

How leaders enlist and enable others to act



“ Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow” (Kouzes et al., 2007). Leaders must master the dynamics of this relationship. They must learn how to mobilize others to want to struggle for shared aspirations. This means that leaders need to acquire the understanding, skills, and experience to collaborate successfully. Within this context, leaders move away from being the sole decision maker to involving others such as staff, and community members in the decision making process.

I have looked deeply into the leader-constituent relationship. Through case analyses, books and journal articles, I have discovered that leaders at all levels follow rather similar paths as they guide others along pioneering journeys. By these studies, I was able to identify one of the most important practices common to most leadership achievements that is enabling others to act. This practice has stood the test of time, and it is available to anyone, in any organization or situation, who accepts the leadership challenge.

This essay discusses the broader study that focused on collaboration in order to contextualize and highlight the findings related to the affective elements of collaborative leadership. The essay examines how the leader supports collaboration in their organisation to enlist and enable others to act and analyses the emotional competencies involved in. Finally, consideration is given to how leaders might be supported in the development and acquisition of the key skills required for affective leadership in their organisation.

This essay also highlights the data related to how the leaders support collaboration. It specifically describes the perceptions that leaders and other stakeholders had regarding the role of the leader in fostering collaboration.

The essay includes the description of behaviours exhibited by leaders and perceived by participants in the study as supporting collaboration. The purpose of the essay is to analyse these collaborative behaviours in terms of their emotional component. It is important to note that the goal of this study was not to examine emotional competencies of leadership. Data related to the affective domain of leaders' work emerged as significant findings of the research question.

Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations

“ Motivation is what drives individuals to work in the way they do to fulfill goals, needs or expectations. These are numerous, varied and changing.”
(Bush, T. et al, p237)

People can imagine an exciting, highly attractive future for their organization. Leaders may be driven by their clear image of possibility and what their organization could become. In this case, leaders passionately believe that they can make a difference. They create the way that no one else has ever produced. They uplift people's spirits with an ennobling perspective about why they should strive to be better than they are today. This means that to create an organised movement as well as significant change, leaders need to enlist others. They also must appeal a shared

aspiration because people will not follow until the vision is accepted as their own.

Leaders must speak others' language to enlist them in a vision. Leaders not only understand people's needs but also have their interests at heart when they are to sign up for journeys into the future. Leaders breathe life into visions through vivid language and an effective style. Their own enthusiasm and excitement are contagious and spread from the leader to constituents. Their belief in and enthusiasm for the vision are the sparks that ignite the flame of inspiration. (Kouzes et al. 2007, p. 16-18)

Breath life into your vision and align your dream with the people's dream

According to Kouzes et al. (2007) and Hallinger et al. (2002), people desire to do something that can make a profound difference to the future of their families, friends, and communities and their life as well. Therefore, leaders not only show the directions and set the standards but also effectively communicate a vision. Visions are about our strong desire such as ideals, hopes, dreams and aspirations to achieve something great. In communicating shared visions, leaders need to make them meaningful by awakening dreams, breathing life into them, and arousing the belief that they can get extraordinary things done before bringing these visions into the conversation.

In order to make their visions become true, leaders need to keep people focused and excited about the meaning and significance of their work. Leaders have to animate the vision and make manifest the purpose so that

others can see it, hear it and feel it. It is not leader's dream alone but is the people's vision. Hall (2002) shows that they need to show how their individual and collective efforts could make a positive difference and make sure that each team member could repeat the vision not just by rote but also from the heart. This would enable them to realize these aspirations and make all people have the power within themselves to accomplish whatever they desire.

Expand your communication and expressiveness skills to animate the vision

Kouzes et al. (2007), Shriberg et al. (2005), Green (2000) and Ginsberg et al. (2003) show that to enlist others and arouse them to go decisively forward, leaders not only appeal to their ideas, animate the vision and breathe life into it but also help them understand how their own interests and dreams are aligned with the vision. The constituents will become internally motivated to commit their individual energies to its realisation if leaders recognise that their enthusiasm and expressiveness are indispensable factors in their efforts to generate commitment in their constituents.

