Leadership Models

Thea Peters

University of San Diego

HCIN 610 Advanced Leadership and Health Systems Management

Dr Josh Wymer, DNP, MSPM, MA, RN CNOR, RN-BC, NEA-BC, CHCIO, CDH-E, FACHE, FAAN

8/5/2023

While there are many leadership styles to choose from when developing a personal leadership style, I do not feel that an effective leader can rely on only one style. Instead, they need to adapt how they respond to their employees and what their employees need from a leader. I feel that the overarching leadership model that should be exhibited is elements of a servant leader. A servant leader is one that accentuates the advancement of those working for your company; paying attention to employee development helps your business grow and benefits the community in which your employees live (*An Introduction to Models of Servant Leadership*, n.d.). There are 4 principles of servant leadership:

- Encourage diversity of thought.
- Create a culture of trust.
- Have an unselfish mindset.
- Foster leadership in others.
  (Hayzlett, J., 2019)

Looking deeper into those 4 principles, having a diverse team creates an environment that people want to be a part of. Diversity has multiple traits and includes more than just gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, or political and religious beliefs, it's also about thinking differently about the world around you. Servant leaders encourage "out of the box" thinking (Hayzlett, J., 2019) and consideration of all perspectives. In a servant leader led organization final decisions are the result of collective collaboration and exchange of ideas with no one person having ultimate control. Creating a culture of trust is done by effectively communicating the company's mission, values, and the overall vision. Communication needs to "be specific and disseminated to every single level of the organization" (Hayzlett, J., 2019) this leads to a culture of transparency which is reflected in work performance (Hayzlett, J., 2019).

The third principle is having an unselfish mindset. Remember that it is not about the leader/owner, and it never was, it is about the people that are doing the work. As leaders we cannot think that profits and people are different entities, they go together. A good servant leader will celebrate

the success of others and ensure that everyone feels valued and that individual contributions matter.

The final principle is to foster leadership in others. Understanding that building an effective team is

developing the next generation of leaders is crucial. This fostering of leadership comes in many forms,

mentoring and coaching to teach others the ropes of leadership, offering simple words of

encouragement and being available to answer questions is key (Hayzlett, J., 2019).

In addition to being a servant leader and helping your employees grow, I feel an effective leader

also needs to be transformational. A transformational leader will set goals by outlining the direction of

the company and what will happen when they reach the goal and are strongly committed to the

organization's purpose and big-picture goals. Transformational leaders also encourage and empower

team members to step outside of their comfort zones for professional development and organizational

achievement. This type of leader creates an inspired and future-focused vision that establishes

expectations that engage and energize employees (Martinuzzi, 2023).

When discussing the benefits of their Strategic Leadership and Management Certification

Michigan State University identified the "4 I's of transformational leadership as Intellectual stimulation,

individual consideration, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. And identified the following

traits of a transformational leader:

- Openness to New Thinking
- Talent for Broadening Minds
- Commitment to Active Listening
- Tolerance for Intelligent Risks
- Willingness to Accept Responsibility
- Trust in Team Members
- Inspirational Motivation
  (*What Are the Characteristics of a Transformational Leader?,* 2022)

I feel that these two leadership styles can go hand-in-hand with each other as they both encourage

employees to grow and be better versions of themselves and in turn will cause the company to grow.

Even leaders who are focused on the long-term goals of the company and encouraging their employees to grow and expand, can be short-sighted in their approach. Some potential pitfalls of transformational leadership would be an increased potential for burnout, a requirement for continuous communication, and slow decision making (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022), while pitfalls for being a servant leader are the fact that it works against traditional authority, makes employees less motivated, decreases managerial authority, and doesn't fit every business (Quain, S. 2018).

A couple of the pitfalls seem to fight against the strengths of the leadership style such as making employees less motivated, servant leaders tend to jump in and fix problems – going as far as completing projects which can demotivate employees to work harder as they know their leader will pitch in and either finish or fix the work for them (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022b). For employees with a strictly transformational leader, the constant encouragement to grow professionally and maintain high standards of performance and productivity could lead to burnout if balance isn't sought as well. In addition, true transformational leaders have a high standard for consistent and effective communication, depending on the size of the company or the size of the team this may not be possible in all instances (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022a).

