

Developing Leadership that Matters: Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership

- The Centre for Educational Leadership of the Ministry of Education in Singapore uses Bass' model of Transformational Leadership (TL) as the foundation for its aspiration for education leadership in Singapore: Authentic, Transformational Leadership.
 - Bass's and Avolio's (1994) definition of TL is explained below.

Idealised Influence

Transformational leaders behave in ways that result in followers considering them as role models. This includes transformational leaders considering the needs of others over their own personal needs.

Inspirational Motivation

Transformational leaders motivate their followers by providing the latter with meaning and challenge in their work. They involve their followers in envisioning attractive future states and clearly communicate high expectations.

Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders stimulate followers intellectually by questioning their assumptions and getting followers to reframe problems and approach old situations in innovative ways.



Individualised Consideration

Although the organisation's growth is important, transformational leaders pay attention to everyone's need for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. The transformational leader appreciates individual differences, and delegates work as a means to develop followers to higher levels of potential.

Summary

Transformational leadership is needed to “motivate others to do more than they originally intended and often more than they thought possible” (Bass & Avolio, 1994, p. 3).



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- In a review of two decades of research and development in TL, Bass (1999) first established that training people to be more transformational is “doable” (p. 15).
- The basic training structure trailed in the literature is illustrated below, together with effects of the training provided.

Workshop

- Trainees are asked to identify the characteristics of the best and worse leaders they had ever encountered.
- Trainees are introduced to TL
- Trainees may role play how to enact TL.

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Action Plans

- Trainees are supported to make action plans to develop specific TL behaviours.
- Trainees implement their action plans at their workplaces.
- Trainees modify their action plans after feedback provided .

Feedback

- Feedback is provided via a pre and post 360-degree assessment of the TL behaviours of trainees.
- Trainees discuss with their coaches their self and others' ratings.
- Coaching can be done by individual coaches or via peer-based team coaching.

Effects of Training

- Studies found statistically significant changes in TL (e.g. Abrell et al., 2011; Stevenson & Doolittle, 2003).
- There were also improvements in subordinates' organisational commitment (Barling et al., 1996; Kelloway et al., 2000) and organisational citizenship behaviour (Abrell et al., 2011).

Assessment of the Training

Effects were studied from 3 months to a year after the training programme (Abrell et al., 2011; Cohrs et al., 2020; Kelloway et al., 2000).

One programme was evaluated four times at 3, 6, 6, and 12 months after training (Abrell et al., 2011), with impact found only after 6 months.

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Some Interesting Findings

- Training and feedback may be interchangeable to some extent in that the combination of training and feedback did not result in higher ratings of TL than either intervention alone (*Kelloway et al., 2000*).
- Peer-based team coaching appears to be effective in developing TL, presenting a cost-effective alternative to individual coaching.

Implications for Singapore Educational Leaders

- Peer-based team coaching could take place during collaborative professional development platforms, such as the school cluster system in Singapore.



This infographic was drawn from a WP brief titled “NIE Working Paper Brief Series No. 5: Developing Leadership that Matters: Transformational Leadership”

For more details and references cited, please refer to the WP brief at:

