

# TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND AUTHENTIC TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP: DIMENSIONS, COMPARISON, COMPONENT

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## ABSTRACT

Most companies lack the ability to implement organizational change; over 70% of Organization Change Initiatives (OCIs) fail. This inability has negative economic and survival implications for companies. Organization Change Initiatives must be effective and rapid to match the high pace of change in the business environment. Transformational leadership has been linked to successful Organization Change Initiatives through its positive influence on employee commitment and reduced resistance to change, yet little research has been done to identify its association with Organization Change Initiatives implementation speed. This literature review describes the transformational leadership and transformational leadership compared with other types of leadership.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, charismatic leadership, transformational,

organizational change

## INTRODUCTION

Organizations are challenged by the necessity and frequency of organization change (Bernerth, Armenakis, Feild, & Walker, 2007; Cohen, 1999; Golm, 2010; Isaksen, 2007; Oreg & Berson, 2011; Pieterse, van Knippenberg, Schippers, & Stam, 2010). Brown and Harvey (2006) stated the necessity for change and the high frequency of change is the only constant for organizations. This condition of frequent change is due to the rapidly changing market, which is driven by changes in technology, economic environment, and the social and cultural changes of a diversified consumer base (Boga & Ensari, 2009; Bridges, 1986; Cohen, 1999; Mokhber, Ismail, & Vakilbashi, 2011; Oreg & Berson, 2011; Pieterse et al., 2010; Vasilescu, 2012). This change is not only constant, but it is also complex, rapid, and increasing, generating ill-structured organizational challenges that have to be overcome for the company to survive (Boga & Ensari, 2009; Liu, Liu, & Zeng, 2011; Oreg & Berson, 2011; Pieterse et al., 2010; Sullivan, Sullivan, & Buffton, 2001; Vasilescu, 2012). Because of the need for high pace change, organizations are seeking the key to improving their capacity to be flexible and routinely embrace and facilitate rapid organizational change (Bernerth et al., 2007; Boga & Ensari, 2009; Erickson, 2008; Oreg & Berson, 2011; Pieterse et al., 2010). This is also because of industry experiencing a high failure rate in excess of 70% for organizational change initiatives (Gilley, Dixon, & Gilley, 2008b). It is possible leadership may be the key leverage organizations are looking for to promote the capacity in organizations to routinely and rapidly embrace change because of the proven impact that leadership can have on organization performance (Golm, 2010). Adding to the body of research in this area has social implication for industries needing a clearer definition of steps that can be leveraged in leadership to improve their organizations' ability to make change. This can have an impact on their organizational culture, their economic status, and their ability to respond rapidly and effectively to the needs of their customer.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Resistance to change

Professionals resist change when they exhibit pessimistic attitudes about new changes in an organization (Kennedy, 2011). Professionals with pessimistic attitudes lose confidence in the ability of their leaders to establish new directions for the organization. A loss of confidence in leadership contributes to patterns of behavior that carry an infectious persuasion of uncertainty, which can inhibit talented professionals' abilities to think creatively and achieve organizational goals (Kennedy, 2011). Leaders can address and minimize resistance to organizational change by

involving professionals in the decision-making process (Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009). When professionals perceive threats of job loss, professionals tended to resist any change their organizations put in place (Van Dijk & Van Dick, 2009).

