

## Week 2. Self Assessment Assignment

I am a transformational leader as my self assessment and evaluation clearly reveal. My leadership style is one that is visionary, dynamic, inspirational, passionate and clearly concerned and involved in the organizational process and a lot more. Indeed, Dr Les Stein (assistant teaching professor of science and leadership in Northeastern University North Carolina) beliefs on transformational leadership resonates with me. Dr Les Stein believes that "Transformational Leadership offers a little bit of everything" and it's generally considered to be extremely effective for leaders who want to get the most from their followers. To him, transformational leaders are people that can rise to any challenge and bring everybody together collectively to make a positive difference and these are most of the attributes that I possess and apply in my leadership capacities.

The original concept of transformational leadership was created by James M Burns in 1978 - He believed that leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of moral and motivation. He claimed that the ability to inspire followers could change their expectations, perceptions and motivations, leading them to work towards a common goal as well as developing and increasing employee satisfaction.

Bernard Bass in 1985, expanded on Burn's idea to develop his own transformational leadership theory. He claimed that transformational leaders succeed by gaining trust, respect and admiration of their followers. His concept includes seven leadership factors which he labeled as. Charisma, inspirational, intellectual stimulation individualized consideration, contingent reward, management by exception and laissez faire leadership.

The transformational leader is the one who can inspire followers to look ahead with a focus on the greater good and function as a single unit with a common goal. A transformational leader is visionary, team centric, encouraging, inspiring, inclusive, emotionally intelligent, collaborative, charismatic, empathetic, motivating, possesses strong ethical values and strives to put their teams before themselves. They possess good communication skills that allows them clearly articulate their thoughts in a way that their messages are inspiring and clearly communicated. They create a positive work culture that enables them assemble the right group of people in a team and create a collaborative environment where each individual feels free and safe to share any creative and innovative ideas while ensuring all team members feel included, heard and valued.

Transformational Leadership authors. Bass and Riggio explained: Transformational Leaders are those who stimulate or inspire followers to achieve extraordinary outcomes, and in the process develop their own leadership capacities. Further research has shown that this type of leadership style drives higher levels of performance and satisfaction because the followers feel inspired and empowered.

My strengths as a transformational leader lies basically in some of my abilities listed herein:

Self motivation and Self management: I first find my motivation from within and am able to manage myself and put my emotions in check so am always able maintain sound mental and emotional stability which I in turn apply to effectively manage the team to the benefit of the organization.

Competence and Excellent communication skills: I am an avid reader who is continually learning, gaining on the job knowledge and gathering new information and intelligence which enables me maintain sound levels of competence. I am also able to communicate clearly and respectfully.

I am confident but with no airs and my ego is always in check. I put the company's goals and objectives above my personal desires and maintain good interpersonal skills with which I encourage my team to put in their best for the collective attainment of the organizational objectives.

I am a Visionary Leader: I start by setting realistic goals that fit into the values of the organization and I am able to clearly communicate the vision and get my team members to buy in towards the attainment of the vision.

Adept Listener: I am an intentional listener and able to decipher the information I receive and process the ideas therein that I can incorporate for the benefit of the team and organization

I am Inspirational: I do this best by taking time to understand what motivates and inspires the individual members of my team and that gives them confidence and assurance that we are truly a team and they are happy to rise up as the occasion requires.

Ability to take difficult decisions: I am not shy, neither do I back off from taking difficult decisions particularly when such align with the institutions objectives.

Ability to take calculated risks: I am able to first research, evaluate and gather intelligence and inputs needed to guide me into taking some necessary risks which more often results in positive outcomes.

I am a Proactive Leader. I am not reactive and am open minded and willing to try out new methods and innovation

Alignment with organizational vision: This enables me determine the right actions to take to induce desired change and innovation needed to drive increased growth and productivity

Dynamic and adaptable: This enables me easily adapt to constant changes in the work and business environment

My weakness lie in the following:

My desire for general acceptance by the individual members of my team. This sometimes causes me to be subjective and overlook some undesirable work practices

Assumptions: I sometimes assume that my team members have the same drive, motivation and beliefs that I have, but this has actually not been so in every situation and has resulted in some decisions with negative implications

Micro management: This sometimes makes me take on more tasks than I should because I sometimes do not trust the team well enough to fully delegate.

Impatience: I sometimes lose my composure and the effect is an over reaction to shortcomings.

