**Lesson 21: Transformational Leadership**

**Introduction**

This lesson consists of:

1. Transformational Leadership Theory

2. Case Study

3. Student Journal Entry

4. “The Subordinates”

**Assignment**

1. **Read Course Guide**

2. When you solve a case study or act as a leader in your organization:

I. ***Identify*** the **Areas of Interest**.

II. ***Analyze*** the situation using the Transformational Leadership Theory.

A. ***Identify*** the prerequisite conditions for transformational leadership in this situation.

B. ***Identify*** any transformational leadership behaviors evident in the situation.

C. ***Identify*** the current outcomes of the leader’s influence attempts.

III. ***Explain*** how the absence of transformational leader behaviors contributes to the followers’ resistance/reaction.

IV. ***Select*** an appropriate theoretical leader strategy(ies) to address Areas of Interest.

V. ***Apply*** the theoretical leader strategy(ies) to the situation through a specific leader plan that addresses all Areas of Interest.

VI. ***Assess,*** evaluate, and revise your leader plan.

3. **Complete a Student Journal entry** for Transformational Leadership Theory.

Think about a work group to which you have belonged as a police officer and discuss EITHER **Option 1 or Option 2**.

**Option 1 – Already Exposed to a Transformational Leader.**

Describe your experience as either a group member (of a group with a transformational leader) or a transformational leader yourself. What existing conditions in your work group/organization made the transformational leader (or you) effective? What transformational leadership behaviors were evident in the situation? How did the group members respond to the transformational leader? Knowing what you know now, what transformational leader behaviors were missing? Could the transformational leader have done differently to improve his or her effectiveness?

**OR**

**Option 2 – Haven’t Seen a Transformational Leader Yet.**

If you have not seen or experienced a transformational leader, then address the following questions concerning your current police work group or higher organization. What is the vision of the work group you selected? How would you get your followers to believe in, contribute to, and support this vision? Discuss a time when you (or your group leader) demonstrated self-sacrifice or showed concern for the individuals in your work group. How can you communicate high expectations in your work group? Can you think of any unconventional strategies that might improve your work group if employed today?

**Transformational Leadership**

***"A man does not have himself killed for a few halfpence a day or for a petty distinction. You must speak to the soul in order to electrify the man."***—Napoleon Bonaparte

Why do most leaders elicit sufficient, acceptable performance from their followers while a few inspire extraordinary achievement? Most leadership research, training, and even our expectations of leaders focus on getting the job done. As leaders, we have been selected, evaluated, and promoted. We have established our reputations on a set of standards that require us to provide well-defined rewards for good workers, punish those who do not perform up to standard, and keep the whole operation on track.

In this course, we have focused on leadership as a transaction or interaction involving the leader, the follower, and the situation. Yet, we see very effective leaders who get the job done but do not affect their followers the same way others do. Some talented leaders touch the psyche of their followers and inspire behavior. This clearly goes beyond the concepts we have discussed so far. So, what is missing?

All along, this course has hinted at the notion that there might be more to leadership than "Let’s Make a Deal." Consider, if you will, the concept of self-regulation from "Motivation Through Consequences." Can a leader affect an employee’s internal standards of conduct? What about the effect on followers of Referent Power and Internalization? Is it possible that these concepts could be part of some higher or more personal and compelling way to motivate people? Think momentarily about the coach who gets his team excited for a big game and draws an unprecedented performance and victory from the players. This would appear to go beyond an exchange or transactional approach to leadership. How, then, does this happen?

Pursuing this question, leadership researchers have recently focused on remarkable leaders who inspire superlative performance in ways beyond the theories we have discussed. The phenomenon they found is called Transformational Leadership Theory.

**Transactional Versus Transformational Leadership**

It’s important to note that leaders aren’t confined to a single leadership style. In many cases, combining different approaches can enhance organizational outcomes. Transformational and transactional leadership are two thoroughly researched styles, and a given leader may exhibit varying degrees of both.

