Adopting the Transformational Leadership Perspective in a Complex Research Environment

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ABSTRACT

Transformational Leadership is a popular topic among leadership scholars, but for research administrators, Transformational Leadership might seem like an enigmatic approach given its various contexts. Research administrators might think the transformational approach is only for executives, or that they do not have enough staff to call themselves transformational leaders, or that organizational transformations belong at the level of chief executive or the board. Bass (1990) noted that transformational leadership can be taught, learned, and practiced. The following argument supports this statement, promotes Transformational Leadership as an acceptable approach for research administrators, illustrates how different philosophies can be integrated into Transformational Leadership, and provides an illustration of the various ways Transformational Leadership can be applied.

BACKGROUND

In a world of fad leadership, book-of-the-month, and CEO biographies it seems the Transformational Leadership (TL) model provides an intuitive framework that separates scholarship from anecdotal advice. The compendium of leadership advice is so copious that leaders might resign themselves to claiming that their leadership model is simply to hire competent people, step aside, and let the rest take care of itself. Leadership scholars know this approach is not active leadership; rather, this behavior is more like the laissez faire dimension of the full model of leadership described by Bass (1990, 1999).

Gibbons (1986) researched the developmental process of transformational leaders through a qualitative study of senior management. The leaders were asked to speak about events and experiences from

childhood to where they were then. Through research by Gibbons (1986) and further analysis by Avolio and Gibbons (1988), seven factors evolved: High expectations from parents and urging of children to perform at high levels; grounded family environment; leaders' ability to manage their own disappointments or failures; exposure to a variety of leadership opportunities; strong desire in professional, ethical, and social issues throughout life; contact with other leaders or role models; and the ability to reflect and draw conclusions. Bass (1990) noted that TL could be taught, learned, and practiced.

TL is based on the following three assumptions: subordinates will band together around a person that inspires; leaders with a vision and passion can accomplish amazing things; and the way to accomplish great things is to interject vehemence and encouragement. It is not really leading if one does nothing, but it helps to define one's actions. The literature indicates that transactions, whether psychological or monetary, must take place between the leader and the follower to produce an observable "leadership process" and that the relationship between leader and constituent must be mutually beneficial (Northouse, 2004). It seems a weakness of the model is exactly how to carry out the TL process and what perspectives to use when carrying it out, especially in research administration, which is formed from so many different perspectives.

Research administrator behavior is influenced by the organizational environment and each environment has its own variables (Atkinson & Gilleland, 2007; Atkinson, Gilleland, & Barrett, 2007; Atkinson, Gilleland, & Pearson, 2007). It would be important for a research administrator to know how to apply the TL process to his/her given context. Bass (1990, 1999) also noted that the interests of the organization and its members need to be aligned. The leader is one of the vital members in the organization, and the research administrator as professional is a default leader when it comes to research and grant functions.

More specifically, it has been established that research administrators are professional leaders because they sit at the intersection between academic and administrative organizational behaviors (Atkinson & Gilleland, 2007; Atkinson, Gilleland, & Pearson, 2007). Research administrators must cope with increased amounts of stress (Shambrook, 2011), seek legitimacy through credentialing (Atkinson, 2002; Roberts, 2006), and work in a context in which there seem to be varying degrees of support (Hamilton, 2010). The RA's working environment is composed of shifting contexts governed by a dual hierarchy that is often at odds with the role the research administrator has to play (Atkinson & Gilleland, 2007; Hamilton, 2010). Warden (2011) noted that leaders in these positions assume a "quantum" approach because so many different variables affect the leader's actions and so

many variables affect the outcome of decisions. She noted, "where there is relationship and sharing of new information, transformational leadership is the method for new energy to do the work" (Warden, 2011, p. 4). Warden's work echoes concepts such as "fractal leadership" or "new science leadership" by Wheatly (1999) and more recently Harle (2011). Fractal leadership assumes that we do not have all the variables and that in many cases the variables are unknown until seen in retrospect. The research administrator, therefore, is required to be savvy and use leadership skills that promote collaboration, the individual, and the intellect because the information produced by the organization is ever changing and fluid.

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The following analysis will focus on the Transformational Leadership model described by Bass and Avolio (1990) and adapted by Northouse (2004). The basic premise is that leaders should move away from transactional and contingent reward type leadership to focus more on the individual (Figure 1). The analysis, therefore, will focus primarily on the 4I's or Idealized Influence, Individual Consideration, Inspirational Motivation, and Intellectual Stimulation aspects of the model. These dimensions define the TL behaviors and are characterized as follows (Table 1; Figure 1.)

