the ability to inspire others to accomplish the mission at hand. "The inspirational leader builds followers' expectations by envisioning a mutually describable future and articulating how to attain it."[25] Inspiration is a critical

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[23] Kark and Shamir, "The Dual Effect of Transformational Leadership," 83.

[24] Avolio, *Full Leadership Development,* 41.

[25] B. Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications* (New York, NY: Free Press, 2008), 647–648.

component to the transformational process; it induces transformation in multiple contexts of the organization.

Enabling input: intellectual stimulation. A transformational leader will enable the input from within the organization. The ability to share knowledge and create group thinking is an important component of transformational leadership. Leaders create an environment where people are not just behaving in machine-like function, but they become intellectually stimulated to invest their time and energy to that which is important to them. A transformational leader will encourage the imagination and input of the employees of the organization. This leader not only looks outside of the box and becomes an innovator, but he also encourages the followers or employees to do the same.

This kind of inspiration leads to the stimulation of the knowledge base within an organization. This "refers to how leaders question the status quo, appeal to followers' intellect to make them question their assumptions, and invite innovative and creative solutions to problems."[26] This is why it is considered transformative and a significant component of a transformational leader. This kind of leader creates a culture in which thinking is not only encouraged but also rewarded.

When this kind of environment is created, "nothing is too good, too fixed, too political, or too bureaucratic that can't be challenged."[27] This creates a knowledge base think tank throughout the culture of the organization that is willing to not only think out of the box but also possibly burn the box in effigy so that the stimulus to create can continue. This atmosphere creates a culture where everyone is involved with leading and following at the same time. Each person is inspired to be a part of problem solving or creating the new because their opinions are integrated into the conversation. This creates greater ownership within an organization.

Without this kind of transformative process in place, Avolio challenges that the future of the organization could be at risk. He states, "It is quite likely that what you refuse to question that is essential to your business survival will be successfully questioned by your competitors who will, no doubt, be delighted you left the questioning to them."[28] The leader creates a culture that embraces the ability to challenge assumptions and reinvent itself. As Bass points out, "Intellectually stimulating leaders help to make their followers more innovative and creative. They question assumptions, reframe problems, and look at old problems in new ways.

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[26] Antonakis and House, "The Full-Range Leadership Theory," 10.

[27] Avolio, *Full Leadership Development,* 46.

[28] Ibid.

Public criticism of followers and their mistakes is avoided. New ideas are sought from followers."[29]

Managing with excellence: contingent reward. Transactional leadership, the contingent reward component, also had a strong statistical correlation to church effectiveness. In the Full Range Leadership Theory, the next level of leadership is three-tiered and describes a leader that leverages through a reward system known as transactional. These factors are contingent reward, management-by-exemption active, and management-by-exception passive (shared with passive-avoidant leadership). Transactional is a positive form of leadership in its active and reward components but is negative in passive forms.

In its simplest terms, "Transaction leadership occurs when the leader rewards or disciplines the follower, depending on the adequacy of the follower's behavior or performance."[30] Avolio continues to define transactional leadership to gain a greater understanding of what it is and how it is used. In defining a transactional leader, Avolio says that "instead of moving those led to go beyond their self-interests, a transactional leader addresses the self-interests of those being influenced by them. Transactional leaders offer inducements to move in the direction desired by the leaders, which often is a direction that would also satisfy the self-interests of the followers."[31] Avolio goes on to say these leaders "exchange promise of reward for cooperation and the compliance from their followers to get the task done."[32]

Contingent reward is characterized by "economic and emotional exchanges, by clarifying role requirements, and rewarding and praising desired outcomes."[33] In short, what we value we should reward. Management-by-exception active leaders watch for errors and deviations from the norm. With this style of leading, the focus is on the mistakes as motivation, but expectations are clearly made in advance. The difference in the passive version is the leader waits until the actual errors have occurred before getting involved. Typically the contingent reward approach occurs when the "leader assigns or secures agreements on what needs to be done and promises rewards or actually rewards others in exchange for satisfactorily carrying out the assignment."[34] Management-by-exception is typically more ineffective, especially when used frequently and in its passive form.

This leadership focus is on specific mistakes and can either be in active or passive forms. "When active, the leader arranges to actively monitor deviations

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[29] Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership,* 621.

[30] Avolio, *Full Leadership Development,* 49.

[31] Ibid., 35.

[32] Ibid., 35–36.

[33] Antonakis and House, "The Full-Range Leadership Theory," 10.

[34] Avolio, *Full Leadership Development,* 49.

from standards, mistakes, and errors in the follower's assignments and to take corrective action as necessary."[35] The active component creates agreed-upon goals that are outlined clearly.

the sideways challenge: becoming transformational

Transformational leadership is about finding the balance between non-involvement to micro-management and from empowering leadership to manipulative influence. The transformational leader initiates a process that is duplicated throughout an organization where the follower and the led are transformed and thereby transform the organization as well.

Within the ecclesial world, the conversation of leadership has focused a few specific paradigms. Two of these leadership paradigms are autocratic and servant-leadership. Autocratic leadership is top-down in form and function. The leader and leading body remain in control while disseminating information to those below them. This paradigm is best viewed through a pyramid, showing a wide base at the bottom and leading up to a point of singular leadership. The servant-leadership paradigm flips that pyramid over. This paradigm believes the leader is meant to serve the organization, not rule with an iron fist.

Transformational leadership presents a third paradigm from which to understand how we lead within the church. This paradigm places the pyramid on its side, thus the sideways leadership challenge (a book I am currently finishing writing). The transformational leader leads from the front but creates a transformational process at each level of the organization. This transformational environment is a culture created by the leadership through idealized influence in values and action, inspirational motivation through a sense of urgency and mission, enabling input through intellectual stimulation, and managing with excellence through contingent reward.

conclusion

It is odd that people plan for their vacations more than they plan for their lives. I pray that is not the case with a senior pastor and their leadership approach to church health. For the engaged pastor working hard to lead his church, leadership can be a daunting subject. Taking in all the contexts and possibilities regarding personal leadership, how does one choose a leadership focus?

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[35] Ibid., 50.

This research indicates a strong statistical correlation between a specific kind of leadership and the health of the church. It also gives permission for a more controlling pastor still functioning in a hierarchical format to see the need and urgency of becoming more transformational and transactional. Pastors must be intentional and find ways to lead using all five components of transformational leadership and the contingent reward component of transactional leadership. This knowledge should change how we conduct ongoing training for pastors, the way we teach our university students, and should give specific framework for pastors to use in making decisions.

This creates a new checklist of sorts for those who are more systems-minded in development. If a pastor is not seeing health in certain areas of the church's development, he can ask himself five specific questions. Do I lead with character by clearly leading myself with consistent beliefs (values) and actions? Do I value and understand each person within the organization I am directly over, and am I encouraging that same behavior in each of them? Have I created a sense of urgency regarding the priorities, vision, and mission of our church? Have I created an environment where input is welcomed and applied (consistent creativity and feedback loops)? Am I creating clear expectations and then rewarding what is considered valuable to our church culture (managing well)?

Applying these basic principles of leadership will enable pastors to create a culture that is transformational on every level—a sideways leadership model that keeps an organization focused with mission but inspired by healthy systems. A church that understands the urgency of participating with the *missio dei* and a senior pastor that realizes his own influence has clear correlation with the health of the church. Standing on the shoulders of giants that transformed us, we now look to transform others through personal investment and systematic leadership; this is transformational leadership.

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