

The charismatic and transformational aspects of leaders essays example

[Business](#), [Employee](#)



Introduction

People form the backbone of organisations. No organisation can exist without people. It is people who work in an organisation. The employees are instrumental in accomplishing the goals and objectives of an organisation. But, each individual has his or her own thought process and priorities. So, it becomes difficult to align people to organisational goals. It is, therefore, important to have an effective leader who can drive people towards a common purpose. There are various ways in which leaders influence their people towards a shared goal, like charisma or fear. The objective of this paper is to delve into the charismatic and transformational aspects of leaders, in specific context to Richard Branson.

The paper is divided into three sections. The first section of the paper briefly describes Richard Branson. The second section highlights the charismatic and transformational aspect of his leadership. The third section concludes the paper.

Brief About Richard Branson

It is important to discuss the backdrop of Richard Branson's entrepreneurship journey as this will help in better comprehension of his personality and leadership quality. This section of the paper introduces Richard Branson and talks briefly about him.

Richard Branson is the founder of Virgin Group. Virgin Group is internationally renowned brand with over 400 companies under its umbrella. According to Forbes (2014), Richard Branson has a net worth of about \$5 billion and he is one of the most high profile billionaires of Britain. Branson is

a self-made man. At an early age, Richard Branson dropped out of school. His dreams of becoming an entrepreneur was fulfilled with the opening of his music record company. The beginning was modest for Branson, but life had lots in store for this ambitious man. The little money that Branson earned from this start-up was invested further in business, in other sectors. His hard work and determination paid and he became the founder of a big empire, the Virgin group of companies.

Charismatic and Transformational Aspects of Branson's Leadership

This section of the paper is divided into two sub-sections. The first defines these two forms of leadership. The second attempts to understand the charismatic and transformational aspects of Branson's leadership.

Definition: Charismatic and Transformational Leadership

Charismatic Leadership. Charismatic leadership, as the name suggests, is motivating people through the leader's charisma. Charisma is nothing but the leader's disposition and charm that attracts followers. Charismatic leaders have a clear vision, an excellent communication skill and use progressive strategies. Charismatic leaders have a lot of positivity about them and do not shy away from expressing their sentiments. They are very aware sensitive towards their surroundings. This helps them gain followers almost instantly.

Transformational Leadership. Transformation means change.

Transformational leaders are change makers. According to Cherry (2014), transformational leadership is a leadership style that instigates progressive

change in the followers. Transformational leaders tend to have the charisma like charismatic leaders. Apart from being charismatic, these leaders are full of energy and are passionate about what they do. They serve as live example for their followers and facilitate their team to become more empowered to handle bigger responsibilities. Thus, they help create second line of leadership.

Richard Branson: Charismatic and Transformational Leadership Aspects

Richard Branson has been recognised as one of the great leaders of the recent times. It is impossible to create an empire like his without being an effective leader and without being able to motivate the team. This subsection of the paper discusses the charismatic and transformational attributes of Branson's leadership style.

Charismatic Aspects of Branson's Leadership. There are four elements of Branson's leadership that makes him a charismatic leader.

First, undoubtedly, Branson was a visionary. He had a clear vision of future and could base his business strategies around this vision. He was able to do the right things at the right time. It is essential to grasp the market dynamics, understand the pulse of the consumer and visualise the need gap, without which it is difficult to be such a successful serial entrepreneur.

Second, he has the talent to gain trust of others as he is sensitive to others and creates an aura of positivity about him. He is sensitive because he listens to his people and does not believe in yelling at his employees.

According to Preston (2014), Branson has never been seen raising voice at his people even during the most testing situations. The positivity in him

comes from his relentless energy and candidness.

Third, communication skill is strength of Branson. He believes in two-way communicating with all employees, irrespective of their hierarchal ranking. According to Feloni (2014), in his book, Branson mentions the importance of going out and meeting people as networking is a powerful tool to grow in an organisation. He also believed in listening, a must-have skill for effective communication. He believes that listening to others helps get the best out of people. The passion he radiates for his work also renders his communication more effective and appealing to others.

Fourth, he has been able to lead by his charismatic personality. Branson's demeanour was pleasant. In an interview with Schawbel (2014), Branson mentioned that laughter is a good therapy to run a successful business empire. It helps take difficult business decision with ease and maintain cool. Branson was emotionally expressive, which gave a finite credibility to his personality and attracted people towards him.

Transformational Aspects of Branson's Leadership. There are four key elements of Branson's transformational leadership style.

First, Richard Branson focussed on people. He strongly believed in capacity building and helping people realise their true potential. According to Entis (2014), Branson never believes in going alone. He also delegated responsibilities and entrusted people with bigger responsibilities. According to Feloni (2014), Branson writes in his book that delegation is an important attribute of a successful leader as no leader can excel in every aspect of running a business. Not only does it give the leader a room for relaxation, it also helps unveil hidden potential of employees. The spare time available

with leaders as a result of delegation can be put to more productive use.

Second, Branson has the ability to transform. His ability to transform comes from his vision, his relentlessness, his love for what he does and his ability to build people's trust. Branson was able to foresee what works in a business. He loved what he did. He would never give up or become anxious in testing situations. He was able to get people to trust him and aligned them to organisational goals. He exuded enthusiasm and vitality. With all these qualities, he was able to transform and became a transformational leader.

Third, Branson led by example. He believed in what he did and never gave up. He never stopped learning, motivating his people to improve their skills. He set high standards for himself as well as his team. He took his team along. According to Perston (2014), Branson articulates that nobody can be successful alone and you cannot be a great leader without great people to lead.

Fourth, Branson is a game changer and a rule breaker (Schawbel, 2014). Branson is not an ardent fan of rules. He believes in the age old adage, "rules are meant to be broken". This attitude forms a culture of Virgin group. People are encouraged to question rules. It helps people innovate, challenge status quo and improvise. Thus, it brings the better out of the group as whole.

Conclusion

Organisations are made of people. People have their own set of value system and priorities. So, it is essential to have influential leaders to drive employees towards common organisational goal. Charismatic and

transformational are two progressive styles of leadership. Charismatic leaders lead through their charm and pleasant demeanour. Transformational leaders focus on bringing about radical changes. Richard Branson, the founder of Virgin group of companies, is a classic blend of these two leadership styles. He is a successful businessman and a great leader. His leadership style can be classified as charismatic because he is a visionary, he has a charming personality, he is able to gain trust through his sensitivity to others and he has excellent communication skills. The transformational aspects of his leadership style include his focus on people development, his ability to transform and his game changer attitude.

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