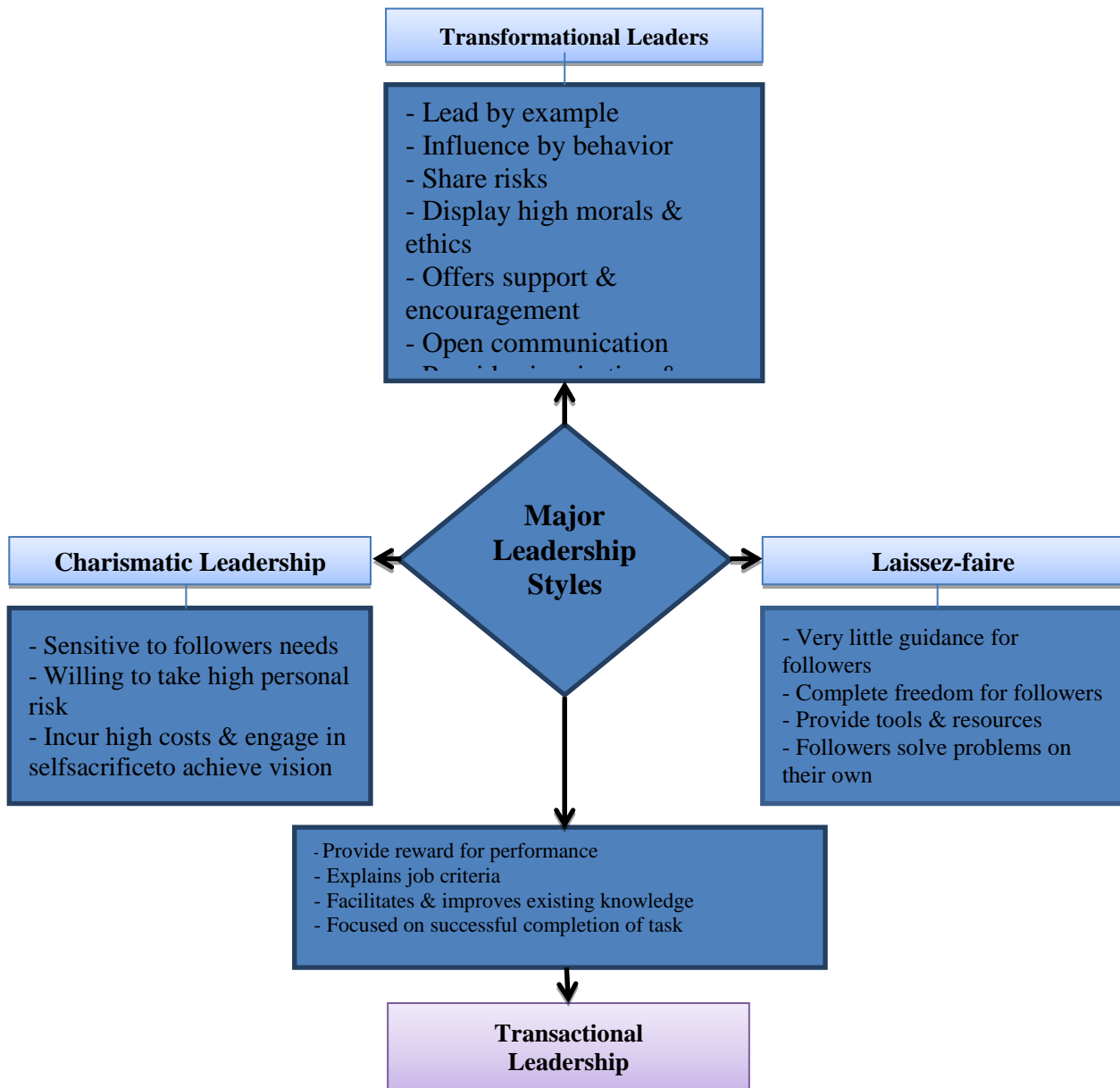
In a 2011 study, organizational change produced challenges for professionals, such as fear and low morale, which in turn affected job satisfaction, job performance, and productivity (Decker, Wheeler, Johnson, & Parsons, 2001). Professionals are the most valuable asset to an organization and effectively influence the operational success of organizations. For example, the effects of organizational change on professionals may cause a loss of confidence, fear of job loss, and fear that changes will increase their workload (Decker et al., 2001).

Many organizational managers underestimate the degree of reaction to change and misjudge influences on resistance to change; managers must be aware of the type of conditions that influence employees' emotions to encourage a positive attitude toward organizational change (Klarner, By, & Diefenbach, 2011). Employees' emotions during organizational change could help or hamper the outcome of the change process. The emotions of employees may express emotions positively or negatively. When professionals demonstrated negative emotions, behaviors resulted in resistance to organizational change. Additionally, when professionals showed positive emotions, professionals became excited and showed acceptance and confidence about the change (Klarner et al., 2011).

### Leadership Styles

Four primary styles of leadership are: charismatic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire.

Transactional and transformational leadership are the main effective leadership styles in the hospitality and hotel industries (Scott-Halsell, Blum, & Shumate, 2008). Figure 1 shows the attributes of transformational leaders, charismatic leaders, laissez-faire leaders, and transactional leaders. The figure provides the components of each type of leadership style defined by Harper (2012) and other researchers.