Transactional leadership is based on exchanges between the leader and each employee. Employees receive positive reinforcement for meeting specific goals. An effective transactional leader is adept at recognizing and rewarding accomplishments promptly. Within this leadership style, team members are typically evaluated and given feedback based on predetermined performance criteria. Workers aren’t necessarily expected to think innovatively about the tasks at hand.

In contrast, transformational leaders inspire employees in ways that go beyond exchanges and rewards. This approach can increase a team’s intrinsic motivation by expressing the value and purpose behind the organization’s goals.

A transformational leadership style inspires employees to strive beyond required expectations to work toward a shared vision. In contrast, transactional leadership focuses more on extrinsic motivation for performing specific job tasks. Learning to balance these styles can help leaders reach their full potential.

Make an impact as a transformational leader.

Now that you know the foundations of transformational leadership, you can see how beneficial it can be. You can answer not only, “What is transformational leadership?” but also, “Why is it effective?”

To understand transformational leadership, it is first helpful to contrast it with traditional or transactional leadership based on the concepts we have discussed thus far.

The transactional leader uses a cost-benefit or quid pro quo approach to motivating followers. This leader provides what a group needs, and in exchange, they perform. The transactional leader is responsive to followers’ immediate self-interests and needs, leading by exchanging pay, status, promotion, and similar rewards for work effort. Transactional leadership relies upon equity and reciprocity to achieve compliance.

On the other hand, the transformational leader elicits more than mere compliance from followers. This concept of leadership envisions a transformation of followers’ values and attitudes, thus motivating them to perform. Such a leader goes beyond basic emotions like fear, jealousy, or greed. Instead, they appeal to ideals and moral values such as justice, patriotism, or self-improvement. Transformational leaders motivate their followers to forsake self-interests for the advancement of group or organizational goals. They ask followers to transcend personal needs and yet still achieve them through the achievement of team, unit, or organization goals. Follower performance stems from the internalization of values rather than the appeal of rewards, the threat of punishments, or the gratification of other personal needs. Transformational leaders actively seek and achieve new attitudes, motivations, and behaviors.

At this point, it is important to state that transactional and transformational leadership coexist comfortably. These two leadership styles are not mutually exclusive; every transformational leader must first be a competent, effective, day-to-day transactional manager. Given the realities of time constraints and mundane tasks that do not require exceptional performance, the transformational leader must exhibit effective transactional behaviors. Reward power, coercive power, equity, and expectancy are necessary in the transformational leader’s approach. In fact, the transformational mindset will actually improve the effectiveness of every theory and leader action we have covered in the course to date.

**The Elements of Transformational Leadership**

Authentic transformational leadership has five elements that often appear in the leader’s thoughts, speech, and behavior: **charisma**, **individualized consideration**, **Inspirational motivation,** **intellectual stimulation,** and **Idealized influence**.

Five Components of Transformational Leadership

As transformational leaders work with their employees to implement effective change, they rely on communication, charisma, adaptability, and empathetic support. In practice, this leadership style comprises four primary elements:

* **Charisma is the emotional component** - It encompasses the faith and respect afforded the leader and the pride experienced by followers. Charisma also includes the sense that the leader is capable of seeing what is currently essential as well as having the vision to anticipate the future. Although charisma is a telltale sign of a transformational leader, do not be fooled by the charismatic speechmaker alone. Many transformational leaders have a quiet, powerful charisma that does not require a platform, podium, or microphone.
* **Individualized consideration**— Transformational leaders listen to employees’ concerns and needs so they can provide adequate support. They operate from the understanding that what motivates one person may not motivate someone else. As a result, they can adapt their management styles to accommodate various individuals on their team.
* **Inspirational motivation—**Transformational leaders articulate a unified vision that encourages team members to exceed expectations. They understand that the most motivated employeeshave a strong sense of purpose. These leaders are not afraid to challenge employees. They remain optimistic about future goals and are skilled at giving meaning to the tasks.
* **Idealized influence —**Transformational leaders model ethical behavior. Their moral conduct earns a necessary level of respect and trust. This can help leaders steer decision-making that works to improve the entire organization.
* **Intellectual stimulation —**Transformational leaders regularly challenge assumptions, take risks, and solicit team members’ input and ideas. They don’t fear failure and instead foster an environment where it’s safe to have conversations, be creative, and voice diverse perspectives. This empowers employees to ask questions, practice greater autonomy, and ultimately determine more effective ways to execute their tasks.

