

# Leadership and performance beyond expectations



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Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations. New York: The Free Press.

It is one of the best leadership books I ever read so far. "Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations" by Bernard M. Bass, published by The Free Press in 1985. It has been two decades since the book published, and some might say that the word "expectations" used as the title may be only applicable during that era, but for me, most of the ideas are still relevant and adaptable till present; as to agree with the a statement made by Abraham Zaleznik, Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership, Emeritus at the Harvard Business School on this publication, "This book will recast leadership research for the next decade or more".

This book is generously filled with a collection of research from various aspects of leadership, sources and well known individuals namely Warren Bennis, Fred Fiedler, James MacGregor Burns, Victor Vroom, Abraham Zaleznik and Robert House. It presents a collection of literatures on the traits of an exceptional leader. Reading this particular publication is like reading a complete literature review on leadership. It does cover most or maybe all possible edges of leadership which I can think of. Author starts with distinguishing the transactional leader which had been primarily focused half a century before and the new-aged transformational leader. Later found in this book, the author's elaboration detailing on the criteria and characteristics of the transformationalist, as to name some such as charismatic, inspirational and intellectual.

Other concepts and styles of leadership were also argued in this book like the practice of authoritarian, participative style, mentor - protege approach, individualistic and quality circles practices. Purposeful This book serves the purpose of being a medium to a better understanding on the overall concept of leadership. As mentioned above, this book is a collaboration of leadership insight from various researchers, which later facilitated a positive change in the readers understanding of who these leaders are, how they get results and why their leadership often exceeds all expectable limits. All the theories, concepts and arguments are discussed accordingly as to enhance the readers? idea on leadership. The author seems has a vision on what to be expected from the readers as his elaboration did well in me.

This book publication had served some objectives I assumed, that set by the author. To dump-in a chuck of insights from various sources is a very tough and challenging job, if it is done without a goal in mind. I believed that it is an honourable and purposeful effort to gather all those valuable information, finding the common ground among the leaders mentioned, and richly translate them into a publication as this. I strongly believed that the author had done a great job in gathering the insights, common direction from various leaders, and build a shared vision to improve his readers. Inclusive Various theories of leadership were discussed in this publication, showing how well it covers most of the leadership scope; Maslow? s need theory, Alderfer? s, Path-goal theory and contingency theory to name some of them. Apart from citation from numerous famous researches on leadership, the author also relates his elaboration with the real-world situation as proven example of these transformational leaders and their success stories, namely

Steve Jobs of Apple Inc, Lee Iacocca of Chrysler, President Roosevelt and JF Kennedy, Mahatma Gandhi, Charles de Gaulle and Kemal Ataturk of Turkey.

This book did not just being a medium of listing thoughts from all over the world, but the author also being inclusive by understanding, valuing and actively engages the diversity of views, approaches and styles of each researcher and the world-class leaders. All aspects of individuality from these sources in this book had added a multiple perspectives and views on better understanding of the concept of an exceptional leadership. Leadership will always be leadership, but how people look on it and practice are the one that made the difference and it all are gathered in this publication. From all the insights and valuable information gathered, the author later presents a Leadership Questionnaire on the last part of this book. The questionnaire was hopefully become a measuring tool for self-appraisal and evaluation of both transactional and transformational traits.

Ethical The author did mention on the morality issue. As quoted by Burns (1978), transformational leadership has moral whereby the leader is guided by ethical principles such as respect for human dignity and equality of human rights. A moral leadership will serve the organization's well-being better in the long run. That is, the transformations that deals with fulfilment of real needs, proven benefited to the organization.

The personal values goes hand-in-hand with the integrity of leaders and will somewhat influence how he lead and run the show. Immoral leadership was also cited in this book. It argued that the leadership is immoral once the followers' needs were not authentic, and their need levels were elevated by

the leader. An example of Adolf Hitler's leadership was discussed as to show how unethical leadership had given a negative impact not just to the country but also at the expense of the German society. Hitler's leadership did promote immorality and encouraging brutality in order to achieve goals, and was globally censured. The author himself had practiced ethics in writing and publishing this book where he cited all the references he took, from a centuries quotes until to-date ones.