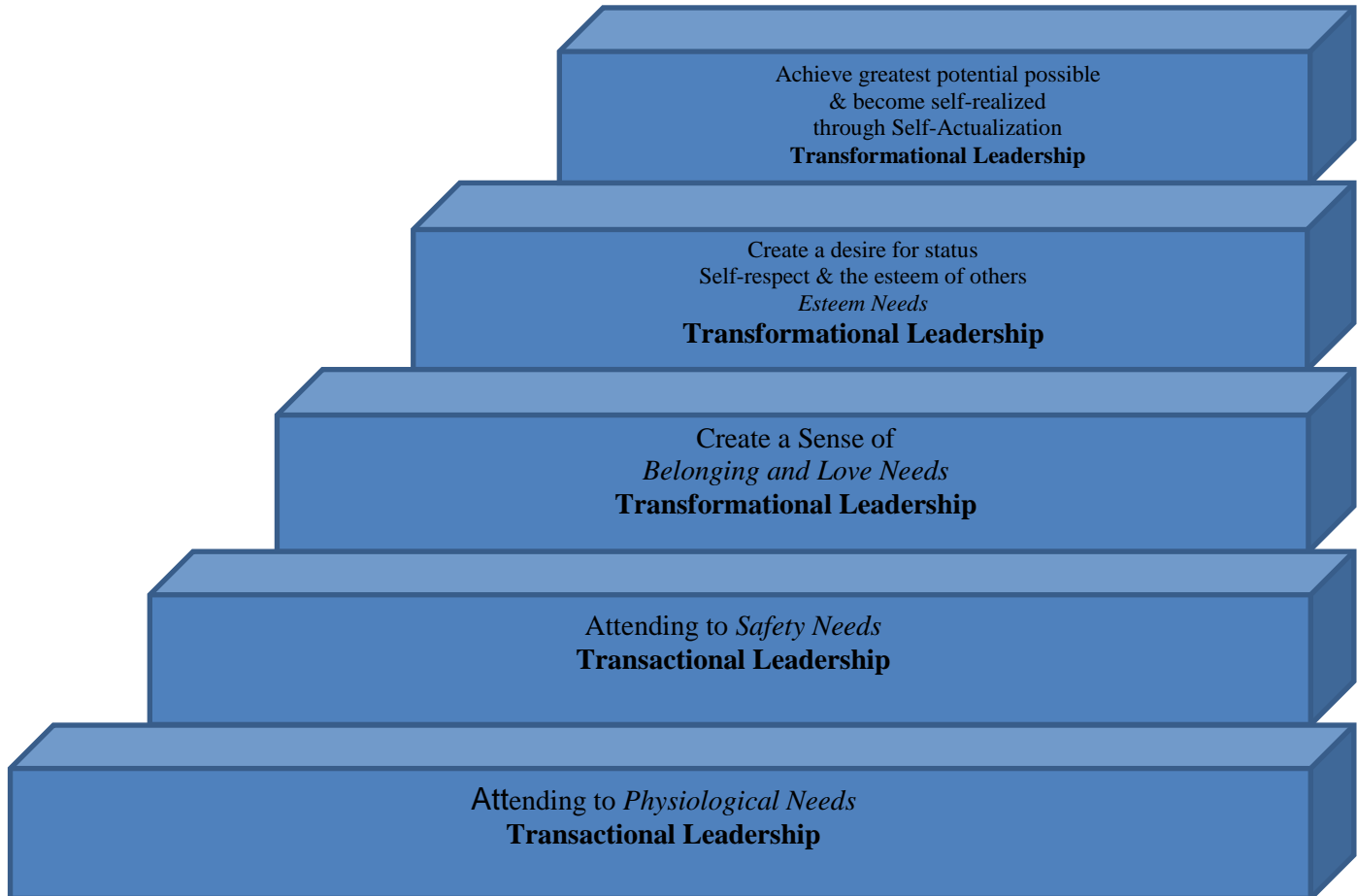


**Figure 1. Characteristics of leadership styles in organizations**  
 Adapted from “The Leader Coach: A Model of Multi-Style Leadership” by S. Harper,  
 2012, *Journal of Practical Consulting*, 4(1), 22–31.