People always desire to work more effectively and find out the fastest way to achieve their common goals but it will be very difficult if the visions are not images in their mind. Therefore, to enlist others and inspire a shared vision, leaders must be able to paint word pictures that best portray the meaning of their vision and that others get a natural mental image of what things will be like in the future.

To find the ways of giving expression to their collective hopes for the future, leaders face some challenges. Firstly, extraordinary things are often very difficult to get for leaders and their constituents. They may be dispirited while facing these difficulties. In this situation, leaders must recognise that their constituents look for them to demonstrate an enthusiastic and genuine belief in their capacity and supply the means to achieve and express optimism for the future to remain passionate despite obstacles. These mean that their vital tasks are to foster team spirit, breed optimism, promote resilience as well as renew faith and confidence. Thus, leaders must look the situation at the bright side and keep hope alive. “ They must strengthen their constituents’ belief that life’s struggle will produce a more promising future”. (Kouzes et al. 2007, p. 147)

Secondly, in mobilizing people to struggle for shared aspirations, their intensive enthusiasm is required to generate. Consequently, leaders are responsible for the energy of authentic excitement in their organization. They need to add more emotion by using all means of verbal and nonverbal expression to their words and their behavior to communicate with their constituents because it really makes their messages to be more memorable. In addition, “ the prerequisite to enlisting others in a shared vision is genuineness. The first place to look before taking to others about the vision of the future is in your heart” (Kouzes et al., 2007, p. 151). If the vision is not leaders’ or they do not believe in what they are saying, it will be very difficult for them to enlist the others.

As Staler (2005) point out, people identified specific communicative behaviours that the leader demonstrates which can support collaboration in

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the organisation. However, they felt that listening and openness are particularly important in providing support. Inherently, such behaviour is emotional work. Openness is related to the honest sharing and disclosure of information, both personal and professional. Similarly, Kouzes and Posner (1999) indicate that in order to become fully trusted, we must be open. Furthermore, when the leader takes the risk of being open, others are more likely to take a similar risk, thereby building interpersonal trust. The ability of the leader to foster such a safe environment, to promote and exemplify such a learning model is, in part, an emotional capacity.

Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships

“ In today’s virtual organisations, cooperation can not be restricted to a small group of loyalists. It must include peers, managers, customers and clients, supplies, citizens. All those have a stake in the vision”. (Kouzes et al., 2007, p. 20). Leaders have to know that to produce the good results people must feel a sense of personal power and ownership. Instead of the command and the control techniques of traditional management, the new effective way to enable others to act is to make people feel strong, capable, and committed by giving the power away.

Show trust to build trust

Need for trust working together, as Mayer, R. C. (1995) said, often involves interdependence, and people must therefore depend on others in various ways to accomplish their personal and organisational goals. The development of mutual trust provides one mechanism for enabling employees to work together more effectively. The emergence of self-directed

teams and a reliance on empowered workers greatly increase the importance of the concept of trust (Golembiewski & McConkie, 1975; Larson & LaFasto, 1989). In the use of self-directed teams, trust must take the place of supervision because direct observation of employees becomes impractical. Further, a clear understanding of trust and its causes can facilitate cohesion and collaboration between people by building trust through means other than interpersonal similarity.

According to Kouzes et al. (2007) and Grint (2003), trust must be at the heart of collaboration. Leaders have to be trust others if they want others to trust them. They can not lead without trust. Therefore, to create a climate of trust, leaders need to be the first to trust by being the first to open up, to show vulnerability and to let go of control. Self-confident and self-disclosure are also required to build interpersonal trust. Moreover, Dinham (2007) point out that leaders must understand that besides sharing information and resources to foster collaboration they need to care for others' needs and interests that play a key ingredient to build the team around common purpose and mutual respect. They understand that mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary efforts. If leadership is built on trust and confidence, people will take risks to make changes and movements alive.

