

LEADERSHIP STYLES IN THE NEW NORMAL AND NEXT-TO-NORMAL

by:

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The success of the schools lies in the hands of its leaders. A heavy responsibility that if not given to the rightful person may lead to a series of chaos and then education catastrophes. As Peter Parker exclaimed, "With great power comes great responsibilities."

The present educational system confronts problems that are related to curriculum and instructions, availability of material, financial and human resources, conflicts in the teaching and non-teaching forces, and preparation of physical facilities for the Next-to-normal.

In line with these blinding challenges in the education sphere, most educators asked what kind of leader is suitable during this time of the pandemic. This issue will be tackled in this article from a three-point perspective.

First, there are different leadership styles as mentioned by Daniel Goleman. These styles when used in different situations evoked different emotions from their subordinates. Visionary, Affiliative, Coaching, Democratic, Coercive, and Pacesetter Leaders are needed to address educational blights posed in different situations at different times. Visionary leaders are highly motivating leaders who guide their team in achieving the common goal and this type of leadership is needed when new goals, new policies, and new direction should be implemented for the betterment of the organization. Affiliative leaders bind the group with a harmonious relationship by connecting to people, understanding their feelings, and resolving conflicts within the group. This type

of leadership can be applied if the school is plagued with conflicts between the in-group and out-group. Moreover, the coaching leaders mainstreamed the organization's goals to the team members' individual goals. One needs to remember that this leadership style is employed if one or two of the members need to refine their skills in delivering their tasks or if a member deviates morally, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually from the norms of the school and society. Furthermore, democratic leaders put a high value on collaboration. These leaders value the voice of every member of the group in materializing the goal of the institution or organization. This type of leadership can be best applied if the leaders need the input of all the members to come up with new ideas needed for the success of educational programs and policies. On the other hand, coercive leaders put everyone under pressure to comply with the directives and finish the goal. This type of leadership can be used with those subordinates who resist change and oppose doing their tasks even if these tasks are of utmost importance for the organization and all the stakeholders of the school as an open system. Lastly, the pacesetter leaders are focused on meeting the goals despite the means. These leaders give no room for failures. They believed that everyone has the full capacity to perform their tasks and no excuses can be given to those who do not fulfill their duties and responsibilities. This leadership style can be best used if a leader expects to come up with high-quality outputs from a highly motivated team.

Second, the present educational setup or the New Normal setup arose from an abnormal situation. Changes and challenges are of extreme severity and these can only be solved if leaders have ocean-wide patience and sky-high love for all the components of the educational system. I know as school leaders, we encounter tons of issues and challenges that test our limits but in this trying time, we need to have more love and compassion for the internal and external stakeholders of the school, the people in our community, and for our country. We cannot go away with our duties and responsibilities as well as with our accountabilities for they are the heart and soul of school administrators and the lifeblood of a successful educational institution.

Third, the New Normal and the Next-to-normal demand leadership styles beyond those styles given by Daniel Goleman. From my standpoint, People-Centered Leaders are called for this time of the pandemic and beyond. The perks and perils of the New Normal and the Next-to-normal can be battled by People-centered Leaders. Who are they? These leaders are those who know how to manage and lead people. These leaders train future leaders and trust them that they can execute the tasks given to them. People-centered leaders are packed with TRUST, LOVE, COMPASSION, and DEDICATION for the development of their subordinates and the success of the organization. I believe that excellent leaders are not those who work at their own pace but they believe in collaboration building rapport and developing the capabilities of their subordinates.

In an end note, we need to remember that leaders hold the key to the success and failure of an organization. Holding the reign tight kills the motivation of its members while holding the reigns loose drives them away.

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