### Transformational Leadership

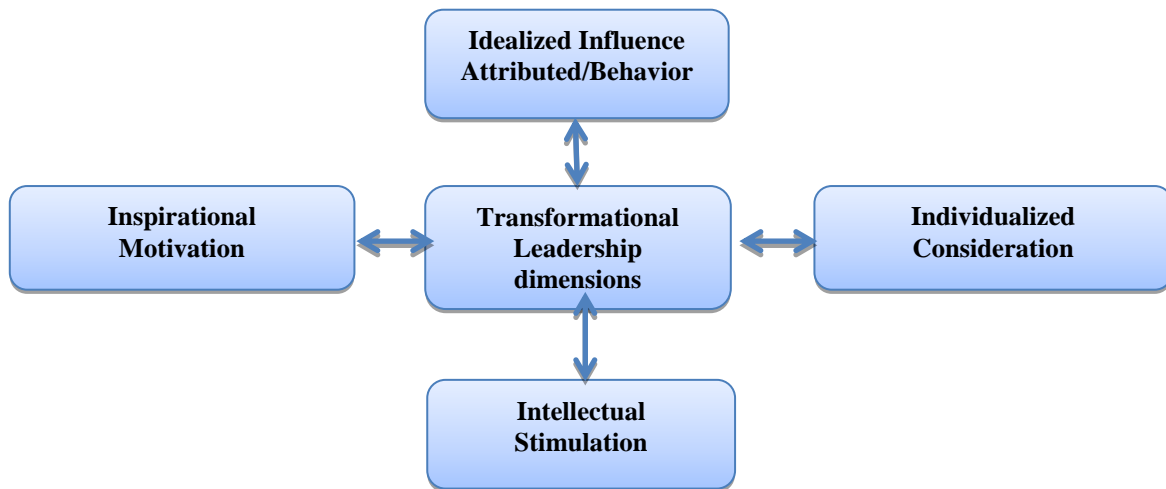
Transformational leadership is a style of leadership that attracts various competences and methodologies to an organization, thereby creating distinctive benefits for the organization. A manager applying transformational leadership shows integrity and communicates clear organizational goals to subordinates or followers (Daft, 2010). Transformational leaders influence organizational performance by promoting organizational learning and innovation (Garcia-Morales et al., 2011). In addition, they elicit better organizational performance from followers while appealing to their higher order needs. Higher order needs include five distinct levels that separate transactional from transformational fulfillment (Rossiter, 2009). Figure 2 illustrates higher order needs, which include physiological needs, such as the basic life-sustaining requirements of food, water, and shelter. Level 2 of the diagram shows safety and security needs such as freedom from harm, and self-fulfillment needs such as social acceptance and companionship. Further, the need for esteem is the desire for self-respect and

praise from others. Finally, self-actualization means achieving success and realizing life's fullest potential (Maslow, 1943). Transactional leaders concentrate more on lower order needs such as physiological, safety, and security concerns, whereas transformational leaders focus on the higher order of needs of self-fulfillment, esteem, and self-actualization (Rossiter, 2009). The transformational-leadership style leads to positive changes in an organization (Garcia-Morales et al., 2011).



**Figure 2..Maslow's hierarchy of needs**

Transformational leadership, effective throughout management levels and work environments, comprises five dimensions (Mahdi et al., 2012; Scott-Halsell et al., 2008): (a) idealized influence (attributed to leaders by the followers), (b) idealized influence (behavior of leaders as observed by followers), (c) inspirational motivation (provided by leaders), (d) intellectual stimulation (provided by leaders and organizations), and (e) individualized consideration. Figure 3 illustrates the dimensions of the transformational-leadership style.



**Figure 3. Transformational leadership dimensions.**

Transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to transcend their own self interests and are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers. Transformational leaders build subordinates' respect and trust by 1) behaving in a fair manner and doing what is right rather than what is expedient; 2) by increasing followers' awareness of the mission or vision toward which they are working and raising followers' expectations of what they can achieve, thereby motivating them to pursue the group's goals; 3) by encouraging their followers to look at old problems from new and differing perspectives, giving rise to followers' creative thinking and innovation; and, lastly, 4) by granting individualized attention to their followers, considering their needs and abilities, playing an especially important role in the followers' growth and development (Robbins & Judge, 2005; Zacharatos, Barling, & Kelloway, 2000) .

