



# The Changing World Needs Transformational Leadership

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The world seems to be rapidly changing and is mostly caused by technological development, global competition and nature of the workforce in the organization has been changing as well. This is now demanding that we have to run organization in a more efficient way. The organization needs modern management precepts and leadership is the critical factor in the initiation and implementation and engenders a positive impact on individuals, teams, and organizations during the change process. We need the leaders who drive the productive outcomes by motivating the staff to do more than we originally expected to do. The leader who could motivate the staff by raising the awareness level about the importance of outcomes and ways to reach that ultimate outcomes, by making team spirit and team working for the success of the organization. This kind of leadership is called “Transformational Leadership”

**Transformational leadership** is a style of leadership where a leader works with subordinates to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group. Transformational leadership serves to enhance the motivation, morale, and job-performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms; these include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to a project and to the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers in order to inspire them and to raise their interest in the project; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, allowing the leader to align followers with tasks that enhance their performance<sup>1</sup>

Transformational leadership theory was developed by Burns in his analysis of political leaders. Prior to this, time much attention had been given to the examination of the approaches of leaders who successfully transformed organizations. Burns characterized transformational leadership as that which “occurs when one or more persons engage with

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others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality”<sup>2</sup>. This theory concentrated on the relationship between leaders and followers inside the organization. Transformational leadership was identified by many researchers such as; Hickman<sup>3</sup> defined Transformational leadership serves as a means to “create and sustain a context for building human capacity by identifying and developing core values and unifying purpose, liberating human potential and generating increased capacity, developing leadership and effective followership, utilizing interaction-focused organizational design, and building interconnectedness”. Bass<sup>4</sup> Transformational leaders are assumed to “stimulate followers to perform beyond the level of expectations”. Transformational leadership theory has repeatedly stressed followers’ progress in the direction of independence and empowerment over robotically following a leader<sup>5</sup>

## ≡≡≡ The characteristics of transformational leadership ≡≡≡

Transformational leadership redefines people’s missions and visions, renews their commitment, and restructures their systems for goal accomplishment through a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and leaders into moral agents. There are four majors characteristics of Transformational leadership;

**1. Idealized Influence :** The major characteristics of transformational leadership include engendering trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect amongst followers through application of charismatic vision and behavior. Transformational leaders strive towards creating such a state of idealized influence by:

- articulating a vision and explaining how to attain the vision.
- leading by example
- acting confidently and optimistically
- sharing risks with followers
- emphasizing values and reinforcing them by symbolic actions
- displaying a high level of ethical and moral conduct

Leaders who apply idealized influence on their followers gain the trust and confidence of the followers. The followers admire the leader as a role model and respect the decisions made by him or her.

**2. Inspirational Motivation :** The transformational leader inspires followers toward the new ideas or goals through inspirational motivation. The major characteristics of inspirational motivation leadership include:

- articulation of a clear and appealing view of the future
- development of a shared vision in both economic and ideological terms so that the followers see meaning in their work
- making sure of each follower's role in the fulfillment of the shared vision, and setting high standards for the followers to attain objectives
- encouraging followers to integrate and become part of the overall organizational culture and environment

Transformational leaders elevate people from low levels of need focused on survival by appealing toward their inborn desire to attain higher levels related to love, learning, leaving a legacy, and the like. The ways adopted to do so are many, and include: 1) making vivid descriptions of a good future that raises one's imagination 2) motivational speeches and conversations 3) public display of optimism and enthusiasm 4) highlighting positive outcomes and 5) stimulating teamwork

**3. Intellectual Stimulation :** Transformational leadership encourages change through intellectual stimulation aimed at self-reflective change of values and beliefs. Transformational leaders raise their followers' awareness regarding problems and develop their capability to solve such problems in many ways. Some of these ways are:

- fostering a climate that favors critical examination of commonly held notions, beliefs, and the status quo
- creating an environment conducive to the creation and sharing of knowledge
- encouraging innovation and creativity
- heightening sensitivity to environmental changes
- encouraging the suggestion of radical and controversial ideas without fear of punishment or ridicule empowerment and imposition of the leader's idea only in the absence of viable ideas from the followers