My own experience with both types of these leadership styles is that there are other styles implemented as well as a mix of servant and transformational leadership. Unfortunately, the go-to additional style typically seems to be an autocratic style of leadership which tends to negate what has been fostered with a servant leader or transformational leadership style. The best example I have is the current Chief of Revenue Cycle. She has a servant's heart and is always encouraging everyone around her to do better, to be better, to aim higher and strive more; however, she also knows that balance is important and so at the same time encourages having work-life balance.

Recently I was asked if I would like to travel back to my home state of Iowa and present a seminar on leadership. I had to think hard as I am not a public speaker, generally public speaking terrifies me; and the speech classes I had to take were met with huge anxiety. However, in a recent Women of Sound (internal work group) meeting they were promoting the book that the book club was reading which was *She Thinks like a Boss: leadership: 9 Essential Skills for New Female Leaders in Business and the Workplace. How to Influence Teams Effectively and Combat Imposter Syndrome* by Jemma Roedel.

In chapter 5 she talks about overcoming self-doubt and how we must switch the thoughts from doubt in self to doubt in the idea (p. 67). Taking that into consideration I submitted my proposal for the seminar, telling my story of my path to being a leader and the leaders I have met along the way and how those women leaders have influenced and impacted my journey. The doubt is the idea of speaking in public, but I can be a storyteller – something I learned about myself when I found the world of Pathfinder, a tabletop dungeons and dragons game supported by Paizo Publishing. I found that I can stand before people, tell a story, and immerse myself in the characters; there are no nerves, there is no doubt, because people are not looking at me as a speaker, I am simply a narrator facilitating the story.

While thinking about what I would say in the seminar, I had to pause and reflect on how I was impacted by women leaders as I have progressed in my career. Another leader I have interacted with recently is Simone Woodhouse who is the Director of the Learning and Leadership department at Sound Physicians. I have the privilege of having her as my mentor and her embodiment of a servant leader is in everything she does and focuses on. Our mentor/mentee conversations generally revolve around where I want to be within the company and my future goals, and how she can help me get there. When thinking about transformational leaders that have impacted my journey my director Ingdia Holt comes to mind. She is very goal oriented, keeps everyone on task, but is always there to support those that report to her and build them up at the same time she is focused on the goals of the team and the company.

For all the good that a servant and/or transformational leader can do, there are drawbacks to both leadership styles. A good working definition of a servant leader is someone who "prioritizes the growth and well-being of others" (Kenton, 2022). While there are some distinct advantages of the leadership style, few leaders have experience in this type of management and find that adopting this style of leadership may require a challenging cultural change, find that decisions take longer – which can be detrimental in times of crisis, and staff can be given more responsibility than they can handle. Servant leadership is a way of thinking that prioritizes service to others over serving oneself (Kenton, 2022). I think that being strictly a servant leader would be very hard and not sustainable long-term. Constantly putting everyone before you, while noble, can be very draining. I have not encountered someone who is only a servant leader in my career journey.

Transformational leadership is "where leaders aim to inspire and motivate others to align their own goals with a company's success" (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022c). There are very good points to transformational leaders however, there are also the pitfalls of a transformational leadership style, such as:

- While inspiring others to motivate themselves there can be a lack of focus.
- A higher potential for burnout, change can cause disruption of routines, there are fewer checks and balances.
- There can be a misuse of power as transformational leaders excel at influencing others.
- With the need for communication between leaders and employees there is a demand for constant maintenance.
- There can be favoritism due to the amount of time transformational leaders spend with their team, the focus on long-term goals and the big picture leads to lost details.
- Transformational leaders tend to have likable and charismatic personalities which causes a reliance on certain personalities, and disagreements can be exaggerated due to the emphasis on employees aligning their goals.

Focusing on a transformational leadership style is one that I do have firsthand experience with. I have had the pleasure of working with two leaders that focus on ensuring that the employee's goals are aligned with the company's goals and the team's goals. They also exhibit aspects of an autocratic leadership style with quick decision-making (Martinuzzi, 2023), however, this can lead to a lack of trust

between the leader and the employee as the employee doesn't feel heard, while other employees are over-heard, and this can create an imbalance in the dynamics of the team. In my case we have a notable difference in the efficiency of team members, the team members that are heard most often are the ones that require close supervision because they are unable to complete their work in a timely manner, their processes are long and/or drawn out and inefficient but yet they lead the implementation of processes for the entire team causing the more efficient team members to work in a less efficient manner if they do not closely guard their workflow.

