EXCELLENT

The Urgent Need for Skilled Transformational Leaders: Integrating Transformational Leadership and Organization Development

D. D. Warrick
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

There is an urgent need in organizations of all types and sizes for transformational leaders who have the courage and skills to reinvent and build organizations capable of succeed

what is most needed is transformational leaders throughout an organization. Is your organization staffed by transformational leaders? Are you developing transformational leaders? Your future may depend on it.

perspective. They also believe that transformational leadership is a systematic process that can be learned and managed.

There have been many other contributors to the thinking and research on transformational leadership. Figure 1 summarizes some of the major characteristics of transformational leaders. These ideas should be very instructive to leaders who aspire to being transformational leaders and to organizations committed to developing transformational leaders.

POTENTIAL PAYOFFS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

It is surprising that there isn't a stronger interest in transformational leadership considering its many documented payoffs. The extensive research on transformational leadership indicates that it can create a shared vision and commitment to higher level goals and builds respect and trust between leaders and followers. It can also improve the performance of individuals, groups, teams, and organizations and increase innovation, creativity, and the involvement and engagement of employees in making improvements. It is effective at empowering employees, improving employee motivation and satisfaction, and reducing employee stress and burnout. Figure 2 summarizes some of the research on the many potential payoffs of transformational leadership.
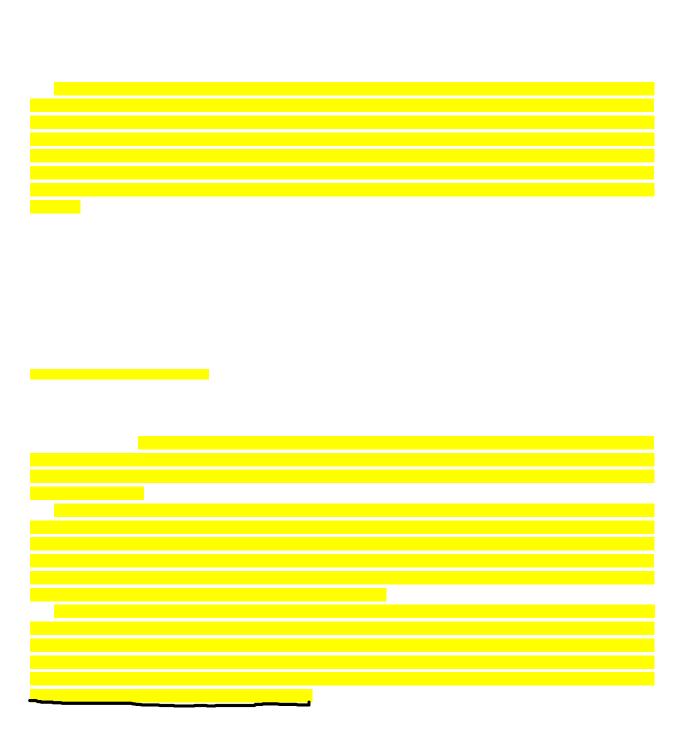
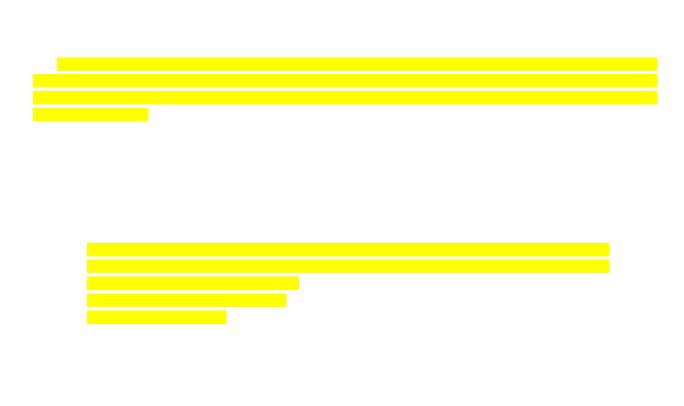## INTEGRATING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

The field of organization development (OD) had its early roots in the 1940s through the work of Kurt Lewin and the Research Center for Group Dynamics that he founded at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1945 (Brown, 2011, p 8). Through the inspiratioDng

1986 book titled *The Transformational Leader* probably comes the closest of the transformational leadership authors to addressing organization development concepts such as managing change although the term organization development is never mentioned in their book.

Interestingly, the multitude of books and articles on organization development provide valuable information on how to develop, change, and transform organizations but draw little from the wealth of research on transformational leaders and the critical role they play in building healthy, high performance

know what is possible, having a passion for excellence and accomplishing something special, and having the discipline to work at communicating ideas in a simple and understandable way.

Skilled leaders also provide *direction* on what it will take to get things done. Vision defines the target and direction clarifies what it will take to get there. Direction typically is communicated in terms of *goals* (what needs to be done), *values* (how things should be done), and *priorities*

the eight step model is excellent for transforming organizations, it does not mention transformational leadership or OD concepts.