Table 1. Dimensions of Transformational Leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1990)

Idealized Influence (II)	Making others feel good, making others proud, earning faith from the subordinate
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	Leader communicates his/her goals, the manipulation of images, helping others find meaning in their work
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	Leader's ability to make others think about new ways to perform work, new ways to look at work, ways to be creative in their own problem-solving methods
Individual Consideration (IC)	Individuals develop themselves, leader feedback to subordinates, time taken by the leader to bring workers into the team or group
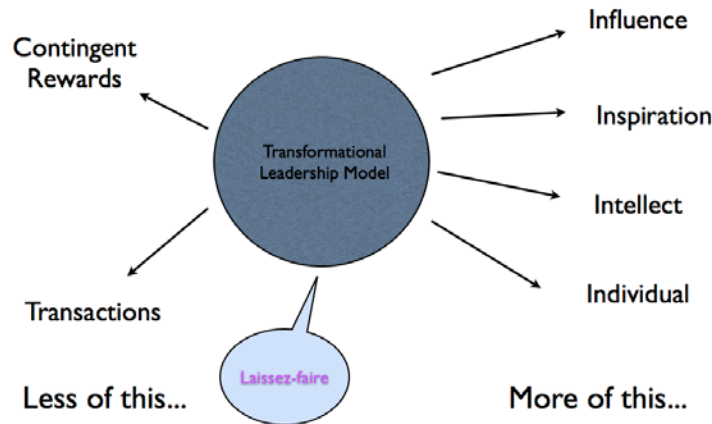
Figure 1. Simple Model of Transformational vs. Transactional Leadership based on Bass (1990)

Idealized Influence (II)

According to Bass (1990), Idealized Influence is the dimension characterized by making others feel good, making others proud to be associated with the leader, and earning faith from the subordinate.

Inspirational Motivation (IM)

Bass (1990) noted that this dimension is characterized by how well the leader communicates his or her goals, the manipulation of images, and helping others find meaning in their work.

Intellectual Stimulation (IS)

Bass (1990) noted that this dimension is characterized by the leader's ability to make others think about new ways of performing work, new ways of looking at work, and to be creative in their own problem-solving methods.

Individual Consideration (IC)

Bass (1990) noted that this dimension is characterized by how well the leader

encourages individuals to develop themselves, how much feedback the leader thinks he or she gives to subordinates, and how well the leader takes the time to bring workers into the team or the group.

> **"The transformational leader focuses on the individual through multiple means and methods. The result is a subordinate or follower or colleague who does work out of feeling important and connected to the leader and the organization."**

The transformational leader focuses on the individual through multiple means and methods. The result is a subordinate or follower or colleague who does work out of feeling important and connected to the

leader and the organization. For purposes of this analysis, from this point forward, followers will be referred to as constituents in order to move further away from the "people are machines" model as well as the "people are entirely dependent on the leader" model (Warden, 2011).

With TL, the constituent feels involved with and finds meaning in the work, because the leader interacts with them rather than hiring them only to "let them be" as in laissez-faire leadership or to "get the job done or lose my job" as in Transactional Leadership (Bass, 1990).

Northouse (2004) noted that the strengths of the TL model are that it allows for multiple perspectives, it is intuitive, and it is process-based (Table 2). Another strength is that the process seems intuitive to the leader because of the focus on the follower's needs.

Table 2. Strengths and Weaknesses of Transformational Leadership (Northouse, 2004)

Strengths	Weaknesses
Multi-perspective	Validity not fully tested
Intuitive	State or trait
Process-based	Elitist
Augments other models	Very "I"- and "me"-based
Followers' needs	Different contexts
Effective	More study needed

Some of the weaknesses noted by Northouse (2004) were that the validity of the tool used to measure Transformational Leadership, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999), was not fully established; there is still some debate about whether the transformational leader possesses these traits at birth, gains them through the environment, or finds them through specialized training and experiences. The MLQ itself can seem very "I"- and "Me"-based because of the way the questions are worded; at the same time, the MLQ does not account for the many different contexts in which leaders work. Many organizational factors affect the effectiveness of the leader.

PROPOSED WAYS OF ENACTING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

The following argument is not an attempt to discover the universal means to achieve a Transformational Leadership style; rather, it an illustration of the multiple possibilities for aligning other models and skills within TL. These models are familiar to most people and may be used to enhance the TL process and perhaps make it more useful for leaders like research administrators. At the conclusion of the analysis, it should be clear that a

transformational leader must almost always shift perspectives and must use all the tools available to achieve transformations among his/her colleagues and followers while reducing the less effective transactional and "hands off" leadership styles. The examples, then, are only scratching the surface of the potential of opening the backbone of TL to other philosophies.

