Individual reflective account of leadership development management essay

Design

The theories of transformational leading (Bass, 1985 ; Bass and Avolio, 1994) and magnetic leading (Conger and Kanungo, 1987) represent popular attacks to the conceptualization of leading and have arguably evolved to be cardinal to the field. However, a figure of bookmans have raised several issues with these attacks (Pawar, 2003 ; Yukl, 1999) . and it is the purpose here to foreground a figure of concerns that relate to the challenge of learning leading.

This addresses an country of disregard in the literature as there has been limited consideration of the instruction of leading (Doh, 2003) . The Meaning of Leadership Research workers interested in leading have approached the development of an apprehension of leading from a assortment of positions. Much of the leading research conducted during the first half of 20th century was focused on the designation of personal traits (properties) that characterised those persons who emerged as leaders. A reappraisal of the leading literature reveals that there are multiple definitions that have been given to the leading concept. Bass (1990) focuses on the construct of leading. He suggests that there are several different attacks to the definition. While each of these positions and utilizations of the term is a legitimate usage of the concept of leading, each reflects a different conceptualisation than that which traditionally has been employed. Bass points out that definitions can be used to function a assortment of intents.

Bass (1960) noted that the definition used in a peculiar survey of leading depends on the intents of the survey. Consistent with this, Yukl (1994: 5) concluded that " leading research should be designed to supply information

relevant to the full scope of definitions, so that over clip it will be possible to compare the public-service corporation of different conceptualisations and arrive at some consensus on the affair. Bass (1990: 19) farther notes that research workers have developed definitions to function the undermentioned different intents: (1) to place the object to be observed, (2) to place a signifier of pattern, (3) to fulfill a peculiar value orientation, (4) to avoid a peculiar orientation or deduction for a pattern, and (5) to supply a footing for the development of theory. The definitions indicate a patterned advance of idea, although historically, many tendencies overlapped.

The earlier definitions identified leading as a focal point of group procedure and motion, personality in action. The following type considered it as the art of bring oning conformity. The more recent definitions conceive of leading in footings of influence relationships, power derived functions, persuasion, influence on end accomplishment, function distinction, support, induction of construction, and perceived ascriptions of behavior that are consistent with what the what the percipients believe leading to be. The truth is that leading may in fact involve all these things. It is suggested here that a impression of a leader animating followings to a shared vision represents merely one manner to believe about leading and may non be of much aid to those concerned with the instruction of leading. It is in this regard that I intend to reason that this dominant conceptualization represents a peculiar manner of believing about administrations and managerial work (of which leading is one facet) , viz. what may be described as " systems-control " thought. Systems-control orthodoxy tends to advance a instead mechanistic position of administrations and managerial work seeing pull offing as an activity

chiefly concerned with " planing and commanding work administrations as if they were large machine-like systems rationally devised to run into unambiguous organizational ends " (Watson, 2005, p.

2) . Such believing derives from modernist and universalistic aspirations to maximize control over human fortunes with the director being viewed as an expert who controls and motivates subsidiaries to act in peculiar ways consistent with the administration ' s ends. Indeed, Barker (2001, p. 479) challenges the impression of " new " leading theory, reasoning that the work of Bass (1985, 1990) for illustration, clings to the thought that " leading is about leaders oversing subsidiaries, approximately subordinates working difficult toward institutional aims as the primary end for leading and about the leader ' s ability to persuade/inspire/motivate subsidiaries to let go of their ain demands to work toward the involvements of the leader or the establishment that the leader represents " . The extent so to which new theories provide an alternate position of leading is therefore questionable since along with old conceptualizations, they continue to be framed by systems-control thought.

It is suggested that an alternate manner to believe about leading is to follow process-relational thought. To follow such thought would be to recognize that: Directors like everyone else in organizational scenes, are continually endeavoring to do sense of legion crosscutting and conflicting ends and intents. Directors and non-managers likewise invariably have to do and refashion deals, exert power, resist power, header with struggles of involvement and negotiate apprehensions with others to do certain that the

goods are produced or services provided to a degree and quality that enables the administration to stay in being (Watson, 2005, pp.