Leaders have the most significant impact on their organisation, promote cooperative goals and build trust by engaging in frequent conversation. It is impossible for leaders to take their people or their organisation to the next level without meaningful, frequent, and consistent communication. Huber (2002) reveal that a collaborative environment leads to greater satisfaction of individuals within the organisation, and therefore enhances their

performance. Yet a collaborative environment does not just emerge because one declares there will now be collaboration. It takes a great deal of trust and respect for this type of synergy to occur. A leader builds this trust by asking and utilizing others input, considering alternative perspectives, allowing others to make decisions, and communicating, communicating, communicating.

When employees feel that they are trusted, they will become trustworthy. On the contrary, when individuals feel that they are not trusted, they will exhibit behaviors creating a toxic environment. In the book the Leadership Challenge, Kouzes and Posner point out that trust is the most significant predictor of individual's satisfaction with their organisation. Highly effective leaders recognise that it is not important for them to be right, but rather to listen, take advice, lose arguments, and in some cases follow. Through these behaviors trust is built and performance is maximized.

Get people interacting to facilitate relationship

The most genuine way to demonstrate your care and interest in others is to engage them in conversation. Frequent conversations build trust while learning about another's values, interests, concerns, and desires. People do not perform at their greatest levels when in isolation. Shriberg et al. (2005) argue that it is important that an organization provides opportunities to interact whether it is through social events, common meeting spaces, or regular staff meetings. Some leaders may see frequent social opportunities as wasteful or non-productive; the reality is an organization cannot develop shared priorities or reach common goals if there are not opportunities to interact both personally and professionally.

In addition, Kouzes and Posner (2007) and Shriberg et al. (2005) showed that a sense of interdependent community in which everyone coordinate their efforts and need the others to be successful is one of the most crucial components to cooperation and collaboration. To bind others into cooperative efforts, a specific reason for being together must be provided by sharing and developing cooperative goals. It is also necessary for leaders to establish and keep the norms of reciprocity and fairness in their mind to improve relationship and decrease stress while working together.

While people keeping the common goal in their mind, leaders need to help them to understand that they can not achieve the group outcomes unless they all play successfully their individual parts. People need to know that the long-term benefits of common group are more significant than the short-term benefits of working alone. There are many things that no one can gain on their own, but they can easily accomplish by working together.

Moreover, Kouzes et al. (2007) pointed out that: “ group goals, reciprocity, and promoting joint efforts are all essential for collaboration to occur, but what is critical is positive face-to-face interaction”. Nowadays, with the great help from technology people have many ways to connect with the others such as the emails, instant messages, and video conferences. However, the most effective interaction to build trust and promote teamwork is face-to-face conversation frequently. Durable and regular interactions between people make them always remember about how they have treated and have been treated by others. This helps them to have positive feelings on the rest of their group, which may be a solid foundation for success. Some people claim that face-to-face connection takes considerable amount of time, but <https://assignbuster.com/how-leaders-enlist-and-enable-others-to-act/>

despite this disadvantage, leaders need to make it one of their leadership imperatives because of the effectiveness it brings to them.

Strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence

To allow people to feel more powerful and ultimately be more productive, it is critical to increase their ability to influence. This may be done through increasing their signature authority, reducing unnecessary approval steps, eliminating rules when possible, and assigning non-routine jobs.

Unfortunately, in many organizations employees are charged with tremendous amounts of responsibility yet are not able to influence their environment to efficiently and effectively get the job done well. Employees must feel that they have the freedom to move around freely and maneuver resources necessary to accomplish an assigned task. (Jill Tomac)

Creating a climate in which people are involved and feel important is at the heart of strengthening others. Leaders must make sure that everyone involve in all the group work. They need to listen to the opinions of others carefully and then help them to build up their capabilities as well as update their own information and perspective. “ When people are trusted and have more discretion, more authority, and more information, they are much more likely to use their energies to produce extraordinary results.” (Kouzes et al., p. 21) Moreover, one key to success is that in order to gain respect leaders must also show respect for others.