Because the TL model is so flexible and allows for multiple perspectives, perhaps the model would allow for the integration of other knowledge and literatures in the field of organizations, leadership, and philosophy. For instance, the mentoring model seems to fit very well within the TL dimension of Idealized Influence where the leader makes others feel proud and emphasizes the formation of mutual trust. The subordinate wants to follow the leader out of faith, which seems to follow the philosophies proposed by Bertrand (2004) or a leadership perspective proposed by Warden (2010). If examined carefully, one might find that the linguistic strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) might also inform TL's Idealized influence in that their strategy allows individuals to "save face" in daily interactions with people with or without power.

In addition, Attribution Theory (AT) (Weiner, 2010) is a way into understanding how others are motivated in various organizational contexts. Both would seem to inform "Inspirational Motivation" in TL. Likewise, semiotics (Chandler, 2007; Danesi, 2007; van Leewen, 2005) provides an interesting perspective on the function of symbols in society.

As for TL's Intellectual Stimulation dimension, in which subordinates and colleagues are challenged to see things in a different light, and are challenged to find creative ways of finishing work, etc., perhaps research administrators should look at the work done in the creativity literature, specifically Estes and Ward (2002), who described how creative people continue to find new ways to look at their creative work and how to access new creative endeavors. The perspective matches assertions made by Burn (2011), who noted that artists bring skills to the leadership process that have usually been ignored.

TL's Individual Consideration dimension seems to encapsulate the entire theory because it involves the leader bringing the individual in to the organization and communicating feedback. The dimension seems to also be informed by mentoring strategies, linguistic strategies, and perhaps attribution theory.

MENTORING INFORMS INDIVIDUAL CONSIDERATION (IC)

Individual Consideration (IC) is part of the TL model. Individual Consideration shares some aspects of the mentoring concept. Therefore, it seems a mentoring approach can inform Transformational Leadership. The research administrator is familiar with the mentoring concept. IC deals with a focus that expands the individual's development, providing

feedback between parties and making the individual feel included in the work. Mentoring is a good framework for this dimension because of the focus on trust. *Webster's Dictionary* defines a mentor as "A trusted counselor or guide". Using this strategy, it seems that a leader would be engaging in Transformational Leadership at the individual consideration level.

When the leader acts as mentor, he or she has to focus on consistency and trust in the relationship. The leader makes a conscious decision to move away from that which tends to create a toxic leadership style (Goldman, 2009, in Warden, 2011). A counselor also provides advice, so the Transformational Leader might find themselves in a passive mode but still leading. This is not necessarily Laissez-Faire Leadership either. The leader is not omniscient and cannot know all. But by resisting the urge to speak and lead, by settling down to listen to the environment, a leader can build trust that can help empower the relationship between the leader and the constituent, and as the trust builds, constituents emerge. People will come to the leader for advice because of his or her experience and position and, finally, trust. In order to do this effectively, it is suggested that the transformational leader might recognize and take the stance that the mentor and protege relationship begins at the intersection of two lives.

Consider Figure 2. The leader and the protege begin their lives at different stages and the relationship begins somewhere in the future. In the realm of unshared experiences the leader and follower make connections and find commonalities. As the relationship builds, each party learns something new about the other, moving the relationship beyond organizational position, face, and stature. The relationship is more personal. After all, according to Bass (1990, 1999), personal attention, faith, and pride of association are key components of IC.

The transformational leader should not use the mentoring tool to seek total psychological control—some have suggested TL might cause leaders to do this (Northouse, 2004), but leaders should use the tool to build mutual respect. Influence over the individual, it seems at this stage, would become easier because of the trust built between the two parties. If trust exists, the ethical transformational leader should not take advantage of the relationship for selfish means. Truly, human behavior is inconsistent and unpredictable; one would hope that the ethical leader would not choose a manipulative approach.

It is clear, however, that mentoring is a powerful tool for engaging in Transformational Leadership through Individual Consideration. It is not being suggested here that the leader should drop professionalism and "make friends" with his/her subordinates. In many cases it will still be necessary to maintain a professional distance in the relationship.
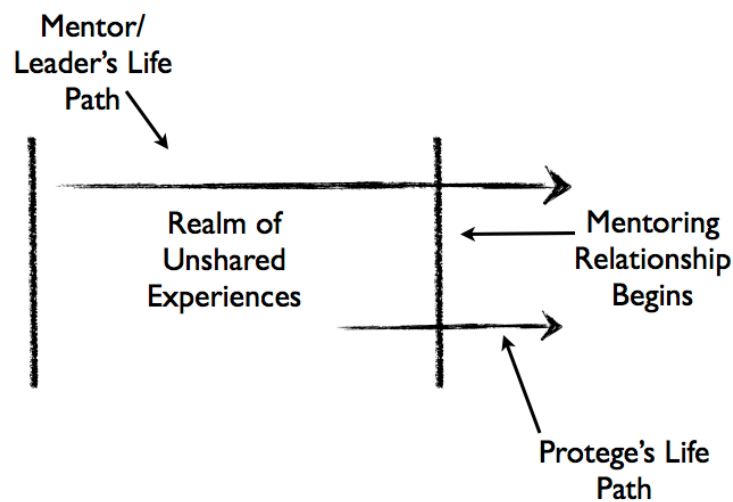
Figure 2. One Model of the Mentoring Relationship

