

# Lecture Title: Appreciation of middle leaders



Lecturer: Rev. Dr. Alan Scerri

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022 (2)

Middle Leaders and the Leadership of  
Educational Institutions

# Defining Leadership

**DeSpain:** “the imperfect art practised by those who lead in which the leader defines reality for his followers while evolving and nurturing a vision of a new and better reality to come. The leader subsequently nurtures and serves the organisation, the followers and the dreams of the vision as all seek to attain the new reality (2010)

**Greenleaf:** Style of a leader is *an evolution* where the leader’s characteristics are the fruit of personal growth and that of others. The perusal of one’s beliefs is a journey that allows the leaders to reflect on their *spirituality, professional* and *emotional* needs by enlarging their human potential.



## Tannenbaum-schmidt:

- A leader's behaviour lies on a specific continuum. At one end of the spectrum is the autocratic leader who dictates while the staff has to abide.
- At the other end is the collaborative leader, with a democratic style, who shares elements of power and information with the staff who participate actively in decision making.
- In between these two extremes are other leadership behaviours varying in degree of power, collegiality, consultation and support.



# Traditional Perspective of leadership

Peter Senge stated that the western view of leadership was deeply rooted in an individualistic and non-systemic view of the societal world culture” (Taylor et. al. 2007)

The leadership paradigm of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries referred to three rudimentary principles:

1. Leaders were born and not made.
2. That reliable management led to successful establishments.
3. That failure was to be averted.

In literature, leadership was defined as being **hierarchical, patriarchal, coercive** and **associated with influence**.



# Modern perspective of leadership

In the early 90's: advocated a new style of leadership:

**PUT PEOPLE FIRST WHEN LOOKING TO CREATE A  
SUCCESSFUL ORGANISATION.**

This leadership model is based on:

- teamwork
- Community
- Collaborative decision making
- Morals
- Encouraging the growth of people. (Black, 2010)

This emerging approach to leadership began with Robert K. Greenleaf  
(Spears, L. 2004)



- One can notice a shift towards a *shared* and *relational* perception of leadership.
- An increasing interest in a more caring leadership which focuses on *teamwork*, *personal growth* and *employee fulfilment*.
- an importance given to **Spiritual leadership**, that is a connection to the leader's heart and intuition that reveals his/her capacity for leadership.
- This holds that modern leadership should be that of:
  - **Designer**
  - **Steward**
  - **Teacher**



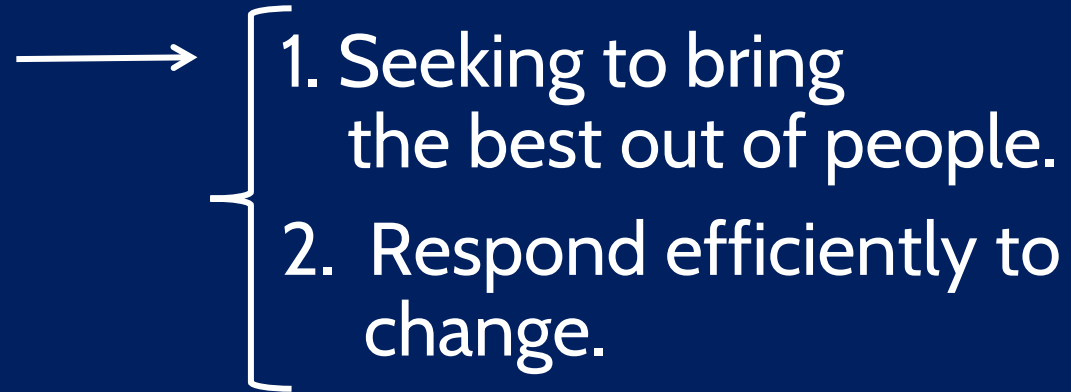
Leaders who embrace their role as servant leaders should focus on creating work scenarios in which employees are working together towards a shared vision while committing themselves to their self and others.



Paradigm shift:

From that of

Supervision and control



***SHIFT*** from authoritative to collaborative style of leadership.





- Three characteristics of effective leadership:
  1. Helps to establish a vision
  2. Has the ability to communicate the vision to others
  3. Has the skill to encourage trust and build connections (Tichy and Devanna)

Service and leadership combination is a **direct challenge** to the hierarchical model of leadership.



# Servant Leadership

“If you want to govern the people, you must speak to them humbly.  
If you want to lead the people, you must learn how to follow them.”  
Lao-Tzu 5<sup>th</sup> century.