I do, however, feel that a person can grow as both a servant leader and a transformational leader. We can take lessons from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr as he took a leadership role in the Civil Rights Movement and his non-violent approach. He focused on larger goals than himself because his desire was to help others and elevate them. That being said, Dr. King sacrificed his own life for his cause (Kenton, 2022). That is not necessarily something we want to do as servant leaders. In addition, there are times where being a servant leader is not the most ideal of leadership styles. While growing within a servant leader mindset we need to keep goals in mind, our goals, company goals, and employee goals. We must figure out how to grow as a servant leader while being transformational and ensuring that there is a path for the people we are leading to follow.

We can all name specific instances that influenced us for good and bad, the bad is usually easier to point out as that is typically at the forefront in our minds. So, what am I going to speak about at the seminar in Iowa? I need to reflect on my first encounters with female leaders both good and bad, reflect on the subsequent female leaders that I have encountered along my journey that have influenced my desire to be in leadership and to help shape our future leaders.

This week while talking with my mentor she tasked me with identifying where I want to be within the organization and where I want to be as a leader. I know I have good strong examples within my work world for female servant and transitional leaders and there are aspects of situational leadership within those women. I know that my preferred leadership style is a mix of the three styles, servant/transitional/situational, as I feel that those three styles give me the best opportunity to help others grow into their best version and meet them where they are at, i.e. do they need someone to be on-top of what they are doing asking for updates to keep them on task, do they want their assignment and to be left alone, are they someone that needs an outline of the task and they and do it or do they need a detailed step-by-step list of directions to be able to complete the project.

While doing an introspective look at myself for this task from my mentor I know that I will need to put myself into a leadership position as well as strengthen my leadership credentials. My mentor leads a "Crucial Conversations" course which is a national course that teaches techniques for speaking persuasively vs. abrasively for better results when discussing high stakes, strong emotions, and risky subjects (*Welcome - Realize Your Potential: Cornerstone*, n.d.). When discussing the course with her it came out that I will be the only non-manager/supervisor taking the course which she is excited about as there are rarely non-manager/supervisors taking this course and her opinion is that everyone could benefit from the information.

I am hopeful that I will be able to use the skills learned from the course to influence how I approach others. I tend to just do things because they need to be done, dishes are one of my partners chores, but I'll do them when they need to be done even though I have my own chores. I have learned while in my graduate courses to let things go and do less so that they can do more, and I have time to handle the responsibilities that are mine and not take on everyone else's responsibilities. Bringing that into the work world will be switching that mindset to empower my team to handle their responsibilities

and not do their tasks for them regardless of if I think I can do them faster or better or because they need to be done.

Empowering my team, to me, looks like meeting with each one individually to ask them how they learn best, what they look for in a leader and what they need from me as their leader; and then working to implement that into our daily/weekly work lives. Empowerment to me also means being able to give my team the entire scope of what we as a team are responsible for and offering insight into my thoughts on a workflow and identifying the parts that are set in stone and cannot be deviated from and identifying areas where I will leave open to their interpretation of how they feel they can best get the work completed. I will also share with the team my top-down responsibilities and make my commitments to the team on the areas of projects that they can trust that I will complete – generally finalizing information for my upper management and ensure that I am meeting them in the middle of the project so that no parts get dropped. I feel that offering transparency in what leadership is responsible for helps a team know that what they are doing is impactful and where the information they generate will go.

Within my conversations with the team and learning what they need from me as their leader I want to identify areas where I can build up members of the team to help them get into the roles that they ultimately want to get into; should that be recommending the "Crucial Conversations" course, encouraging them to take college courses to advance their careers advance. I know my path will not be everyone's path so I think that recognizing that some people are happy where they are at and do not aspire to management or upper management positions could be tricky for me as I want everyone to reach their full potential.

For me to encourage and impact my team I have to do the work myself and on myself. Introspective looks into myself have become a huge thing for me, looking inward to review where am I

at, where do I want to be, and how am I going to get there; is something I have been doing a lot of lately. Not just because my mentor has been asking me these questions, but because I know that I need to be secure in what I am doing and where I am going to be able to effectively lead others to their potential. One of these introspections let me to taking my graduate courses and completing my masters degree as that is putting me in line to move into management.

Another introspection led me to signing up for a mentor program and being pair with my company's Director of Learning and Leadership which brought me to the "Crucial Conversations" course that will allow me to learn additional skills that I can employ in both my personal and professional life. Yet another introspection is allowing me to see the benefits of taking a Project Management Professional (PMP) course after I have completed the final classes for my degree as well as reach out to PM professional within my company to ask about job shadowing experiences to learn more and make those connections within my company.

