

## **Transformational Development and the Transformation Mindset – Part 2**

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In Part 1 of this article, I shared the views of Economist Dr. Roxanne Brizan – St. Martin as she contextualized the notion of transformative development. In this Part 2 article I share her views on transformational leadership and the transformation mindset.

The concept of transformational leadership is not a new concept. It was introduced in 1978 by James MacGregor Burns in his research on political leaders. In this research, he defined Transformational Development as a process in which “leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation.” He further highlighted the difference between transformational and transactional leadership in which the latter does not strive for cultural change in the organization but rather works with the existing culture whereas the transformational leaders can try to change organizational culture.

What senior managers are striving for is cultural change - encouraging and inspiring each other and by extension the nation to innovate and create change that will be for the benefit of all.

In the execution of this transformational leadership, it is important that managers are:

1. Good listeners - recognizing that you may not always have the answers (this requires a lot of humility). It will help you understand your teammates and open the door to productive collaboration.
2. Adaptable and innovative - you need to be cognizant to changes - recognize it, acknowledge it in all its elements and capacities but also make rapid adjustments without compromising your strategic goals.
3. Inspiring - when employees are inspired there is better performance and effort. This requires creating a sense of purpose for your teams - creating an environment where everyone understands, values, and appreciates their vital role in the process.
4. Accountable - key to good governance - this sets an example for junior members of staff to also accept accountability in their work. This provides a foundation of communication, trust, and consistent engagement. Accountability means taking responsibility for your own actions, behaviors, performances, and decisions. Everyone has a part to play in this regard. Lack of accountability damages the team and should not be a core part of the culture of the organization and team. Systems to ensure accountability can include:
  - Leading by example.
  - Setting individual and team goals.
  - Working on feedback skills...key here is two-way feedback.
  - Keep track of commitments and hold each other accountable.
5. Have integrity - being honest, ethical, and worthy of trust. It involves honoring commitments, keeping promises, being credible.

These can be summarized into what James Burns calls individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

With these qualities you will be able to garner not just the commitment from other members of staff/colleagues but the mindset that is needed to effect overall organizational change. Therefore, a transformation mindset matters.

A transformation leader must have this mindset in order to effect personal change or change in others. If mindsets are not properly aligned, then reshaping the culture of the organization is going to be very difficult. We should be reminded that culture is shaped and solidified over time through mindsets and behaviors.

With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic came the unveiling or further exposure of our vulnerabilities, challenges and even lack of foresight as it relates to issues such as Food Security. However, I revert to the Chinese proverb which states that “Where there is Danger, there is Opportunity.” The reliance on the legacy mindset while important, is not sufficient. Legacy mindset is present when persons are not desirous of changing how they do things, nor are they interested in learning new skills. This mindset is based on knowledge skills and behaviors that deliver success in the past.

However, transformational mindset embraces and owns changes, requires creativity, insight - this mindset sets the tone for competitive advantage; knowing when to control and protect and when it’s time to create and connect; from being smart to being wise. With this mindset, transformation becomes central to who you are as a ministry and what you do.

While you plan and build as a team it is important to be conscious of menaces which works against a transformational mindset; overconfidence, being entrenched in orthodoxy, staying within your comfort zones, thinking too short-term, insular thinking and behaviors and lack of strategic clarity. Rather, it requires growth, investing time and effort to change the approach and combining decision-making with evidence. This does not mean blind acceptance or complacency but committing to a growth mindset to continuously find new ideas and perspectives.

Transformation involves a *conscious* and *committed* departure from the current state. This is critical if you are to go beyond what is expected while working on a shared vision. Transformation development therefore is hinged on the people process - having a transformational mindset and exhibiting transformational leadership. Remember leadership does not equate to management. Management directs using positional power and is about planning whereas leadership relies on relational power and is about inspiring.



Let us focus on community, partnerships, and evidence-based solutions for sustainability. Displaying transformational leadership is critical to the agenda and the achievement of transformational development. What you are striving for is cultural change - encouraging and inspiring each other and by extension the nation to innovate and create change that will be for the benefit of all.

Knowledge is power and experience is the greatest teacher.

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