Within the realm of unshared experiences, how would the transformational leader go about sharing these experiences and which ones are appropriate? Bertrand (2004) noted that each individual has a view of him/herself as a "universal me" that contains many of the elements of human nature that can be shared, or can be used for learning and teaching (Figure 3; Table 3). Bertrand (2004) noted that all individuals possess habits that can be both annoying or endearing; each individual deals with imperfections and tries to hide them; almost all humans want to know their destiny, where they will end up in life, how they will die. Humans crave meaning. But at the same time, people must deal with other "Fake People" or people pretending to be something else, or trying to trick and manipulate each other via insincere means. Trickery and manipulation are all around us and a basic fact of life, but the TL transcends this behavior through trust.

The perspective aligns with Warden (2011), who suggested that if leaders want to orient themselves for change, it would be necessary to adopt the perspectives of "natality" and "mortality salience" where natality encourages the leader to think of new ideas and mortality salience encourages the leader to remember, echoing Bertrand (2004), that all humans face the same final destiny. Built into mortality salience, noted Warden (2011), is also an impulse to resist the fear of death while recognizing the fate.

Feelings

Habits

Identity   Reason

Imperfection

Events

Control the Future

Desire for Better Life
Universal Me

What is my destiny?

Ladder Climbing   Fake People

Friendship   Respect

Crave Meaning   Sympathy

Figure 3. Bertrand's (2004) Elements of Shared Experience

Table 3. Proposed Ways to Integrate Other Theories with the Transformational Leadership Process

Transformational Leadership Dimensions	Models Considered
Idealized Influence (II)	Mentoring (Bertrand, 1978, 2004, etc.) Linguistic Strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987)
Inspirational Motivation (IM)	Social Semiotics (Chandler, 2007; Danesi, 2007; van Leeuwen, 2008, etc.) Attribution Theory (Weiner, 2010; etc.)
Intellectual Stimulation (IS)	Creativity Research (Estes & Ward, 2002)
Individual Consideration (IC)	Mentoring Linguistic Strategies (Brown & Levinson, 1987)

Many of these elements cross cultures, too. Some cultures emphasize some of these elements over others, but in the end people share many of the same problems, challenges, hopes, and dreams. When seen in this light, Transformational Leadership takes on a new meaning, and it becomes clear that the transformational leader's influence can be expanded in a very powerful and meaningful way.

IDEALIZED INFLUENCE (II) INVOLVES POLITENESS

Idealized Influence is part of Transformational Leadership. Elements of Idealized Influence are also part of Politeness Theory. Therefore, Politeness Theory can inform Transformational Leadership. Idealized Influence is marked by making others feel good, making others proud, and earning faith from the subordinate. The leader must do this through interaction that will involve some form of communication, either verbal or nonverbal.

Politeness Theory (Brown & Levinson, 1987) is a communication theory that involves the interactions of people, but emphasizes the issues of building community and finding common ground. Politeness Theory is what happens when people consider the thoughts and feelings and respect for others to ultimately get along with each other. Erbert and Floyd (2004) noted that, "A fundamental assumption of politeness theory is that all individuals have and are concerned with maintaining, *face*" (p. 255). A strong definition of "face" was provided by Goffman (1959, 1967) in Erbert and Floyd (2004): "Face is a person's desired public image" (p. 255). Brown and Levinson (1987) broke the concept of face into two dimensions: negative and positive. Positive face creates the feeling of community and agreement, while negative face is an outward expression of respect for a person's

autonomy and the desire to work without "interference" (Brown & Levinson, 1987). It is important to note that "negative" face is not negative in the sense of causing harm. It is an approach to handling potentially negative situations in which individuals could experience threats to their image. The concept of "face", then, can be used by the transformational leader to find common ground with proteges, colleagues, and subordinates—a vital skill for the research administrator.

The transformational leader might carry this out in practice by making sure to avoid criticism that would violate commonality (Figure 4). Brown and Levinson (1987) listed multiple cross-cultural strategies for building positive face. They recommended using humor and phrases that the protege can relate to in order to save face. Instead of emphasizing a mistake, one strategy for the transformational leader would be to find common ground by saying, "It happens to people when they first get into the business." If the impact of the mistake on the organization is obvious, then the transformational leader need not belabor the point. But by focusing on making the individual feel better by finding common ground, the leader activates two components of the Transformational Leadership model: Idealized Influence and Individual Consideration, as discussed in the last section.

Avoid Criticism
that would
violate
commonality.   Use humor

-I did that when I was starting out.