Transformational leadership is perhaps one of the most researched leadership paradigms over the last three decades; over 100 theses and dissertations investigated the concept during the five-year period of 1990 to 1995 alone (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1995). In a content analysis of published articles, Lowe and Gardner (2001) found that one third of the research in *Leadership Quarterly* was about transformational/charismatic leadership. Furthermore, Judge and Piccolo (2004) found in a search of keywords in materials published from 1990 to 2003 in the PsycINFO database, that there have been more studies on transformational or charismatic leadership than on all other popular theories of leadership (e.g., Fiedler's contingency theory, path-goal theory, substitutes for leadership) combined. In their meta-analysis, Judge and Piccolo (2004) also found support for the validity of transformational leadership, which generalized across many situations, including when it is studied in rigorous settings. Judge and Piccolo report that transformational leadership has been studied in the lab (Jung & Avolio, 1999) and in the field (Yammarino, Dubinsky, Comer & Jolson, 1997), as well as researched in correlational (Hater & Bass, 1988) and experimental (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996) studies. Transformational leadership has been studied in the military (Kane and Tremble, 2000), education (Koh, Steers, & Terborg, 1995), and business (Howell & Avolio, 1993) settings. It has been studied at a variety of levels, from entrepreneurial CEOs (Baum, Locke, & Kirkpatrick, 1998) to supervisors (Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999). Transformational leadership is a very popular academic pursuit. James McGregor Burns first introduced the concepts of transforming and transactional leadership in his 1978 seminal work, *Leadership*. Transformational leadership is often mistakenly put in opposition to transactional leadership, comparing them on the same continuum. Bass (1985) argues that they are separate concepts, a viewpoint that differs from Burns' original work. Bass believes the best leaders are capable of both transactional and transformational behaviors. He described four specific dimensions of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration) and three specific dimensions of transactional leadership (contingent reward, active management-by-exception, passive management-by-exception). Leaders' behaviors may represent any or all of these seven dimensions.

Transactional leadership focuses on the exchange between leader and followers, influencing each other in such a way that both receive something of value, such as a pay raise for the follower, in exchange for greater productivity for the leader. Based on an exchange relationship to meet self-interests, the transactional leader clarifies for the follower what the follower needs to do to be rewarded for the effort, (i.e., contingent reward). A transactional leader may monitor the follower's performance and take corrective action if the follower errs (i.e., active management-by-exception) or may passively wait for problems to present themselves before taking corrective action, (i.e., passive management-by-exception). Transactional leader behavior is very common in the workplace today (Yammarino & Bass, 1990) and can be witnessed throughout many levels of differing organizations. Transactional leaders are able to influence subordinates because it is in the best interests of the subordinates to do what the leader wants (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987); however there is no individualization or focus on subordinate needs or personal development.

Transformational leadership is complementary to the transactional leadership style and may be ineffective with the complete absence of a transactional type of relationship between leader and follower (Bass, Avolio, & Goodheim, 1987). According to the Augmentation hypothesis, transformational leadership actually builds on transactional leadership to achieve high levels of performance from followers (Waldman, Bass, & Yammarino, 1990). The primary difference between the two styles is in the process by which the leader motivates followers and in the types of goals set. Transformational leadership is concerned with not only performance, but the development of followers to their fullest potential (Avolio, 1999; Bass & Avolio 1990). Transformational leaders are effective motivators, encouraging followers to support the greater good rather than their own self-interests (Kuhnert, 1994). The behaviors of transformational leaders are based in their personal values and beliefs (Bass, 1985). Their behavior stems from deeply held personal value systems, or end values (Burns, 1978). Transformational leaders offer a purpose that goes beyond short-term goals and focus on higher-order intrinsic needs, whereas transactional leaders focus on the proper exchange of resources (Conger & Kanungo, 1998). This long-range and higher-order focus results in achievement of higher levels of performance among followers than previously thought possible (Bass, 1990).

### **Authentic Transformational Leadership**

Authentic transformational leaders are those leaders who are able to intellectually stimulate, inspirationally motivate, individually consider, and ideally influence their followers in an ethical manner. Authentic transformational leaders are trustworthy, honest, and believable. They are transparent in their dealings, ethical in their actions, and morally developed. Simply, an authentic transformational leader has transformational capability and a high level of ethicality (Nichols, 2006).