In accomplishing transformational change in organizations, it is important to develop a sound transformation process, train leaders on the process, appoint a transformation team to help guide the process, and seek internal or external professional guidance in developing, executing, evaluating, and improving the process. An example of a transformation process is shown in Figure 5.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING SKILLED TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS

Organizations that recognize the considerable potential payoffs of having transformational leaders at the top and hopefully throughout the organization need to have a plan for developing transformational leaders. Even the best of leaders, with rare exception, are not likely to be skilled at transformational leadership as this important type of leadership requires critical skills in leading, championing change, and transforming organizations that leaders may not be aware of or possess.

Traditional training methods that provide knowledge and hope that the knowledge will be applied are not likely to be adequate for developing transformational leaders. In designing programs for developing transformational leaders and realizing the potential benefits the following guidelines are recommended:

1. **Assure top level support and involvement:** Build top level commitment to the program and assure that top level leaders participate in the training. They can be the first to be trained or better still join with other levels of leaders in the training.
2. **Appoint a design team to plan the training and develop a transformational leadership model to be used in the training:**

organizations and the culture of an organization. One can well imagine the ripple effect of having each of the participants involved in making personal changes and improving or transforming the groups they lead and contributing to the improvement or transformation of the organization.

CONCLUSION AND CHALLENGE

In today's times of fierce competition and dynamic, non-stop change, there is a need for transformational leaders and for organizations to have a sense of urgency in developing transformational leaders. The payoffs can be substantial! There is also a need to integrate transformational leadership and organization development concepts and when this is the case both concepts are strengthened. Finally, there is a need to develop operational definitions of transformational leadership that can be used to train skilled transformational leaders. It is the purpose of this article to make addressing these needs a high priority for organizations and to help them recognize the payoffs of doing so.

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APPENDIX

FIGURE 1

Characteristics	Author(s)
1. Visionary leader committed to transforming people, groups, and organizations: The leader envisions and communicates a desirable future and is committed to elevating and transforming the performance and	Bass (1985), Bass (1999), Burns (1978, p. 20), Friedman, Langbert & Giladi (2000), Tichy & Devanna (1986), p.4

2. Communicate clear goals and values that elevate performance:
   Mobilize people to embrace and accomplish worthy goals by involving
   people in the process, making goals meaningful and articulating how they
   can be reached, leading by example and emphasizing important values
	Bass (1985), Burns (1978, p. 20), Tichy & Devanna (1986)

3. Inspire excellence and raise aspirations: Inspire people to excel and
   to sacrifice individual interests for a higher purpose, makes challenges
   meaningful and simple to understand, and encourages positive
	Bass (1985), Bass & Avolio (1991), Bass, Avolio, & Goodheim (1987), Tichy & Devanna (1986), p. 187 .d stt fo.3(t)rwc-.577s5(c

FIGURE 2

Payoffs	Author(s)
1. Increased individual performance, motivation, satisfaction, morale, **loyalty, commitment, innovation, and empowerment.**	Avey, Hughes, Luthans, & Norman (2008), Bass (1999), Michaelis, Stegmaier, & Sonntag (2010), Humphreys & Einstein (2003), Kanungo (2001), Kelloway, Barling, Kelley, Comtois, & Gatien (2003), McShane & Von Glinow4.5(1)1,

FIGURE 3

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

**TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS are leaders who are skilled at
Leading, Championing Change, and Transforming Organizations.**

LEADING

Leading is the process of providing:
- **Vision**. A clear and compelling picture of what needs to be done and why.
- **Direction.** Clear goals, values, and priorities.
- **Inspiration.** Leading by example and motivating people to excel, meet the challenge, and persevere.

CHAMPIONING CHANGE

Championing Change is the process of:
- **Initiating Change.** Skills in leading or sponsoring needed change.
- **Facilitating Change**. Skills in guiding or paving the way for change.
- **Implementing Change**. Skills in designing, managing, and sustaining changes.

TRANSFORMING ORGANIZATIONS

Transforming Organizations is the process of:
-

FIGURE 4

In these times of dynamic change and the need to do everything smarter, faster, and better, Transformational Leaders who are

FIGURE 5

SAMPLE PROCESS

1. **Develop a keen sense of present realities inside and outside the organizations.**

2. **Explore best practices and define the ideal.**

3. **Create a design team to help design and implement the transformation process.**

4. **Develop a compelling vision and a clear and simple transformation strategy.**

5. **Frequently communicate the vision and strategy.**

6. **Train and empower leaders to be skilled transformational leaders and to champion needed changes.**

7. **Involve the appropriate people throughout the organization in making changes and assure the change process is effectively managed.**

8. **Create, communicate, and recognize early wins.**

9. **Align everything to support the desired changes.**

10. **Build in reliable feedback mechanisms to monitor progress, make needed adjustments, sustain the changes, and learn from the process..**