Positive Face: Show Commonality

-Don't you hate it when that happens.

-It happens to the best of us

Figure 4. Positive Face Illustrated for the Sake of Idealized Influence of the TL Model

In essence, Politeness Theory highlights the overlap in the TL model but also becomes a vital tool for the transformational leader's toolbox. Again, the leader's intentions should be grounded in a "do no harm" ethical stance when garnering influence in this manner. It is easy to see how TL can be highly manipulative if not careful.

Negative face seems to coincide with an ethical stance, because the strategies discourage TL from assuming and presuming anything (Figure 5). It requires the transformational leader to make an effort to gather facts. Negative face requires respecting autonomy and avoiding coercion, both of which are often emphasized as a basic human rights. Research administrators are familiar with these concepts as well. Brown and Levinson (1987) provided several strategies for pointing out problems to subordinates

without necessarily violating their autonomy. They recommended "going off record" or giving the benefit of the doubt. For instance, rather than acting mad and frustrated if a report is late, the alternative TL strategy might be to say, "I know it was a busy week last week" or "I know I pushed a lot of fires your way last week, but these reports are important because they let the president know how well the institution is doing." The strategy allows assertion of the importance of submitting reports on time, but does not emphasize the mistake to the point of isolating the constituent. If someone violates a policy, rather than pursuing the perpetrator like a criminal, the TL strategy might be to provide the policies, emphasize why the policies were established, and describe the big picture impact of violating the policies. The approach provides an avenue for maintaining commonality and avoiding

rifts. The strategy also seems to build respect because the transformational leader appears assertive rather than passive. The leader is not avoiding punishment, but using the event as an opportunity to train, teach, and improve the performance of the individual. That is active leadership. A laissez-faire approach toward policy violations or mistakes might lead to more disaster, so the transformational leader's strategy of saving face respects autonomy, allows for development of the individual, and opens the door for building the professional relationship.

> **"If someone violates a policy, instead of pursuing the perpetrator like a criminal, the TL strategy might be to provide the policies, emphasize why the policies were established and describe the big picture impact of violating the policies . . . the TL leader is using the event as an opportunity to train, teach, and improve the performance of the individual."**

Don't assume/ presume

Off Record: It must have been a busy week last week.

I encourage you to attend some training.

Don't coerce

Negative Face: Respect Autonomy

Your policy review "needs a bit more work" (Not a whole lot)

Here are some policies that address important areas of outreach.

Figure 5. Negative Face Illustrated for the Sake of Idealized Influence of the TL Model

At this point it should be obvious how closely Idealized Influence (II) and Individual Consideration (IC) are interconnected. Both strategies, saving face and assuming a mentoring posture, are probably good strategies to use as a transformational leader, but not the only strategies. It would be important for the leader-scholar to explore more strategies to build his/her leadership perspective. The transformational leader would see the model in Figure 6 as fluid and perhaps add more arrows as he/she accounts for context, preference, and study.

As the analysis proceeds, more overlap among the factors should be obvious, specifically when it comes to Inspirational Motivation (IM) and Intellectual Stimulation (IS). The concepts were presented in this order on purpose because it seems that in order for the transformational leader to get to the IM and IS dimensions, he/she must have first established a rapport with the protege, subordinate, or colleague.
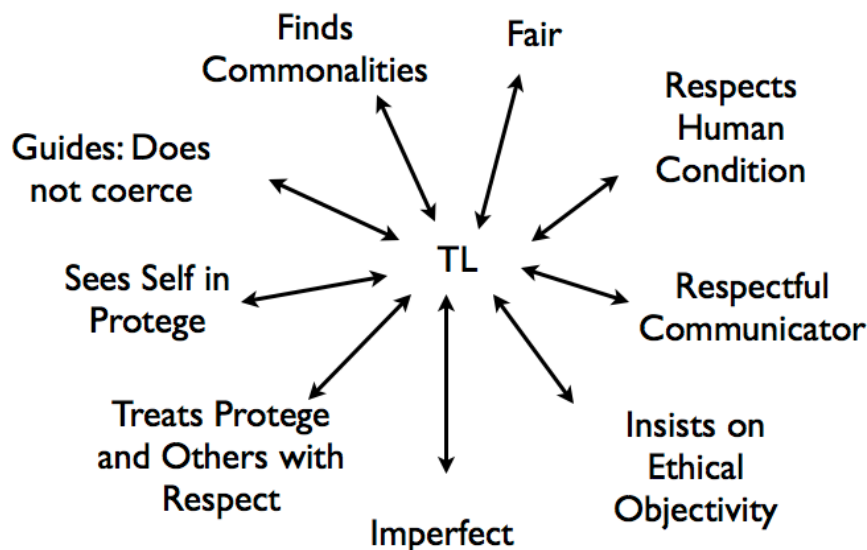
Figure 6. One Illustration of the Transformational Leader using Both Idealized Influence and Individual Consideration

INFORMING INSPIRATIONAL MOTIVATION (IM)

IM is part of TL. IM shares elements with semiotics and Attribution Theory.