The subject of authentic leadership is a hot topic of research [see the 2005 Leadership Quarterly (16) special issue on authentic leadership]. Authenticity itself, however, has been a topic of discussion since the early Greeks, and their philosophy, "to thine own self be true" (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Authenticity is described by the French philosopher Sartre (1943) as a self-referential state of being. In Maslow's (1968, 1971) needs theory, he discusses self-actualized persons, or people who are in-tune with themselves, having an accurate perception of who they are with strong ethical convictions. This description matches that of an authentic person. Two key elements included in the definition of authenticity are ethicality and self-awareness. Avolio et al. (2004) conceive of authentic leaders as people who have realized elevated degrees of authenticity in that they know themselves, what they value and believe, and they operate based upon those beliefs and values while visibly and clearly interacting with others. Authentic leaders are leaders who truly understand their own behaviors, as well as the causes of those behaviors. Furthermore, they are perceived by others as understanding their own and others' values/moral perspective, strengths, and knowledge. They are cognizant of their environment and clearly picture the framework in which they lead. Qualities of such leaders include being positive, optimistic, self-assured, pliant, and having a great store of moral fortitude (Avolio, Luthans, and Walumbwa, 2004). May et al. (2003) mark authentic leaders as those who are able to integrate their ethical behavior fully into both their personal and organizational lives, creating an ethical climate that focuses on the employees and the stakeholders, recognizing their inherent worth. All of these authors consider authentic leadership to be a root or over-arching form of leadership that includes transformational, spiritual, and ethical leadership.

### **What Authenticity is Not**

In order to better define what authenticity is, Chan, Hannah, and Gardner (2005) discuss what authenticity is not: sincerity, impression management, or self-monitoring. Authenticity is different than sincerity. Trilling (1972) described sincerity as the absence of pretense in which there is a consistency between actions and feelings. Insincerity is simply the feeling of a lack of congruence between one's feelings and his/her actual relationships with other people (Chan et al., 2005). Authenticity is more than feeling, and concerns actually being one's true self. It is self-contained, not dependent upon relationships with other people.

Authenticity is also not impression management (Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Rordan, 2002). Impression management is concerned with the manipulation of the social environment to portray a specific image to an audience. Authentic people may utilize impression management techniques to portray their true image, that image being consistent with their nature. People who are inauthentic will hide their true thoughts, simply saying what they think others want to hear. The difference is based in intention; the authentic person seeks to portray who he/she truly is, the inauthentic person seeks to fool others (Chan et al., 2005).

Inauthentic people, however, will still be inauthentic outside of social situations where impression management techniques are not necessary. They still have a lack of self awareness and an inability to be true to the self.

### **Components of Authentic Leadership**

Avolio and Gardner (2005) discuss the components of authentic leadership as positive psychological capital, positive moral perspective, leader self-awareness, leader self-regulation, leadership processes/behaviors, follower self-awareness/regulation, follower development, organizational context, and performance beyond expectations. This framework of authentic leadership marks the theory as developmental in nature as well as holistic in that it covers a vast range of leadership perspectives. The rationale for each component is briefly explained below.

#### **– Positive Psychological Capital**

Luthans and Avolio (2003) identified confidence, optimism, hope, and resiliency as positive psychological capacities and personal resources of the authentic leader. These psychological states are conjectured to increase self-regulatory and self awareness behaviors of the leader, creating an entire process of positive self development. These positive psychological capacities have theoretical and psychometric support for being state-like (open to development and change) (Luthans, Luthans, & Luthans, 2004). Thus, these capacities may play an important role in the development of individuals, groups, and organizations (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

#### **– Positive Moral Perspective**

May et al. (2003) discuss the moral component of authentic leadership. Authentic leaders engage in an ethical and transparent decision-making process, where they draw on moral capacity, courage, and resiliency in addressing ethical issues. Their integrated framework discusses how an authentic leader who is aware of moral issues ultimately has ethical actions. Moral decision-making relies upon recognizing moral dilemmas, transparently evaluating the alternatives, and developing intention to act in a manner consistent with one's evaluations. The moral capacity of the leader influences the relationship between the environmental characteristics of the dilemma and the leader's ability to recognize a moral dilemma. Leader moral capacity consists of how they construct their own leadership roles, their perspective taking ability, and their experience with previous moral dilemmas. Moral courage is the determination of the leader to follow through on moral intentions and behave ethically, despite outside pressures to behave otherwise. Acting courageously, however, must not occur in a single instance, but must be sustainable over time. Moral resiliency allows an authentic leader to positively and continuously adapt to situations that pose significant adversity or risk to the leader's

principled actions. Sustained ethical actions are considered to be a key component of authentic leadership (May et al., 2003).