**Five traits successful transformational leaders have in common**

Considering the transformational leadership style, you may wonder what it looks like in practice. *Forbes* senior contributor Blake Morgan outlines several habits common to effective transformational leaders. Here are five of the most essential traits:

**Good transformational leaders practice self-awareness**

Transformational leaders thrive on personal growth and know their strengths and weaknesses. They often take time to reflect and set daily or weekly goals. These leaders believe everyone, including themselves, should be continually learning and improving.

**They remain open-minded**

An important aspect of transformational leadership is remaining open to new ideas and fresh perspectives. Rather than jumping to conclusions, these leaders regularly gather feedback and ideas from various sources before making strategic decisions.

**The best transformational leaders are adaptable and innovative**

Good transformational leaders understand changing business dynamics and always find innovative ways to stay ahead of the curve. They’re unafraid to alter traditional approaches that have worked in the past as they look toward the future.

**Good transformational leaders are proactive.**

Leaders cannot simply sit around and wait for change to happen. Instead, they make proactive decisions and bold choices that can set the tone for others to follow.

**They lead with humility.**

Finally, transformational leaders have little issue admitting they don’t have all the answers. While they can remain confident in their goals and abilities, they can also keep their egos in check and do what’s right for their team or organization.

**Effect on Followers**

In our lesson on the Bases of Power, we discussed four possible outcomes of leader influence: resistance, compliance, identification, and internalization. Transformational leadership often leads to identification or internalization since it strives for attitude and value changes. Transactional leadership, on the other hand, most often leads to compliance; it is less likely to change attitudes.

Transformational leadership leads to extraordinary performance. It goes far deeper than superficial exchanges between employees and bosses. Transformational leaders elicit a powerful, willing alteration of followers’ attitudes. Once the followers personally embrace the organization's goals and values, the result will be superlative motivation, satisfaction, and performance.

**Effect on Leaders**

Sometimes, leaders' first reaction when considering adopting a transformational leadership style is bewilderment. How, after all, does one become this exceptional, larger-than-life leader? Another common reaction is one of disdain. This transformational stuff sounds weird, touchy-feely, and certainly not like anything a mature, respected law enforcement leader should adopt. Very often, another reaction is fear. It takes enormous amounts of personal and moral courage to step outside the box and employ the concepts of Transformational Leadership Theory. After all, when you open previously closed lines of communication, you may see and hear painful things about you or your organization’s weaknesses and vulnerabilities.

The researchers in this field and your course coordinators share your concerns. But compare your concerns against the potential benefits of transformational leadership. Consider the genuine benefits to your relationship with followers, your development as a leader, and the increased performance of your organization. If it does not work for you in the end, you can always go back to being the leader you were—almost.

Once you have been exposed to Transformational Leadership Theory, traces of it will likely show up somewhere in your interactions with your followers or in your vision of what your job could be. Whether you use it a little or adopt it heart and soul, Transformational Leadership Theory can be your key to elevated satisfaction and performance.

**Applying Transformational Leadership Concepts**

Transformational leadership is effective to some degree in any context. However, transformational leadership will be more effective in certain times and situations. The following conditions tend to nurture transformational leadership:

1. Crisis, change, and instability
2. Mediocrity
3. Follower disenchantment
4. Future opportunity

Traditional values and beliefs may be questioned during crises, change, and instability. The old ways of doing things may not be enough to get the organization through the crisis. Thus, the transformational leader may appeal to the followers' values and call upon them to put their hearts into their work efforts. Such transformational leadership is not restricted to cataclysmic, acute crises but also whenever the values of an organization are being attacked or during a volatile time. By its very nature, transformational leadership carries with it a challenge to the old order, a break with continuity, a risky adventure, ferment, and change. For example, Franklin D. Roosevelt was able to calm and transform the American people during the Great Depression and World War II with his Fireside (radio) Chats.

When an organization experiences general malaise or mediocrity, the leader may need to go beyond the current motivation, satisfaction, and performance levels. Transformational Leadership Theory is tailor-made to energize employees and catapult the organization to new, heightened accomplishments.

When employees are disenchanted or unhappy with current conditions, a transformational leader will provide the direction and vision needed. Disillusioned followers are particularly receptive to the emotional, inspirational influence attempts made by a transformational leader. Unfortunately, many cult leaders take advantage of the powerful forces of transformational leadership in situations like this. They can gather a large following by attracting those frustrated or dissatisfied with present conditions. Jim Jones, the evangelical minister from California, was able to use a charismatic, transformational style to appeal to people’s dissatisfaction with relationships and conditions in the U.S. With a congregation of hundreds, he convinced them to move from the U.S. to Guyana and later to commit mass suicide. Jim Jones and other infamous leaders, such as Adolf Hitler, are examples of the dark side of transformational leadership. While these situations are tragic, they demonstrate transformational leadership's awesome power.

The transformational leader surveys the future environment and then inspires followers to see the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead. This leader is an opportunist, encouraging their organization to capitalize on the knowledge they have gained, the public attention that has been focused on their problems, or any other positive elements that have resulted from turbulent times. The leader may ask the followers to set aside their self-interest for the present to pursue a future goal.

**Who Can Be a Transformational Leader?**

It may seem that you must be the president, chief executive officer, or chief of police to engage in transformational leadership. This is not the case. Consider any sergeant, civilian supervisor, lieutenant, or captain taking over a new assignment. Conditions of follower disenchantment, instability, change, and future opportunities may all be present in the organization. On the other hand, an incumbent leader may see these conditions develop over time in their work group. Either way, employing Transformational Leadership Theory may be beneficial. How is it done?

**Transformational Leader Behaviors**

Transformational leader behaviors are listed and described below; they should be used together in a broad approach to leadership. They represent a severe and dramatic change in how leaders approach their responsibilities. One cannot approach transformational leadership half-heartedly and expect to see results. This approach is a dynamic and consuming way to approach life in the workplace as a leader. The components of this approach to leadership are listed below:

1. Develop and communicate a vision
2. Use unconventional strategies to achieve performance
3. Communicate high expectations and confidence (especially in areas such as integrity, ethics, and performance)
4. Show concern for followers
5. Demonstrate self-sacrifice

The foundation of Transformational Leadership Theory is developing and effectively communicating a vision about where the group or organization is headed and what it does. The leader’s vision is a source of self-esteem and a common purpose for every organization member. A leader may realize the need for a major organization revitalization and use a vision to identify, clarify, and achieve critical changes. Or a vision may reaffirm, reenergize, and refocus existing work groups or organizational direction. Regardless, the vision should convey an intuitive, appealing picture of what the organization can be in the future. For example, two bricklayers worked side by side at a construction site. When asked first what he was doing, he replied that he was laying bricks. When asked, the other responded that he was creating a great cathedral. The first bricklayer only followed blueprints; the latter had a vision.

Visions must be communicated clearly and frequently. It can be done through speeches, policies, behaviors, or symbols. An example of a leader who possessed and expressed his vision was Martin Luther King, Jr. In his “I Have a Dream” speech, King was not interested in specifics like allowing Black Americans to eat at dime store lunch counters or attend integrated schools. Instead, he communicated the broad vision that all American citizens would embrace equality. Likewise, Lincoln articulated his vision for America in his Gettysburg Address, and Gandhi demonstrated his vision for his homeland through a simple, nonviolent lifestyle.

In his book Thriving on Chaos, Tom Peters discusses creating a vision for modern organizations living in a chaotic world. He warns about the fad of “visioning” that has swept the business world, and he encourages leaders to search for a succinct and uplifting philosophy that can replace the thick strategic plans and policy manuals written for yesterday’s more placid times. He states that the process of creating a vision is personal; it is also the essence of leading in chaotic times. Peters does not give specifics on preparing a vision, but he tells us it should be the leader’s, developed for him- or herself in conjunction with their people and organization. Several specific traits of a compelling vision, as listed in Peters’ book, include the following:

* Effective visions are inspiring. Inspiring visions rarely include numbers. Numbers are saved for objectives or goals. Instead, effective visions ask for the best in a way that is easy to understand.
* Effective visions are clear and challenging. There should be no question about what the leader wants. The leader must convey what is expected to unite the organization in the mission.
* Effective visions must be stable but constantly challenged. The vision must act like a compass in formidable terrain. It guides us through tough times and sets us on course. Like the declination deviation of a compass, however, a vision loses its value if it is not adjusted to its surroundings.
* Effective visions prepare for the future but honor the past. Ronald Reagan presented a vision to the nation as he urged us to create new future opportunities by recalling our entrepreneurial, high-spirited past.
* Effective visions are lived-in detail, not in broad strokes. A vision is concise and presents a picture of the future. Actions speak louder than words. Trite slogans and mottos have their place, but they are the least important aspect of a vision.
* Visions should first be lived and then posted. If you, as the leader, cannot live the vision, you cannot expect your followers to do so. Adopting transformational leadership behaviors as guiding principles for your leadership behavior will build credibility. You will be transformational only when you actively and demonstrably live out your vision.
* Finally, visions are emotional. They must come from your own emotions; only then will they appeal to your followers' emotions.

This vision is often achieved through the leader’s unconventional strategies. Innovative techniques add to the followers’ belief that the leader, the organization, and the vision are extraordinary and unique. One example of an unconventional strategy would be the basketball coach who asks his players to hold hands and pray before the “big game.” Transformational leaders go beyond the ordinary in expressing and then acting out the vision.

Along with the vision, the transformational leader communicates high expectations and confidence in the followers. A leader’s policies and behaviors must reflect trust and faith in the competence of the followers. Indeed, the vision expressed will be more alluring when leaders steadfastly commit to their people. For example, John F. Kennedy expressed a vision and communicated high expectations when he declared that the U.S. would put a man on the moon by 1970. Despite America’s late start in the space race, Kennedy demonstrated trust and confidence in U.S. technology.

As stated previously, a transformational leader also shows concern for individuals. This may take the form of effective delegation, mentoring, counseling, and management by walking around. One researcher advocates that individualized concern is especially important. He advises all leaders to take the time to learn their followers' names and become familiar with the employee’s personal needs, strengths, and weaknesses. A division captain who periodically works a patrol car with their police officers will likely be the kind of leader who shows individualized concern.

A transformational leader shows self-sacrifice in achieving the vision. Self-sacrifice may take many forms, including personal risk-taking and personal effort to attain the vision they espouse. Followers notice whether or not the boss is asking for more than they are willing to give. When faced with a struggling Chrysler Corporation, Lee Iacocca decided to cut his salary to one dollar in what he called “the equality of sacrifice.”

The best way to understand transformational leadership is to experience it. No doubt, several people in this classroom have been profoundly affected by a transformational leader. In fact, it is likely that some members of this class already enjoy a powerful, emotional, reciprocal, transformational relationship with their followers and peers. Please use this time to consider and discuss your role in influencing human behavior. The following exercise will help you explore and develop your potential as a transformational leader.

**Student Journal Entry for Transformational Leadership Theory**

Think about a work group to which you have belonged as a police officer and discuss either Option 1 or Option 2.

**Option 1 – Already Exposed to a Transformational Leader**

Describe your experience as either a group member (of a group with a transformational leader) or a transformational leader yourself. What existing conditions in your workgroup/organization made the transformational leader (or you) effective? What transformational leadership behaviors were evident in the situation? How did the group members respond to the transformational leader? Knowing what you know now, what transformational leadership behaviors were missing? What could the transformational leader have done differently to improve their effectiveness?

**OR**

**Option 2 – Haven’t Seen a Transformational Leader Yet**

If you have not seen or experienced a transformational leader, address the following questions concerning your current police workgroup or higher organization: What is the vision of the workgroup you selected? How would you get your followers to believe in, contribute to, and support this vision? Discuss a time when you (or your group leader) demonstrated self-sacrifice or concern for your workgroup's individuals. How can you communicate high expectations in your work group? Can you think of unconventional strategies that might improve your work group if employed today?

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