These perspectives, then, can inform the TL perspective in the IM dimension. These are not the only philosophies or perspectives that can inform this dimension. The leader-

scholar should use them to see the possibilities. It could be said that the core of IM is to for the transformational leader to manipulate words and symbols in a way that motivates people to act around a shared sense of duty. It sounds intentional. But the truth is that leaders use symbols and words, both intentionally and unintentionally, to manipulate the thoughts and feelings of others (Danesi, 2007; van Leewen, 2005). The fact is well-established. The literature on this topic is expansive, but it might help the transformational leader to look to various works in semiotics to find some strategies for motivating and inspiring people.

To demonstrate how symbols and signs affect behavior and motivation, a "sign inventory" was created following in the tradition of semiotic inquiry (van Leewen, 2005). Creating sign inventories is one of the methods sign scholars use to examine communication in life (Danesi, 2007; van Leewen, 2005). Following van Leewen (2005) and many others, for this analysis a

sign was defined as "what we see and hear plus what we think about what was seen and heard". Using YouTube, an inventory of videos was created that depicted various pre-game rituals found among sports teams (Table 4). Sports was chosen for this demonstration because rituals are often used as a "motivating" factor and emotions run high. In the following inventory, some of the sports represented were American football, soccer, and rugby. The dominant theme among these rituals was that the team expressed an increased sense of excitement as the ritual was performed. For rugby and American football, the fans could be heard screaming and yelling their excitement in response to the ritual, which added another dimension to the effect signs and symbols have on individuals. Some common semiotic themes were rhythmic motion and chanting, hopping, and screaming fans. Watching the rituals was typically inspiring and it seemed motivating for the team.

Table 4. Semiotic Inventory of Pre-game Rituals in Sports

| Sport Depicted	Ritual	Observations	Fans
Baseball	Rhythmic chant that featured swaying with interlaced arms	Teams' heightened sense of camaraderie	No visible fans; some off-camera clapping
Professional Rugby	Haka or war dance.; rhythmic motions with arms, legs, and body	Players' faces were fierce, seemed angry, focused; carried out the ritual with purpose	Stadium was full of fans who screamed their approval, and the noise level rose with each phase of the ritual
American Football	New Orleans Saints pre-game chant; rhythmic, compelling.	Players' heightened sense of camaraderie	No visible fans; some off-camera clapping
Soccer	Rhythmic chant that featured hopping	Team's heightened sense of camaraderie	No visible fans; some off-camera clapping but several side observers seemed moved by the display
American Football	College football team performing its own Haka; rhythmic motions with arms, legs, and body	Players' faces were fierce, seemed angry, focused; carried out the ritual with purpose	Fans screamed their approval and the noise level rose with each phase of the ritual
Soccer	Rhythmic chant that featured hopping	Teams heightened sense of camaraderie	No visible fans; some off-camera clapping, but several observers seemed moved by the display

Source: YouTube

With the IM component of TL, however, the rituals, words, and actions in day-to-day activity may be a little more subtle. The opportunity for TL to use symbols and signs might be in the mission statement, logos, or speeches of the organization. Words are signs and symbols (Danesi, 2007) and so are texts (Chandler, 2007). Departmental meetings are a good time to review the mission statement for the department and the university (texts) and examine how symbols and words align with existing organizational actions and behaviors. Scholars often examine whether mission statements are causative or simple acts of representation that reveal some

cognitive or shared experience (Atkinson, 2008). In some situations, the mission statement backs up other asserted statements. Mission statements (text symbols) can take the form of policy in some situations simply by stating "What we are doing here aligns with the mission of the University and the Strategic Plan." The statement may not be inspirational, but it can be motivating and make people think about the core values of the institution. But talk alone may not get the transformational leader where he or she needs to be when it comes to inspiring and motivating others. Often the problem with motivation lies

within the individual's own set of beliefs and values.