#### – **Leader Self-Awareness**

Another fundamental aspect of authentic leadership is leader self-awareness; leaders are cognizant of their own existence and what constitutes that existence over time (Silvia & Duval, 2001). Self-awareness is a continual and emergent process whereby a leader comes to understand his/her unique talents, strengths, sense of purpose, core values, beliefs, and desires (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Self-awareness includes values, cognitions regarding identity, emotions, and motives/goals (Gardner et al., 2005).

#### – **Leader Processes/Behaviors and Follower Self Awareness/Regulation/Development**

Several processes and behaviors through which leaders influence followers have been proposed, including positive modeling, personal and social identification, emotional contagion, and positive social exchanges. Positive modeling of the different components of authenticity (self-awareness, self-regulatory processes, positive psychological states, and/or a positive moral perspective) is fundamental to the influence of authentic leaders on follower development. Positive modeling, in leadership terms, is the idea of leading by example, whereby leaders set themselves up as positive role models for their followers. When leaders demonstrate transparent

decision making, confidence, optimism, hope, resilience, and consistency between their words and deeds, followers take note (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Positive modeling is an identification process, it is not the sole source of identification. Followers come to identify with authentic leaders and their values through personal and social identification processes as well (Avolio, Gardner et al., 2004; Avolio, Luthans et al., 2004; Gardner et al., 2005; Ilies, Morgenson, & Nahrgang, 2005). Authentic leaders attempt to create positive feelings in followers and a sense of identification with the fundamental purposes of the leader. Authentic leaders fashion the circumstances for elevated trust and extract positive emotions from followers (Avolio, Gardner et al., 2004).

Another leadership process whereby authentic leaders influence followers and their development is that of emotional contagion. Emotional contagion is based on two theories. Frederickson (2003) developed a model that posits that a leader's positive emotions may be contagious and linked to positive organizational outcomes. The second theory is provided by Kernis (2003) with the contention that authenticity, specifically the self-awareness and relational transparency aspects, promotes positive affective states in followers. Emotional contagion is a process whereby an authentic leader feels positive emotions, which spread through social contagion to other organizational members, creating positive emotional and cognitive development (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). The simple idea is thus: happy leaders make happy followers.

The last process relies on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), that of positive social exchanges. Ilies et al. (2005) put forth that when authentic leaders share self relevant information, display personal integrity, and have an authentic relational orientation, leader-follower relationships take on high levels of trust, respect, and positive affect. These strong relationships then foster greater value congruence and follower reciprocation in the form of behavior that is consistent with the leader's values (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

The developmental process of authentic leadership includes not only a growth aspect for the leader, but also one for the follower. Indeed, authentic leadership development is based on the idea that leaders and followers will develop simultaneously, in a relational process. Leader and follower become more authentic as their relationship becomes more authentic. When followers develop a deeper self awareness, they begin to share more with the leader. In turn, the leader is able to benefit through a better understanding of the follower, more richly developing his or her own leadership skills (Avolio & Gardner, 2005).

### **Charismatic Leadership versus Transformational Leadership**



Charismatic leadership research has a history much longer than that of transformational leadership, though many researchers consider them identical in concept, using the terms interchangeably (e.g. DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2000; Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). Charismatic leadership is rooted in the work of Weber (1921, 1947), where he discusses implications for charismatic leadership in organizations. Shils (1965) proposed that charisma could be found in a work environment in ordinary people. Tucker (1968), often credited with the first full theory of charismatic leadership, described the charismatic leader/follower relationship. He attempted to demystify charisma, advocating that charisma only existed when followers said it did. House (1977) extended Tucker's work with a more complete charismatic model. Conger and Kanungo (1988) introduced situations to charismatic leadership

research, explaining charisma as an attributional occurrence. Followers attribute charisma to leaders perceived as effective. Certain conditions must exist: 1) the leader must see the opportunity and develop a vision to address it; 2) the vision must be communicated to followers and those followers must be persuaded that change must occur; 3) the leader's personal success, sacrifice, and risk-taking must convince followers to trust his/her abilities and vision; and 4) the leader must convince the followers that the vision is both realistic and attainable (Conger, 1991). Thus, charisma was not viewed as a personal characteristic, but as an ability to recognize deficiencies in the system.

