

Concepts at servant leadership



According to Greenleaf servant-leaders are driven to serve first, rather than to lead first, always striving to meet the highest priority needs of others. In comparing Christianity and Islamic religion in regards to servant leadership, the characteristics must be observed: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. This paper will address two religions ' Islamic and Christianity ' one that is compatible and the other not compatible with Greenleaf's characteristics of servant leadership. It will focus on TDIndustries, which has demonstrated servant leadership. Also, it will explain the importance of self-awareness and emotional intelligence and the role it play in enabling leaders.

In 1977 Robert Greenleaf introduced the concept of servant leadership. Servant-leaders emphasize the development and elevation of followers. Servant-leadership is a natural feeling; it serves others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of the common good. The core Christian values include hope, righteousness, love, and putting God first in our lives. Christianity share similar values of servant leadership. In Matthew 20: 26-28, Christ tells us that we need, first of all, to lead in an attitude of servant hood. Christianity is about a personal relationships with God and with others. Christian servant leaders serve God through investing in others so that together they may accomplish a task for God's glory. Christians, non-Christians, and women are treated equally in society and American court of law. The majority of Christians regard women with dignity and respect, having been created alongside men in the image of God.

The Islamic religion share some but dose not share the essential characteristics of servant leadership. The Islamic religion treats Muslims and non-Muslims very different. Non-Muslims are referred to as dhimmi, which are considered second class citizens. They are not allowed to present evidence against a Muslim in a court of law governed by the Koran. Since his oath was unacceptable in an Islamic court his Muslim opponent could not easily be condemned. In order to defend himself, the dhimmi was obliged to purchase Muslim witnesses at great expense . The punishment that a guilty Muslim received for a crime would be greatly reduced if the victim were a dhimmi. The Islamic state is forbidden from discriminating between citizens on the basis of race, creed, colour or anything else. In origin all the rules of Islam apply equally to Muslims and non-Muslims. Under Islamic Shari’ah law, non-believers ‘ Christians and Jews anyway ‘ are permitted to live as long as they support Islam through their Dhimmi taxes and are willing to accept what amounts to a third or fourth class existence, always subject to false accusations and ill treatment. Dhimmis always live in fear. Dhimmi is the status of infidels under Islam who are permitted to live in Muslim jurisdictions but only with restrictions as second class citizens. Additionally, Muslim women also suffer under a dual standard and experience second class status.

Jack Lowe, Sr. founder of TDIndustries dedication to servant-leadership began many years ago; he developed a leadership approach based on his religious convictions.

It was the responsibility of his leaders to build his organization by ensuring the achievement of their employees’ personal and professional career goals.

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This servant leadership approach to and management has enabled TDI to make the necessary changes for survival during difficult times. For the last five decades, they seemed increased profit growth and employee satisfaction. By taking care of their employees, TDI is ranked number 36 on Fortune magazines' 100 Best Companies to Work For (2006). What makes this organization so great? This is an employee-owned contractor company. The board of directors is elected by employees. According to Jack Lowe Jr. (2006) there are key elements of servant-leadership that are continuously emphasized at TDIndustries: being a servant first, making sure that other people's needs are served, and serving through listening. Firstly, ' we are committed to providing outstanding career opportunities by exceeding our customers' expectations through continuous aggressive improvement.'

Secondly, to ensure their employees' needs are served annual survey are compared to a national average. Finally, top management would invite employees in to discuss critical issues and brainstorm ideas to solve business related problems. Jack Lowe Jr. believes in open communication and through these key elements all employees has an opportunity to share their views and suggestions at least once every two years. TDIndustries has consistently practiced and call attention to the success they have experienced as a result of institutionalizing these key elements of servant leadership. Their strong commitment to servant-leadership has created an environment of mutual trust and respect between employees and leaders. By encouraging and respecting an individual value, team trust is increased. Any by respecting others, the leader in turn earns respect. Where there is strong trust, there is strong commitment to a vision that creates value, meaning, and purpose.

Employees know their voices are heard and leaders are genuinely interested in their ideas.

On an interpersonal level, the importance of self awareness to Marvin knows his strengths and weaknesses can help gain the trust of others and increase his credibility, which will increase his leadership effectiveness. On an organizational level, acknowledging the he does not have all the answers and will make mistakes and knowing when to ask for help. Marvin believes ‘ having good human skills will have a high degree of self awareness and a capacity to understand or empathize with others.’ By developing his emotional intelligence, he establishes a strong bond with employees and management. His emotional intelligence is key to his skills as a respiratory therapist. Being compassionate about serving his patients is an emotional competence base on empathy. Trustworthiness is a competence that is based on self-regulation. Both of these competencies are critical in helping to make him an outstanding therapist.

In closing, servant leadership is not a particular style of leadership, but rather relates to the motivation behind a leader’s thoughts, words and actions. Servant leaders must ensure that their vision and principles are in line with other in their organization. While serving other first may not appear easy and is the heart of servant leadership; it could be easier when leaders hold a similar vision and value for themselves. Christianity show more similar characteristics of servant leadership than Islam. Christian servant leaders serve God through investing in others so that together they may accomplish a task for God’s glory. This ultimate accomplishment of Christian leaders will spread to help mentor and grow additional leaders who can be sent out to

establish new ministries and train even more leaders. Significant oppositions with servant leadership theory were found within Islam. These oppositions do not preclude servant leadership from being practiced within those traditions but raise serious questions as to how compatible these traditions actually are with the whole theory and its implications. The Islamic state is forbidden from discriminating between citizens on the basis of race, creed, color or anything else. However, under Islamic Shari'ah law, non-believers ' Christians and Jews anyway ' are permitted to live as long as they support Islam through their Dhimmi taxes and are willing to accept what amounts to a third or fourth class existence, always subject to false accusations and ill treatment. Jack Lowe, Sr. of TDIndustries is regarded as a true visionary in taking this company to the next level in servant leadership. He utilized servant leadership and religious convictions, by consistently treated their 1400 employees the way he wish to be treated and a partner. This is reflected by being a servant first, making sure that other people's needs are served, and serving through listening. Being true to himself and his employees through servant leadership, help to bridge the respect and trust between employees and leaders. Showing self awareness and emotional are key characteristics in servant leadership. Expressing compassion when serving patients and being conscious of what you are good at while acknowledging what you still have yet to learn. This includes admitting when you don't have the answer and owning up to mistakes.