Attribution Theory seems to address many aspects of internal motivation. The Attribution Theory Model explained by Weiner (2010) provides very compelling insights and tools for a transformational leader as expert motivator. Weiner's (2010) explanation is extensive and involves a long history of research that is not covered here, but he provides a simple model that explains the theory in summary (Figure 7).
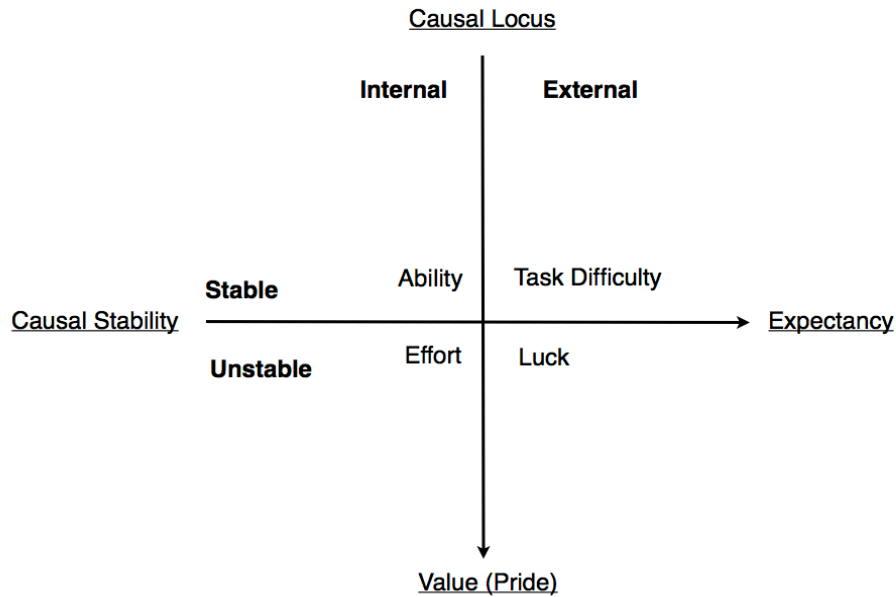
Figure 7. Weiner's (2010, p. 32) Description of Attribution Theory

Weiner noted that people evaluate their success and failures on some very basic observations about the world around them. As Weick (1995) noted, people are sensemakers in an organization and often develop their own theories about why things happen the way they do, why things happen to them, and what control they have over it or not. Basically, Weiner (2010) said that when things happen to people in organizations, they may attribute these causes to either problems they cause themselves or problems caused by other people or factors. Within the problems that they cause, people will attribute their success and failure to their own innate abilities, such as talent or skill, or they will attribute success or failure to how much effort they actually put into the project. If people do not blame themselves, they will say it was because of something else, such as how difficult the task was for them or attribute it to just plain luck. Ability is a factor that changes slowly over time, and

depending on the difficulty of the task, is variable among individuals. If an individual realizes that they have given sub-standard effort to the project, the transformational leader might be able to pinpoint ways to encourage them to do better—perhaps by using techniques mentioned under Idealized Influence. If people are blaming the difficulty of the task, it might be necessary for the leader to assign a different team or encourage people to think more creatively. Truly, luck plays a factor, too, but luck is something that is obviously out of the leader's locus of control.

If the task seems difficult, and the transformational leader needs to encourage creativity, this could be a problem. The leader probably has some control over task difficulty, but not much. Much of it truly depends on how much people believe in their own innate abilities. As in research administration, the external factors such as rules and regulations are quite stable over time and controlled by factors outside of the leader's control. Conditions like these call

for the ability to think about things in different ways.

INFORMING INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION (IS)

IS is part of TL. It shares elements with Creativity Research. Therefore, Creativity Research can inform TL. If the transformational leader finds a situation that seems uncontrollable and is affecting colleague performance, it would help to get people to think about things in different ways. Some answers may lie in work done by Estes and Ward (2002), who noted that creative people are able to modify concepts and create new ways of looking at things in a process called "emergence".

Emergence arises from "concept combination", which quite simply involves taking two unrelated concepts and combining them in a way that creates new meaning (Figure 8).
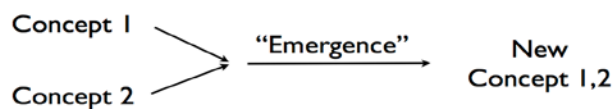

Figure 8. Concept Combination and Emergence in Creativity

In addition, two other factors are involved in enhancing emergence during concept combination: relevance and typicality (Estes & Ward, 2002). Each concept has various dimensions that are relevant and typical to that dimension, but in concept combination, dimensions that are *not* typical tend to generate emergence. Research administrators run into this problem all the time. On the fly, non-typical events seem to catch unexpectedly and they are required to create a new way of thinking about things. To illustrate how relevance and typicality work in this situation, Estes and Ward (2002) provided this illustration:

"...a relevant dimension of the concept shark is its temperament, and a typical feature on that dimension is aggressive, whereas an atypical feature is harmless. An example of an irrelevant dimension of shark is its color, because color is not ordinarily important when considering a shark. The colors gray and black are typical and atypical, respectively, of sharks" (Estes & Ward, 2002, p. 150).

It is interesting to note that idea generation does not work for every combination. It requires some thought and some work, but the technique can be learned. For instance, Estes and Ward (2002) used the example, "cloudy enemy", which seemed irrelevant as a new concept based on various inter-rater reliability tests. The phrase simply does not work very well.