2-3) . The beginnings of such thought may be seen to be associated with a dissatisfaction with mainstream systems-control thought and in peculiar, the review of Silverman (1970) which drew upon thoughts from societal action theory (Berger and Luckman, 1967) , foregrounding an apprehension of administrations as societal concepts produced and reproduced through their members ' activities and subsequently being built upon to underscore the impression of negotiated order (Day and Day, 1977) . To see the administration in process-relational footings therefore involves a displacement from seeing the administration as a end prosecuting entity as suggested by a systems-control position to believing about the administration as " ongoing forms of intending doing and activity brought about as a? ¦ people in relationships to others and to their civilizations " (Watson, 2005, p.) . Sing the administration through a process-relational lens therefore accepts that merely partial managerial control can of all time be achieved given the ongoing and emergent nature of organizational activity and the centrality of " people in relationships to others " with their inevitable complexnesss and differing involvements.

However, it is of import to observe that the acceptance of a process-relational position (or so a systems-control 1) goes beyond a manner of seeing the organising and managing of work, it besides represents a manner of speaking and moving towards organizing and pull offing. Thus a director who adopts a process-relational model is more likely to take into history

broader and more-subtle facets of work behavior. Arguably, the cardinal impression of leader ' s animating followings to a shared vision seen in new leading theories becomes more debatable when believing in process-relational footings.

It is therefore suggested here that believing about leading in process-relational footings may be more helpful to direction pedagogues as it does greater justness to the composite, mussy worlds of organizational life and as such provides greater aid in assisting directors to do sense of their direction pattern, and in peculiar, the portion of their pattern that is leading. Further, the thought that a leader must in some manner be gifted shows a arrested development to impressions of leading as an innate ability and as such suggests little can be done by manner of learning leading. Indeed, in my ain auditing work, I found several directors who perceived leading as an inspirational gift and hence efforts to learn leading were seen as limited: I do n't believe good leaders are people that you can, I think the term is a good leader is born, you ca n't turn person from being a hapless leader into a good leader by seting them on some classs a? that kind of inspirational accomplishment is something that that person has and I do n't believe you can ever develop that into person (project director) . Whilst the impression of epic leading may keep weight for some there is a turning organic structure of grounds that debunks this leading myth. Numerous surveies are now found which may be said to lend to an emerging anti-heroic leading position which suggests leaders are non larger than life persons with particular powers instead they are far more ordinary and reserved.

The work of Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2001) offers a really different construct of transformational leading to that described earlier. Their work high spots the saliency of what the leader does for the person such as empowering, valuing, back uping and promoting. This is contrasted with dominant thoughts of the leader moving as a function theoretical account and animating the follower. Indeed, Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe suggest that followership, so cardinal to transformational and magnetic leading theory is absent in their work. Remarks made by directors during my ain audit work were consistent with this position with directors speaking of back uping and promoting others instead than animating followings: Well those things leading can be a reassurance, a steadfast determination, a supportive determination, giving people encouragement, being really prepared to lodge your caput above the parapet where other people are n't sometimes. Bing decisive instead than indecisive. Not ever taking from the forepart but merely letting people know that you are supportive of what they are making that they can trust on you if things go incorrect (operations manager) .

Taking away the impression of followership diminishes the importance of the heroic leader since there is a reduced demand for an inspirational figure to pattern the manner for followings. Alternatively Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe (2001) argue that their work suggests a greater sense of propinquity, openness, humbleness and exposure. Collins (2001) provides grounds that suggests that successful administrations do non hold leaders who are magnetic, epic figures but instead persons who display personal humbleness and professional will. He found that successful leaders which he

footings " level five " leaders, were diffident unpretentious, awkward and modest but at the same clip had an tremendous sum of aspiration non for themselves but the administration. Similarly, Badaracco (2001) suggests the importance of " quiet leading " . This is seen non to animate or thrill, but to concentrate on little things, careful moves and measured attempts. He farther suggests that quiet leaders have an apprehension of the world of their state of affairss observing the bounds of their powers and understanding that they are merely " one piece on the chess board " .

This emerging work would look to gestate leading in possibly more realistic ways concentrating attending off from thoughts of inspirational powers and alternatively a suggestion of an ordinary individual working alongside others. This is consistent with a process-relational framing of leading since it is recognised that leaders are " like everybody else " and make non possess particular powers therefore traveling attending off from thoughts of particular personality properties. Therefore there is hope for the bulk of being able to lend to leading and a suggestion that there may be some function for the direction instructor.