In coaching a client with the results I've produced, my recommendations for their professional development would include, among others, advise them to read the book by Steven Covey, titled: Seven Habits of Highly Effective People which provides seven valuable nuggets for leadership which are listed herein:

1. Be Proactive: Proactively is strongly related to acknowledging individual responsibility and influence as it is easier to influence what is within your immediate control.
2. Begin with the end in mind: Herein lies the vision, mission and objectives. This implies that you must stay conscious of the immediate and long term outcomes of any decisions you make.
3. Put first things first: This has to do with discipline. Integrity, honoring your word and keeping your agreements.
4. Think win-win: Realize that you can accomplish more by cooperating with other people (interdependence) In cases of conflicts, always seek solutions that are fair to all parties and encourage mutual compromise.
5. Seek first to understand and then to be understood: Be a good listener, concentrate first on understanding the other person before you try to pass your views and get understood. Listening is one of the most basic qualities of an effective leader.
6. Synergies: We all have some level of Dependence, Interdependence and Independence., Your approach should fundamentally be based on respect, cooperation and trust. Form the habit of strengthening your relationships
7. Sharpen the saw: Maintenance, Perseverance are needed in the journey of continuous self improvement. Take plenty of exercise, rest, meditate or do whatever helps your body, mind, soul and spirit but maintain a good balance.

Further advice will be given to him on other effective leadership behaviors advocated by various theorists and researchers in the field and study of leadership. Among which are:

Warren Bennis & Burt Nanus in their book titled: Leaders, The strategies for taking charge "predicted that the most important challenges facing leaders in the twenty-first century will be the speed and pervasiveness of technological change—— In the future, the leaders of the organization must be able to manage successfully, both rapid changes in technology itself as well as the organizational and structural development such changes bring to the organization" They emphasized the fact that Leadership is about character, thus, leaders must create an organization that fosters intellectual capital, they must be able to display a bias towards action and must be able to convince others to sign unto their vision.

I will advise him on the key lessons from the book titled "The leadership challenge. By James Kaiser & Barry Posner which are:

The power of persuasion; here, they state that the use of influence can only be ethical when something of superior quality is being delivered.

The power of finishing strong: That, energetic and self motivated leaders understand that it is up to them to decide the outcome of the situation and that one on the planet can get more than they deserve.

Rise to the occasion: a leader must possess sharp communication skills to be able to rise to each occasion to convey any message of significance.

Advice will be given on the need to be a role model. He must be a leader that leads by example - One way a leader can influence followers is by settling examples of exemplary behaviors. He must find the right balance in the leadership style to adopt as that should be determined by each individual circumstance. An effective leadership strategy can be the difference between a leader that succeeds and the one that fails. Each leadership strategy operates on different sets of priorities and can be equally effective when applied to the correct situation. Learning to be a more effective leader can be achieved. An effective leader in today's busy world is one that is able to adjust the leadership style to meet the challenges of the moment. The leader should be able to stay in control of the situation, clearly convey a clear vision of the group or institutional goals, always exhibit a passion for the work and make the group feel recharged and energized. This way, he will be able to inspire positive changes in the group both in their minds and in their commitment to the work.

I will advise him to remain focused on helping every member of the group succeed. He must not be afraid to challenge the status quo when the need arises and encourage creativity among followers. Keep communication lines open so members of the team can feel free and safe to share ideas, this way, their individual contributions can be easily recognized.

Finally, I would advise him to lead the group to the extent that they are so influenced by his lived values and they can naturally trust and respect his leadership over them.

#### Evaluation of the Self Assessment Tool

I would evaluate the tool as valid

Valuable insights can be discovered through self assessment as the principle of "Know thyself" is a key lesson of life and self assessment has been seen as the starting point in the journey of self discovery. Self assessment is a good tool that enables effective leaders periodically take stock of their personal strengths and weaknesses as identifying and working on areas of weaknesses will improve leadership abilities.

Everyday leaders are facing new issues they never faced before and what worked yesterday may no longer be effective for today as the change is fast and the stakes are higher. Without constant self evaluation, a leader may not know that the times have moved beyond his old style of leadership and the urgent need to transform to new methods.

The leadership self assessment tool helps individuals discover how they can measure up in their own eyes and in the eyes of those with whom they work, with success being measured through a retesting program to track changes in leadership style. Self management is a set of strategies used to influence and improve an individual's own behaviors -( Manz & Sims 1980: Sims & Lorenzi 1992) Self Management is primarily based on control theory, after comparing one's current condition against the desired condition, a person can make necessary corrections by taking more responsibility for their own lives. Through the self assessment tools, leaders can set personal goals and are able to plan and work towards attainment and are also able to monitor their progress. Redo

shows that self aware leaders report having greater effectiveness in the work place and better relationships with colleagues

There are however some criticisms on the validity of the self assessment tool for the following reasons among others:

It's a self rating tool which the users may apply subjectively and since it is self rating, it is believed that self perception will alter the accuracy of the assessment.

It has also been criticized for its lack of a measure to hold the leaders accountable. Accountability to work on identified areas of weaknesses cannot be measures as the challenge for the desired change is solely in the hands of the leader.

There is the risk that the tool may lead to an affirmation of self and self promotion along with a self perspective of competence and capability.

References:

Leadership in Organizations 8<sup>th</sup> Edition: Gary Yukl

Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Steven Covey

Leaders - The Strategies for Taking Charge - Warren Bennis & Burt Nanus

The Leadership Challenge : James Kaizer & Barry Posner