Transformational leadership essay

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Transformational Leadership IntroductionThis paper outlines the process of implementing a change of program within a school system using the transformational leadership style. We assume that here, the " leader" is the head of the school, i. e. the head master.

Subordinates include teachers and their assistants, and other staff members. A brief definition of the transformational model is followed by certain reasons behind choosing this particular model. Then, a description of how to use this model to implement change is followed by some of the positive and negative influences that may affect the change process.

Lastly, it is discussed how the negative influences can be overcome. Transformational Leadership: DefinitionTransformational leadership theory was developed by James MacGregor Burns, and it revolves around the idea that effective leadership is one which focuses on inspiring employees in order to motivate them and foster their enthusiasm and commitment to the corporate vision. Instead of offering tangible rewards for performance, this theory of leadership makes use of moral rewards in return for employee performance. (BNet, n. d) Why Use Transformational Leadership Model? There are certain factors which lead to the decision of choosing this model for implementing the change of program. The very dynamics of change are such that transformational leadership is the best style of leadership to adopt in order to implement a change successfully and effectively.

Firstly, a change cannot be brought about successfully without gaining support, confidence and commitment from subordinates. In this case, it is

essential to gain support and confidence of all employees involved, e. g. staff members, professors and their assistants, students, etc. If they are not willing to support the change, it will not be implemented properly. It follows that in order to gain this trust and confidence, the leader must communicate openly, and have the ability to listen and collaborate effectively. Effective listening and collaboration increases the sense of ownership felt by employees towards the organization, as the employees are made to feel more involved in the decision making process. This will increase employee loyalty and commitment to the organization.

Also, this sense of ownership plays an integral role in successful implementation of change, as employees will be less resistant to any change as they will feel it is their decisions and feedback which is being implemented. Open communication involves more than taking inputs from subordinates. Equally important is providing constructive and regular feedback. In short, open communication should be used by the leader to form sound relationships with peers and subordinates. These relationships can then by used to gain the trust necessary for employees to be more open to any change proposed by the leader. However important open communication is to bring about change within the organization, it should not be seen as an end in itself. Open communication should be used as a tool to build the sort of relationship with employees whereby the leader can then inspire and motivate them into accepting and committing to the change at hand.

The leader can them motivate subordinates by offering moral rewards in return for employee compliance, and these moral rewards would be accepted by subordinates because of the level of trust and confidence that has been established through open communication. Hence we see that transformational leadership is the key to implementing change effectively, as it is this sort of leadership which will ensure employees to buy-in to the change. It is this leadership style which will provide clear direction by modeling the way for the team.

This means that in order to bring out about a change successfully, the leader needs to do more than communicate openly and build trusting relationships. He needs to lead by example, and display in his behavior what he wishes from his employees. This is another way of motivating and inspiring employees, as junior level employees will always aspire and look up to their leader. Therefore, leading by example in order to motivate employees is another quality of transformational leaders.

(Wynn Solutions, n. d)Transformational leadership is also the best style to use when dealing with employee resistance. Whatever the situation, whenever change is being implemented in any organization, the leader can rest assured that most, if not all employees will display resistance to change. It is in the very nature of human beings to fear change.

For this reason, the leader needs to have the ability to inspire and motivate subordinates in order to alleviate some of these fears. It is these factors which lead to my decision of using transformational style of leadership to implement the change. To successfully implement change within a school, a

leader needs to secure the commitment of all professors and staff members. In order to do this, he must adopt an open communication policy whereby he will take their inputs and opinions, and also give his own feedback. This will lead to the establishment of a sound relationship between the two parties, which will then be used as a basis to inspire and motivate the professors and staff members to buy into the change. Using Transformational Leadership Model to Implement ChangeThis section deals with how to use transformational leadership to implement change within the school system. Transformational leadership is said to be the most useful when changing the culture of an organization.

Transformational leaders can change the organizational culture by changing employee beliefs and goals, and by changing the way employees define their goals. (Alger, 2008)In the same way this model can be used to implement a change of program within a school system. Transformational leadership requires a charismatic leader to inspire, motivate and empower employees in order to gain their commitment to the change. I would use these techniques to gain the support and willingness of teachers and staff to be committed to the proposed change.

Positive and Negative Influences of the Transformational ModelTransformational leaders use a combination of authority, power, and charismatic personality to inspire and motivate people into following their footsteps. Needless to say, this sort of influential power does not come without the potential of danger. This sort of danger arises when leaders lose sight of moral and ethical standards, and the resultant style of leadership is

termed as " pseudo-transformational leadership" by some scholars. In short, as long as transformational leaders have ethical and moral considerations in mind, there is no problem. However, if this is not the case, the result could be detrimental for subordinates and the future of the organization. Therefore, under certain circumstances, transformational leadership can have negative influences on the change process.

One of the determinants of whether or not this style of leadership will have negative influences is integrity. A leader with a high level of integrity will always believe in giving fair treatment to the entire workforce. However, leaders with low levels of integrity will ignore employee needs and use his charismatic personality to manipulate his followers into accepting changes and making decisions which will eventually be beneficial only for himself, and not the entire organization. In this way, the transformational leader's charismatic personality is being misused by him. His ability to inspire and motivate is being used to misguide subordinates by manipulating them. Therefore, if the Head of the school is being driven by selfish ulterior motives, his transformational leadership will lead the school into a change which might not be beneficial for the entire school.

The change in program could be better suited to the leader's individual needs rather than the needs of the students and teachers. If this occurs, then sooner or later the staff and teachers will realize that the proposed change of program does not suit the needs of the students, and once they retaliate against the change, the entire system will break down. The employees will loose faith in their leader, and it will be impossible for them

to follow him through any other change process. There are also certain organizational factors which could lead to negative influences to the change process.

For example, if the nature of school is such that a bureaucratic culture is in place, the transformational leader could use this to his advantage. He can misuse power for his own benefit. This can be done by using his power to manipulate and control others. (Russell, 2004)Having said all of this, the positive effects of transformational leadership cannot be ignored. Transformational leadership is proved by a number of studies to have positive effects on organizational innovation. Therefore, when implementing a change, it would be beneficial to use transformational style as it would gauge more creative ideas and adoption methods by the employees and other peers. (Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2007)Research shows that transformational leadership is also positively correlated with work attitudes, i.

e. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Therefore, by using this model to bring about change within the school system, the Head master would gain commitment of teachers and staff, and also increase their level of job satisfaction. (Avolio, 2005) Overcoming Negative InfluencesAll leaders have a combination of positive and negative aspects. The key to overcoming the negative factors is for the leader to himself realize and recognize the potential dangers which lie in his excessive power. The transformational leader must know that he has the ability to inspire and motivate, but must also be aware of the dangers which lie in this ability. Only then can he work

to control instincts to misuse his power, and ensure that he uses his charisma and inspirational power only for the greater good of the organization.

Another way that the negative influences can be mitigated is through accountability to others. Accountability to others will ensure that leaders stay ethical and moral, as it will keep a constant check on them. The transformational leader, hence, should not be running a " one-man show". This will keep him grounded and will keep help him stay focused on what is best for the organization's interest, and not his own. (Russell, 2004)Therefore, the negative influences when implementing a change of program within a school can be overcome by ensuring that the Head of the school is accountable to others for his decisions and actions.

Often, for this purpose, there is education board which overseas all decisions and actions carried out by educational institutes. Such a board will make sure that all decisions regarding any sort of change will be for the greater good of the students and teachers, and is not fulfilling any selfish ulterior motives of just the Head. References Alger, Gary (2008).

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