Jill Tomac shows that leaders are those individuals who are not widely known; they have very little interest in placing themselves in the forefront

but are quite happy having their successors in the spotlight. In effect, these leaders create stars all around them, allowing others the glory. As a result, each member of the organization is performing at his/her maximum potential and bringing the organisation to new levels of achievement. Leaders recognise the importance of empowering others, through sharing information and assigning responsibility while enforcing accountability. A leader's ability to understand and appreciate other's perspectives can be the critical distinguishing factor between a success and failure. Leaders who prefer to work by themselves and do not engage or believe in those around them have great difficulty achieving their goals. They have a tendency to share power and provide choice; allowing others the latitude to make choices and take responsibility. Of course, it is valuable to provide the expectations, parameters, direction, and skill building needed to be successful. However, beyond that people must feel that they have the respect and trust of their superiors to get the job done.

Effective leaders use their power in service to others through strengthening and supporting them. In effect, leaders turn subordinates into leaders themselves - enabling people to consider variables, make choices, and act on their own initiative. As Kouzes and Posner state " Leaders strengthen others when they give their power away, when they make it possible for constituents to exercise choice and discretion, when they develop competence to excel, when they assign critical tasks, and when they offer visible support."

Increase individual accountability to enhance self-determination

To help people increase accountability and then enhance self-determination, leaders need to act by following a scientific process.

Firstly, as Riley et al. (2003) said, people can not finish their work as their group desire and can not make a difference if they have no freedom of choice about what they do as well as the way that they think fit. Thus, leaders need to help them to recognise their abilities and assign them to roles that they are comfortable by listening to their ideas and suggestions. By this way, every group member can bring value to the whole team and be responsible for their work Secondly, leaders must design work proactively to allow others discretion and choice. It means that people must have the latitude in decisions what they desire and believe should be done in their own creative and flexible ways. By this way, leaders can empower and strengthen others to do their best.

Thirdly, personal accountability is a critical factor of collaboration. It seems to be a contradiction between cooperation and personal accountability as some people's opinions. They argue that they will take less responsibility for their action while working collectively because others do their parts of work for them. Although they have a point in thinking that, their opinions are not true. This is because the team do not accept the slackers unless they increase their own responsibility. People are forced powerfully to do well by the expectations of the rest of their group. Therefore, by promoting collaboration, leaders simultaneously increase individual accountability. (Kouzes et al. 2007).

Offer training support to develop competence

Leithwood et al. (2003) indicate that when increasing the authority and influence a person has within the organization, it is critical for people to develop the needed skills and knowledge to perform effectively. It is foolish to ask people to begin making decisions or take actions that they have never been assigned before without preparing them to be successful. Through training, coaching, and mentoring staff, they will not only increase their abilities but also their interest and dedication to their work. (Jill Tomac)

“Valuing people means not only listening to what they have to say or contribute, but taking their input and using it to solve problems or make decisions. To value the contribution of other people, the leader supports the collaborative process by focusing on the interdependent nature of their work” (Staler, 2005). However, as noted by Beatty (2000a), and the studies of Blase and Blase (2000), leaders may feel concerned about losing control while letting go of control. Therefore, they need to understand about shared responsibility.

Advocacy for collaboration includes the promotion of beliefs, goals, and information about the value of collaboration. A principal advocates for collaboration by conveying the ongoing visible endorsement of, and participation, in collaborative activities (Leonard and Leonard 2001). As previously mentioned, when principals model collaboration they build credibility, because their actions are consistent with their words or they do what they say they will do. However, to set an example, principals need to be clear about their values and beliefs; they must know what they stand for. According to Kouzes and Posner (1999) that's the 'say' part. Advocacy then

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might take the form of conveying information on the attributes and goals of collaboration or describing the decision making model for implementation. People say that the leader's advocacy for collaboration helps to support the process are in accordance with Gerber's view (1991: 48), that effective advocacy puts collaboration on the 'launching pad' for take-off in the school.

Goleman (1998) introduced the term emotional competency to describe learned, job-related capabilities or skills that individuals develop based upon their emotional intelligence. As Goleman (1995) identified, five domains of emotional intelligence are self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and adeptness in relationships. People agreed that in collaboration, workplace skills related to emotional intelligence are required leadership competencies.