Conclusion

While introspection has been a huge factor in my life the last few years, looking back it's something that I started after the demise of a long-term relationship. After the end of that relationship, I had the opportunity to essentially start over and so while dealing with the fallout of that relationship I sat down and had a long conversation with my mother. One of the questions she asked me was did my relationship define me or would it refine me; que first introspection. That very first introspection led me to my bachelors degree and my first experience with management concepts and informatics. The career positions I obtained while in taking my bachelors classes allowed me to see effective and ineffective management styles and start to refine where I would want to be as a leader; we all have said at one time or another "I would do XYZ differently if I was the supervisor".

As I have grown in my current position I have encountered strong servant and transitional leaders that have given me the opportunity to see how those 2 leadership styles fit my personality of wanting to be the best I can for my company but at the same time surround myself with strong people on my team and sometimes to surround yourself with strong people you have to help them become a stronger version of themselves and that is where the servant leader style comes into play for me. Serving others by encouraging them to take steps to become a better version of themselves to me is a huge win as it gives me more strong people in my circle.

Encouraging others also encourages me to expand myself and continue to learn and grow myself and bring those ideas and concepts back to my team to help them learn and grow and strengthen my circle. I will never be done learning, be it going into a PHD program or working with physician leaders within my company to look at the mechanical side of physician burnout to see what we can change within workflows to decrease the advent of provider burnout to positively impact patients and allow them to have a better experience.

References

An Introduction to Models of Servant Leadership. (n.d.).

https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/models-of-servant-

leadership?gclid=Cj0KCQjwwISlBhD6ARIsAESAmp65Nbf0e1vBv-

oyqEt5Y80yVardWp3bLPlyLClLeofQQS7cXpHknLsaAqrLEALw_wcB&aceid=&gclsr

c=aw.ds

Hayzlett, J. (2019, October 16). 4 Principles of Servant Leadership. *Entrepreneur*.

https://www.entrepreneur.com/leadership/4-principles-of-servant-leadership/340791

Indeed Editorial Team. (2022a). Pros and Cons of Transformational Leadership (With

Definitions). *Indeed.com*. https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-

development/pros-and-cons-of-transformational-

leadership#:~:text=Transformational%20leaders%20encourage%20their%20employees,p

otential%20for%20burnout%20among%20employees.

Indeed Editorial Team. (2022b). Pros and Cons of Transformational Leadership (With

Definitions). *Indeed.com*. https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-

development/pros-and-cons-of-transformational-

leadership#:~:text=Transformational%20leaders%20encourage%20their%20employees,p

otential%20for%20burnout%20among%20employees.

Indeed Editorial Team. (2022c). Common Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership and How

To Avoid Them. *Indeed.com*. https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-

development/transformational-leadership-weaknesses

Kenton, W. (2022). Servant Leadership: Characteristics, Pros & Cons, Example. *Investopedia*.

https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/servant-

leadership.asp#:~:text=The%20disadvantages%20of%20servant%20leadership,they%20a

re%20able%20to%20carry.

Martinuzzi, B. (2023). Exploring 7 Common Leadership Styles: Find Your Own. *Business Class:*

Trends and Insights | American Express. https://www.americanexpress.com/en-

us/business/trends-and-insights/articles/the-7-most-common-leadership-styles-and-how-

to-find-your-own/

Quain, S. (2018, October 22). *The X&Y Management Theory*. Small Business - Chron.com.

https://smallbusiness.chron.com/xy-management-theory-55198.html

Roedel, J. (2021). *She thinks like a boss : leadership: 9 Essential Skills for New Female Leaders*

in Business and the Workplace. How to Influence Teams Effectively and Combat

Imposter Syndrome.

Welcome - Realize your potential: Cornerstone. (n.d.).

https://soundphysicians.csod.com/LMS/UserTranscript/ILTSessionView.aspx?qs=%5e%

5e%5ePMXcqa75Y2onlJorr3qBF58DGdtxWRJl2bO0oP6LORKO%2bEzUsUJQUeRmO

HeyJT6Bt9eiRMkdGEHO2VTkolrYXh1mqQqwSvOcKSyWmgiOTq5nd7rMzDR6jeEG

0OI%2fLDC%2b

What Are the Characteristics of a Transformational Leaders? (2022, July 8).

Michiganstateuniversityonline.com. https://www.michiganstateuniversityonline.com/