**4. Individualized Consideration :** Individualized consideration ranks among the major characteristics of transformational leadership. The transformational leader treats each follower as a "whole" individual rather than as an employee, and considers the individual's talents and levels of knowledge to decide what suits him or her to reach higher levels of attainment. A transformational leader applies such individual considerations by:

- listening to each follower's needs and concerns
- expressing words of thanks or praise as a means of motivation
- making public recognition of achievements and initiatives
- making private notes of congratulations to boost self confidence
- ensuring fair workload distribution
- undertaking individualized career counseling and mentoring

The influence of transformational leadership on the personal outcomes has many aspects such as :

**1. Empowerment** : Followers are empowered not only by the vision formed by the transformational leader, but also by the signals the leader sends regarding their capacity to achieve that vision.<sup>6</sup> Transformational leaders construct a participative climate and empowered condition that allows followers to respond quickly and with flexibility to change in organizational and environmental demands.<sup>7</sup>

**2. Job satisfaction** : Job satisfaction is often theorized as containing the following essentials: the job itself, supervisor relationship, management beliefs, future opportunity, work environment, pay/benefits/rewards, and co-worker relationships<sup>8</sup>. The transformational leadership style will have a positive impact on job satisfaction.

**3. Commitment** : Mowday, Porter, and Steers<sup>9</sup> defined commitment utilizing three components: identification with the values and goals of the organization, willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and commitment to stay in the organization. Transformational leaders engender their followers' commitment to the organization, the organizational goals and values, and team commitment.<sup>4</sup>

**4. Trust** : Trust is a construct with multiple components and several dimensions which vary in nature and importance according to the context, relationship, tasks, situations, and people concerned. Although there is no universal definition of trust, a frequently used concept emphasizes interpersonal relationships and a "willingness to be vulnerable" based on the belief that the leader is proficient, concerned, and dependable. The transformational leadership style will have a positive impact on trust.

**5. Self-efficacy beliefs** : Self-efficacy represents an individual's belief in his or her capabilities to successfully accomplish a specific task or set of tasks.<sup>10</sup> Self-efficacy can also be described as the confidence which followers have in being successful and the value they attach to possible outcomes. Self-efficacy can be increased through transformational leadership. An increase in confidence and valence of outcomes can produce a noticeable rise in followers' efforts to succeed, thus making leadership the stimulus to effort beyond

expectations<sup>4</sup> Transformational leaders are able to raise the self-efficacy of followers by showing confidence in followers and helping them work through individual problems and developmental challenges.<sup>11</sup>

**6. Motivation :** Burns<sup>2</sup> referred to motivation as one of three main domains of a follower's development. He proposed that transformational leaders motivate followers in such a way that the followers' primary motive is to satisfy self-actualization needs rather than the lower needs in Maslow's need hierarchy. Bass<sup>4</sup> further extended Burn's theory and "suggested that transformational leaders expand their followers 'need portfolios' by raising them or Maslow's hierarchy". The emphasis placed on satisfying self-actualization needs reflects the type of need underlying followers' motivation and extra effort results from generating higher levels of motivation.

In summary, transformational leadership has a positive influence on personal outcomes. The literature demonstrates that transformational leadership has a positive influence on empowerment, job satisfaction, commitment, trust, self-efficacy beliefs, and motivation. This literature review reinforced the conceptual model of transformational leadership proposed by Bass<sup>4</sup> and demonstrated that transformational leadership is significantly correlated with personal outcomes. In Thailand's research related to transformational leadership mostly investigated the factors related to transformational leadership and created curriculum to develop transformational leadership in organization. Although the organizational and personal behaviors examined in this study have been shown to be heavily influenced by transformational leadership, this study does not provide an exhaustive discussion of all the ways these behaviors are influenced by transformational leadership. Further empirical research related to these outcomes and transformational leadership may provide more insight into the development of theories related to leadership and organizational behavior.



## References

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