Charismatic leadership involves many of the premises of transformational leadership (Humphreys & Einstein, 2003). Shils (1965) suggested that charisma can be found everywhere, similar to Bass' (1985) conceptualization of transformational leadership, in which he proposed that transformational leader behaviors are often present at various levels and in diverse types of organizations. Tucker (1968) described charismatic leaders as those with the ability to communicate a vision and assist followers in solving problems, both key leader behaviors in Bass' (1985) transformational leadership model. House (1977) distinguished personality characteristics and behaviors of charismatic leaders that also fit with the transformational framework (Bass, 1985, 1990; Tichy & DeVanna, 1986), such as self confidence, dominance, a strong belief in the moral correctness of the vision, and the need to influence other people.

House (1977) further suggested that charismatic leaders arouse their followers to give blind obedience, commitment, loyalty, and allegiance to the leader, and to the cause the leader represents. It is this definition that casts doubt on charismatic leadership, setting it up as a two-edged sword (Humphreys & Einstein, 2003). Although charismatic leaders are able to lead followers to higher levels of performance and morality, they also can exhibit tendencies to manipulate and enslave them (Conger, 1990; Howell and Avolio, 1992; Sankowsky, 1995). This dark side of charismatic leadership (Conger, 1990) also casts a shadow on transformational leadership because of their overlapping relationship. It is important to note, however, that those leaders with charisma are not necessarily transformational. Leaders who are charismatic may emotionally appeal to their followers without exhibiting other transformational behaviors.

Charisma is but one component of transformational leadership; perhaps a very visible component, but by no means the most important (Bass, 1985). Even though charisma is the most suspect transformational behavior when considering the potential for abuse, it is also possible that the entire range of these behaviors could be abused. The popularity of transformational leadership may encourage unethical leaders to mimic behaviors associated with it. When one considers the broad spectrum over which transformational leadership has been studied and the plethora of positive organizational and personal outcomes associated with it [e.g., overall employee performance (Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993); turnover intention (Bycio, Hackett, & Allen, 1995); increased employee satisfaction (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990); extra effort (Seltzer & Bass, 1990); organizational commitment (Bycio et al., 1995); and organizational citizenship (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000)], it is likely that transformational leadership behaviors are seen by leaders and followers, practitioners and academicians alike, as a set of ideal leadership behaviors. Mimicking these behaviors pleases

unknowing followers (as they may be unaware of the leader's true abilities or intentions), granting power and personal benefit to the leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Savvy leaders recognize the potential gain of utilizing such behaviors to garner favor with their followers.

## CONCLUSION

Organizational change is imperative for any organization because, without change, businesses would lose their competitive edge and fail to meet the needs of their loyal clients. Organizational change benefits include improved performance, growth opportunities for employees, and technological changes (Anjani & Dhanapal, 2011). Improved performance is one of the benefits of organizational change because human beings and organizations should continuously familiarize themselves with the changing world around them to thrive (Garcia, 2013). Long-lived organizations cannot rely on systems created at the organization's inception or continue to use the same technologies used in the past. Leaders adapting the business to the contemporary environment make the organization more likely to prosper (Garcia, 2013).

Leaders play a crucial role in motivating performance and effectiveness on all levels and all areas of an organization. On an individual level, the personality of a leader determines how the leader will lead and affects the performance of the people he/she leads. In conclusion, this critical influence of leadership is also true for change leaders or those leaders responsible for leading organizational change initiatives. The personality and leadership style of change leaders impact the performance of employees going through an organizational change initiatives; therefore, understanding the leadership style, personality traits, and/or leadership behaviors best suited for implementing this critical organizational function may be an advantage in overcoming the challenges of implementing a successful organizational change initiatives.

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