

Transformational Leadership – The Need of the Hour?

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Abstract

What is Leadership, and who is a Leader? How important is Leadership in steering a company towards success? Which type of Leadership style is most suitable for leading a company to success? Are Leaders born or made?

The above are just a few of the questions that but naturally come up in the minds of students and practitioners of management. The simplest definition of a Leader is that ***“A leader is one who has followers”***. Without followers, there is no leader – a simple yet practical truth. But, if the Leader does not possess certain qualities that inspire and motivate the followers, they will not follow him. From this perspective, a Leader has to treat the initial followers as equals, and once he has sufficient followers, nurture them. Another notion attached to Leaders and Leadership is that Leaders need to have a ***Vision***. Henry Kissinger has famously said that ***“the task of the leader is to get his people from where they are to where they have not been”***.

Leadership as a subject has been studied over the last 100 years or more. From the initial theories of leadership such as the ***“Trait Approach”*** to ***“Transformational Leadership”***, various theories have thrown light on the subject of leadership and have contributed to a better understanding of leadership. Some of the popular leadership theories are: ***Trait Approach, Skills Approach, Style Approach, Situational Approach, Contingency Theory, Path-Goal Theory, Leader-Member Exchange Theory, Transformational Leadership, Servant Leadership, Authentic Leadership, Team Leadership, and Psychodynamic Approach***.

This conceptual research paper focuses on ***“Transformational Leadership”*** – a theory which is fast gaining acceptance the world over as one of the most effective theories in leadership. Whilst discussing Transformational Leadership, this paper also throws light on related types of Leadership – ***Transactional Leadership, and Laissez-Faire Leadership (Passive Avoidant Leadership)***. Transformational Leadership is all about changing and transforming followers.

Key words: leader, leadership, leadership theories, transformational leadership, leadership styles