To emphasize the details of how a transformational leader might apply these concepts in practice, it helps to examine the

Estes and Ward (2002) creativity study to a greater extent. Estes and Ward recruited 221 students from a psychology course and found that when the participants applied non-typical features to concepts, emergence increased at a statistically significant rate, but at the same time "extreme irrelevance" created the greatest emergence (Estes & Ward, 2002, p. 153).

Though Estes and Ward's (2002) research primarily deals with linguistic concepts, they go on to say that "concept combination" is involved in general forms of idea generation, problem-solving, and insight, and has "potential applications for science, art and business" (p. 149).

A transformational leader could do this in practice by encouraging regular brainstorming sessions to cause different team members to think about mundane practices in a new light. It would be a good time to ask what is typical about the routines performed in the office, ask questions such as "why do we do it this way" or "are there more relevant or creative ways to get the job done more efficiently?" It would not matter if the problems were solved; it would simply matter that the transformational leader moved people toward thinking about things in a new way that is a hallmark dimension of the Transformational Leadership perspective or process. Encouraging the practice of creativity, it seems, would eventually aid more solutions to problems in the long run. Also, the research in this field seems to verify many of the ideas that research administrators use to solve problems

anyway, so the results are intuitive and reassuring that research administrators can be transformational leaders in their practice.

> **"... ask questions such as 'why do we do it this way' or 'are there more relevant or creative ways to get the job done more efficiently?' ... Encouraging the practice of creativity, it seems, would eventually aid more solutions to problems in the long run."**

The perspective seems to work well because other scholars have emphasized that leaders seem to be "improvising" and are really simply very good at creating the myth of control (Jones, 2011; Mohr, 2011). To highlight the overlap among perspectives, Mohr (2011) noted that the principles of "improvisational" leadership involve trust, being present, engaging in dialog, recognition that constituents and leaders are co-creators, and finally openness (Mohr, 2011, pp. 57–60), while Jones (2011) asserted that creativity only springs forth when we release our thought processes from some toxic myths such as the myth of loneliness or the myth that total control will bring about bureaucratic efficiency or that scarce resources will perpetuate politics (Jones, 2011, p. 70). All of these perspectives echo concepts found in Individual Consideration, Inspirational Motivation, and Idealized Influence.

CONCLUSION

The previous exercise analyzed the core components of Transformational Leadership Theory: Idealized Influence, Individual Consideration, Intellectual Stimulation, and Inspirational Motivation. Next, the exercise integrated ideas from other literatures and synthesized new ways of looking at each component. For instance, it is clear that Idealized Influence and Individual Consideration can be informed by bringing in mentoring techniques in which the leader focuses on the individual's development. It is also clear that Inspirational Motivation could be enhanced by studying how signs are manipulated and used in the organization as well as using Attribution Theory to gain a general understanding of how people perceive control over successes and failures. Intellectual Stimulation can be informed by creativity research to encourage people to think about the typical and atypical aspects of problems and concepts. Finally, Individual Consideration seems to be the doorway to the other three areas: encouraging individual development, bringing others into the group through mentoring, and general principles of politeness theory.

A quick examination of Table 5 illustrates the potential overlap in all four areas. The techniques the transformational leader uses could easily cross over into other areas. Additionally, this analysis is limited to the five dimensions in Table 5. It is quite certain that other literatures could be brought in. As for leadership

development, it seems a transformational leader could follow the literature in creativity, theatre, and art, and create new associations that can enhance the TL perspective. Perhaps a new study could be designed that would incorporate testing of these new techniques to determine their effectiveness. In all, TL appears to be accessible and a leadership style that can be easily applied in various contexts. It is hoped that research administrators find ways to use the techniques to enhance their own style and discover new techniques that encourage them to be transformational. At the same, research administrators may be satisfied to find that their existing techniques have some backing in various academic disciplines and literatures and that they have been practicing Transformational Leadership all along.

Table 5. Summary of Integration of Ideas into the Transformational Leadership Framework

Bass's (1990) TL Dimensions	Mentoring	Linguistic Strategies	Study of Signs or Semiotics	Creativity	Attribution Theory
Idealized Influence					
Make others feel good	X	X			
Make others proud	X	X			
Earn faith from subordinates	X	X		O	O
Inspirational Motivation					
Communicate goals	O	O	X		X
Manipulate images			X	O	X
Help others find meaning	O	O	X	O	X
Intellectual Stimulation					
Think about things in new ways	O		O	X	
New ways of looking at work	O			X	
Creative problem-solving	O	O		X	
Individual Consideration					
Encourage individual development	X	X		O	O
Regular leader feedback	X	X			O
Bring others into the group	X	X			O

The X's represent the ideas discussed in this paper. The O's indicate potential or logical overlap, but were not specifically discussed in the analysis.

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