

Transformational Leadership

The most current leadership theory that has the most abundant presence in the current literature is that of Transformational Leadership.¹ Transformational Leadership is about getting everyone involved in decision-making.² “The overriding element of successful leadership is to involve people in the process of leading” (Horan, 1999, p. 21).³ Most explanations of Transformational Leadership begin with distinguishing it from

Principal Leadership and Teacher Morale 13

Transactional Leadership. In Transactional Leadership the leader is concerned with the basic needs of the person through a reward system in exchange for favorable group or organizational outcomes.⁴ While Transformational Leadership also seeks to reach these needs for the follower, its aim extends to reaching the higher level needs through empowerment and inspiration.⁵ Theories of Transformational Leadership had the following five common leader characteristics: creative, interactive, visionary, empowering, and passionate (Hackman & Johnson, 2000).⁶

In a very well known transformational theory,⁷ Kouzes and Posner (2002a) list and describe the following as the five practices of exemplary leaders: Model the Way (interactive), Inspire a Shared Vision (visionary), Challenge the Process (creative), Enable Others to Act (empowering), and Encourage the Heart (passionate).⁸ Model the Way refers to leading by example; exemplary leaders motivate followers by setting the example through direct involvement in the organization’s mission.⁹ Inspire a Shared

Vision means the leader is able to formulate, verbalize, and create enthusiasm for a vision of the organization. To create a¹⁰ desire to strive for the organization's goals, the leader must motivate the followers by relating to their personal goals and ambitions.¹¹ Challenge the Process is the leader's ability to look for and choose innovative ways to improve the organization. The leader must study the organization and its people to determine the best course of improvement to lead the organization to become more. The category Enable Others to Act is the leader's ability to create teamwork and trust and to empower followers to work toward the organization's goals.¹² Lastly, Encourage the Heart refers to the leader's resilience to keep motivating and encouraging the followers through the exhaustion and frustration that often occurs with change.