Even it may be a minor contribution in leadership, but it does make a difference as a writer, an ethical writer, checking plagiarism is a so-called crime. Empowering Empowerment may be described as encouraging members to actively engage and it is achieved by enabling the involvement of group members and conveying power in them. Unfortunately, there is no specific discussion on empowerment in this publication. There are some areas touched on delegation as it said transactional leader may delegate responsibility as per agreed contract while the transformational leader may delegate to encourage subordinate development. It does look similar as delegation of responsibility is in place, but the trust on passing the power and risks were never mentioned. I assumed that the concept of empowering members has not been discovered during the publication of this book or it is still new yet less proven and reliable documentation found.

The only empowerment that I personally extract from this book is the authority and trust passed by author to the reader, to read, understand, interpret and execute the leadership that believed to be the most suitable and appropriate accordingly; the freedom to implement any styles or traits which are thought to be useful and may serve the best. Process Throughout

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the course of this book, on being an exceptional leader is a process; being aware of the way everybody interacts and its impact towards the group? s work. This book does promote the involvement of individuals, decision making and handling tasks. For an example, as transformational leaders practising an ethical leadership, they do believe that it is a moral principle of conduct which should be conformed. The ethical personal values of a transformational leaders who value the process and the organization, saw participation as the means to gain employee acceptance of the decisions.

They trust and believed that process is an important part of the leadership to accomplish their goals. Even the transactional leader do shared and trust the process. Transactional leaders are known for the practice of granting rewards for progress towards such goals or for reaching them. They believed that for all the services or tasks done shall be reward because such positive contingent reinforcement is seen as one way to motivate their employees. And so does with contingent punishment or penalization, when members fail to live up to the leader? expectation. These two are characteristics of transaction-oriented people who are more concerned with efficient processes.

Learning and understanding the all the theories and concept on this book is a process, a planned implementation of the author. As the author, and the leader of this book, Bass had worked together with his „ participants? ; gathering insights in a process which later, till now, had create a momentum that may drive the leaders today. “ Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations” had contributed a lot to my understanding of leadership. There are numerous areas that I discovered on leadership even this particular <https://assignbuster.com/leadership-and-performance-beyond-expectations/>

publication had been around for more than 20 years. I may have read some leadership related publications before but nothing is almost detailed as this book.

It had brought valuable information in me to better understand the bigger picture on leadership and being a leader. Previously for me, leadership is all about the traits, styles and approaches we chose towards leading the different types of followers, leadership is all about being tact; knowing what to do and to whom. But perhaps, after this publication, my view and understanding on the concept of leadership is widen and broaden. Never had I imagined before that there are so many studies done on leadership alone, and this book represent also as a research that for the first time documents the traits of an exceptional leader.

The author had reviews most of the known theories available during the period and come out with a most complete summary to date on this capacity. There is a part from this book which varies from my personal shallow opinion. Hollander (1978) suggested that leader-follower positions are interchangeable. He quoted that being a leader or a follower is not a fixed state of affairs and followers have the potential to become leaders. I do agree that follower may become a leader but I do not fancy that the position is interchangeable.

I am more towards the idea of Burns (1978) who stated that transformational leaders having the capabilities to make their followers into leader, where the “ mutual charisma” is a possibility as this would seen most clearly in the transforming effects of mentoring. After reading this book, I would strongly

recommend this book to another student of leadership who may wish to learn and explore more on this topic. This almost detailed book of leadership would be a very good addition to any academic leadership reference text. I would also like to recommend that this book not to be taken as a sole reference, as there are more to be explore from other books.

Furthermore, most of the theories and concepts eviued in this particular book have not been explained into greater details. It is just a summary from various sources on leadership and is believed to be best for further and additional reading only, perhaps for those who are looking for better understanding on such topic. If I am to write something different from the author? s one but with the same title, instead of just a collection of literature, I would love to add on the expectation from the environment towards the leaders today. As people? expectation keep on growing and expanding, I do believed that there is a need to explore for more.

The area of empowerment that has not been specifically discussed, which globally practiced and accepted nowadays may also be included. This practice may add some extra edges from what had been presented by the author in order to make it an almost complete leadership reference to date. Finally, I would also like to add the latest series of achievement of great leaders today as it may be clearer and visible to current audience.