“After one has served society only then is the individual recognised  
as leader”. Robert K. Greenleaf

Leadership was bestowed upon a man who was by nature a  
servant. It was something given, or assumed that could be taken  
away. His servant nature was the real man, not bestowed, not  
assumed and not to be taken away. He was servant first.



# Characteristics of Servant leadership

6 characteristics of Servant leadership:

1. Empowering and developing people
2. Humility
3. Authenticity
4. Interpersonal acceptance
5. Providing direction
6. Stewardship



For Greenleaf the fundamental quality that distinguishes servant leadership is: “going beyond one’s self interest”.

Servant leader is “**primus inter pares**” a person who forgoes using power to get things done but uses persuasion to convince followers.



Servant leaders believe that healthy societies and organizations care for their members ... (and), that the measure of a leader's success lies in what happens in the lives of followers – not in what the leader has accomplished (Tran & Spears, 2020).

Sharing helps the leader meet the needs of everyone in the organization which in turn helps the leader to grow and mature (Block)

It is a long-term transformational change towards life and work; creating positive change across society (Tran and Spears, 2020)

The leader is at the base of the pyramid whilst supporting the organisation – *the reversal of the hierarchical pyramid.*



# Being a Servant Leader.

## 10 characteristics of servant leader (Larry Spears)

- ❖ listening (*deep commitment* to hearing what is said and unsaid)
- ❖ empathy
- ❖ healing
- ❖ awareness
- ❖ persuasion
- ❖ conceptualisation
- ❖ foresight
- ❖ stewardship
- ❖ commitment to the growth of others
- ❖ building communities



## LISTENING:

the leader's ability to listen to the inner voices and seek to understand what one's mind is communicating.

Listening is the servant leader's capacity of evaluating a situation before taking action.

“only a true natural servant automatically responds to any problem by listening first.” (Greenleaf)



## Empathy:

Is the leader's skill to understand from a supportive stance instead of being patronizing.

Being empathetic means to comprehend another person's actions, behaviours and intentions.

Servant leader always accepts the person but might not accept some of the individual efforts and performance. (Greenleaf)





Ability to heal themselves and others:

Servant leaders acknowledge that they have the chance to “help make whole” individuals that they are in contact with.



Foster awareness:

through self-reflection to oneself and others, by being open to learn and by connecting what one knows and believes to what one says and does. (Crippen)

It is a disturber and an awakener. (Greenleaf)

The servant leader must continuously question himself “how can I use myself to serve best?”

It involves an understanding of one’s beliefs and morals.



Persuasion:

to convince others and to seek reaching consensus through

- respect
- dignity for their followers.



## Conceptualisation:

The ability to see the whole in its totality; past and future; adjusting goals and plan for future possibilities.

This requires the leader to balance efficiently between looking beyond the short-term into the long-term vision of the organisation.



Foresight:

The ability to foresee the likely outcome of a situation.

Foresight is the lead that a leader has. The ability to compare the possible future with events from the past to determine a possible conclusion. (Crippen)

Foresight is the one servant-leader characteristic which one may be endowed with from birth.



## Stewardship:

When a servant leader is accountable and ready to serve willingly and not as a response to a demand.

Stewardship involves the leader's personal responsibility to manage his life and affairs with proper regard for the rights of other people and the common welfare. (Sergiovanni)



## Growth of others:

The servant leader should be committed to the individual growth of others, striving to do everything possible to nurture them.

The primary concern for a servant leader should be in meeting the higher-order needs of those being served.



Strive to build communities:

This can be achieved through caring for the community, serving the community at large and investing financially into developing it.

Greenleaf's view of improving a community is by being actively part of the organisation's progress, by not detaching oneself by hierarchy.





It is clear that in the education sector a positive school climate is conducive to higher student achievement and research has shown that frequently schools with a servant leadership mindset tend to have a better school climate than those that do not.

The premise that a leader is called to serve is associated with the quality of altruism and love where the needs of all others within the school community are put before the leaders' individual needs. (M. Striepe and T. O'Donoghue, 2014)



Leadership based on selfless service may very well be the only means by which humanity can effectively address the range of pandemic crises facing the planet.

How essential it is then , for schools, to comprehensively present this model of [servant] leadership to the coming generations.  
(Lavery 2009)



What do principles do in schools that are becoming communities of leaders?

Many things. They preach and teach, they encourage, they help, and sometimes they even yell and tell. But mostly they serve.  
(Sergiovanni)



# Middle Leaders and the Leadership of Educational Institutions



# Middle Leaders and the Leadership of Educational Institutions