Slater (2005) show that to understand others, leaders need to actively listen to their ideas and sympathise with their feelings, perspectives and concerns. In other word, the artful skill of understanding another person's perspective depends upon a communication skill such as emotional competencies.

Emotional self-awareness that is also identified to relate to competencies is a crucial skills in collaboration. According to Goleman (1998), people who know their emotions engage in accurate self-assessment, and have a strong sense of their own self-worth. Having the courage to speak out is an emotional competency based on self-confidence. The development of self-awareness meant discovering their own voice and coming to their own sense of power. It also means that in a collaborative situation people need to recognise the strengths that they bring to the group (Slater, 2005).

In addition, “ Options, latitude, and accountability fuel people’s sense of power and control over their lives. Yet as necessary as enhancing self-determination is, it is insufficient. Without the knowledge, skills, information, and resources to do a job expertly, without feeling competent to skillfully execute the choices that it requires, people feel overwhelmed and disable”. (Kouzes et al. 2007).

Without education, training and coaching to develop their skills, people may not know how to exercise their knowledge to operate their critical tasks because they are scared of making mistake. Therefore, leaders not only increase the latitude and discretion of their constituents but they also need to raise expenditures on training.

This means that the group members need be understood and then to receive training in both basic and expert skills and problem-solving techniques. These investments will develop people’s competences and foster their confidence. They may be more qualified, more capable and more effective in taking their part of common work.

Basing on understanding how the contextual factors of others’ jobs perform to designed their works to help them know what is expected of them is another important way that leaders can strengthen their constituents. Thus, leaders must to:

provide sufficient training and technical support so that people can complete their assignments successfully. Enrich their responsibilities so that they experience variety in their task assignments and opportunities to make meaningful decisions about how their work gets accomplished. Create <https://assignbuster.com/how-leaders-enlist-and-enable-others-to-act/>

occasions for them to network with others in the organisation. Involve them in programmes, meetings, and decisions that have a direct impact on their job performance. (Kouzes et al. 2007, p. 264)

Conduct coaching conversations to foster self-confidence

As Kouzes et al. (2007) said, without adequate self-confidence, people can not convince to take challenges. They will feel powerless to make choices and to face opposition because they do not believe in their skills as well as they are not sure to make decisions. The lack of self-confidence also leads to the lack of self-determination. Therefore, fostering the confidence for people to accomplish their tasks is critical in the process of strengthening others. Similarly, Gold (1998) and Northouse (2010) point out that leaders must take a careful look at what people are doing and communicate to them that they can be successful if they persevere in their works. It is true that by helping people learn from their skills and experiences, leaders act as coaches. If coaching occurs regularly, people will become more capable because of being encouraged to broaden their skills and experiences.

Jill Tomac indicates that to foster self-confidence, leaders create stars all around them. Rather than shine the spotlight on themselves, they sing the praises of others. Effective leaders need to find out what others doing well, then thank them for their contribution, and finally sharing it with others.

CONCLUSION

Evidences in this essay reveal the need for leaders to enlist and enable others to act in the process of collaboration. To this end, leaders need appropriate professional development of the fundamental abilities that are

required in facilitating groups, reaching consensus as well as team building. In this way, leaders must develop new skills, behaviours, and essential knowledge. Firstly, to enlist others, leaders breathe life in to the shared vision that is meaningful to them. They make people feel proud to be a part of extraordinary common work. Secondly, to foster collaboration, leaders must create a climate of trust and facilitate effective relationship by getting people interacting. They must develop cooperative goals to make senses of collective purpose. Thirdly, to strengthen others, leaders have to extend power and responsibility to them. They develop others' competence and confidence as well as enhance self- determination by offer training and coaching support.

Accordingly, this essay has explored a crucial practice of leaders that is to enable others to act, in which collaboration is the central component. Understanding and managing the emotional aspects of the collaborative process is a challenge for leaders who wish to work in collaborative ways. The success of collaborative reform efforts and the improvement of organization performance rely on the leader's skilful implementation of the collaborative process. Consequently, further studies that examine the emotions of leadership would enhance our understanding of how leaders' competencies in the affective domain can be used to build the capacity for leading in the modern time.