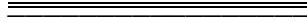
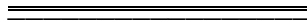


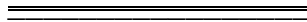
**The Bill Blackwood
Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas**



Transformational Leadership in Law Enforcement



**A Leadership White Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Required for Graduation from the
Leadership Command College**



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ABSTRACT

Many law enforcement professionals have had an interesting mixture of supervisors throughout their career. Odds are that the majority of them had no particular style of leadership and simply supervised their subordinates the way that they were supervised. Until recently there has not been a huge emphasis on leadership styles or police supervision training, at least not in most departments. Most law enforcement training centers offer some type of leadership training and the styles will differ depending on what training center you attend.

As a police officer, it is important have consistency in supervision to avoid confusion and conflicting orders. What may be important to one supervisor may not be a priority for the other. One supervisor may be more military in their style and the other more analytical. Transformational leadership is the best style of leadership to reduce confusion and increase consistency.

Police supervisors should implement the transformational leadership to create a well-rounded department. Transformational leadership is simple and natural. It allows each one in the chain of command to work for the same vision and goals. It allows the subordinates to hold a stake in the department and the citizens they serve and protect.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper is about transformational leadership and the benefits of implementing this particular style of leadership in the law enforcement profession. Transformational leadership is one of many styles of leadership that is used in the law enforcement profession. With an overwhelming number of different styles and theories being taught today, the transformational style is best suited for the law enforcement profession. Transformational leaders do more than just lead their subordinates. They transform them into a positive force that benefits the subordinate, the leader and the department as a whole.

Several studies have been done regarding transformational leadership and the results have been positive for a department that is seeking transformation and change. Transformational leadership starts at the lowest level and with each employee at that level (Herold, Fedor, Caldwell, & Liu, 2008). Law enforcement officers have to work an individual as well as a team level depending on the situation.

When an employee takes notice of a supervisor's leadership qualities, then sets goals to have the same qualities, the employee has witnessed transformational leadership from the supervisor (Herold, Fedor, Caldwell, & Liu, 2008). Through transformational leadership the employees become more oriented on future goals as well as the current goals of the organization. It is important for police managers to fully understand and practice transformational leadership in today's society. Police managers work with many different types of personalities, customs and generational gaps. The transformational style of leadership affords a style that will be able to reach all these.

Police managers should adopt the transformational leadership style. The transformational leadership style fits the goals and the mission of law enforcement. When compared to other styles of leadership, it becomes apparent that the transformational style was favored. If compared to other popular forms of leadership such as, transactional leadership and situational leadership, it becomes more challenging to determine which is best. Transactional and situational leadership both have very strong arguments for their styles but neither can compare to the transformational style of leadership as research will show.

POSITION

Murphy's definition of transformational leadership is "the ability of a leader to motivate followers to transcend their own personal goals for the greater good of the organization" (Murphy, 2008, p.165). This is the goal that all police managers are trying to accomplish when striving for excellence within their organization. These goals can be accomplished by following the transformational leadership style.

Transformational leadership is unique in that it motivates and inspires both the leader and follower. As the employees and leaders communication and interaction improves, they will begin to see transformational leadership occurring (Whittington, Goodwin, Coker, Ickes, & Murray, 2009). This is what both the leaders and their followers are looking for. All members in an organization want to reach the same goal and that is exactly what happens when transformational leadership occurs.

When the transformational style of leadership is properly practiced it will include certain behaviors. The behaviors associated with the proper practice of transformational leadership include; inspirational motivation, ascribed charisma,

intellectual stimulation and individual considerations (Whittington et al., 2009). Another way to describe the behaviors associated with transformational leadership is known as the 4 I's. Avolio describes the 4 I's as; "Idealized influence which triggers Inspirational motivation to provide Intellectual stimulation and to demonstrate Individual consideration to followers" (Avolio, 1999; Bass 1990, p.21). The four I's are what comes naturally to most leaders and subordinates are craving this type of leadership.

The transformational style of leadership has the ability to engage an individual's own assets which will influence change in the individual (Girodo, 1998). All police officers and managers have experienced an individual who, through their charisma, had a huge impact on the individual's growth and contributions to their department. (Girodo, 1998) found that the transformational style of leadership was used by older police managers as well as managers in the training and community policing divisions. This fact sets well in the law enforcement community because all police managers are involved in training, even if it is not an official assignment. Transformational leadership sets well with older supervisors as well. This is important since it is inevitable that all supervisors will grow older. Singer and Singer explained that "transformational leaders motivate their employees to perform beyond expectations by heightening their awareness of the goals and inducing them to transcend self-interest in favor of the organization" (Singer & Singer, 2001, p.385). It is a natural instinct for police officers to put others before themselves so this is also a strong statement in favor of the transformational style of leadership.

Epitropaki and Martin (2005) defined a transformational leader as someone who builds confidence, inspiration, and an easily plausible vision for future goals, through the

use of enablement, are likely to notice the desirability of the organization. Trust and inspiration are cornerstones of the average police officers. Officers need to be empowered due to their hands on knowledge and interaction with the public. When these things combine, the result will be positive for all parties involved.

The results of other research done on transformational leadership such as Hater and Bass showed “that transformational leadership added to their prediction of subordinate ratings of leader effectiveness and satisfaction beyond that of transactional leadership” (Hater & Bass, 1988, p.695). The results of this study should not come as a surprise to the reader. Any subordinate would be happy with their supervisor when it involves an individual that practices transformational leadership.

There has been a lot of research pertaining to different styles of leadership and how they can be utilized in policing. Some of the research includes studies conducted by Hater and Bass (1988), Epitropaki and Martin (2005), Singer and Singer (2001), Murphy (2008) and Avolio (1999), just to name a few. Transformational Leadership is a relatively easy style to adapt to, and all that is needed to be successful are the 4 I's. Everyone naturally possesses the ability to exhibit idealized influence which will trigger inspirational motivation and provide intellectual stimulation which demonstrates individual consideration to their followers.

The ease of this style of leadership fits the law enforcement environment and the community they serve. Police officers are predominately alphas who are self-motivated individuals that feel they need little guidance. They are tasked with making life and death decisions on a daily basis and usually take criticism along with orders with a grain of salt. Officers deal with the public and are tasked with keeping them satisfied. They

have to play the role of a counselor, an enforcer and a protector. Transformational leadership fits into this profession as it allows for all officers in the department to understand the clear vision that travels through the chain of command. As a result all within the department are on the same page when it comes to the goals of the department and the citizens they serve.

COUNTER POSITION

Transactional leadership, as opposed to transformational leadership, is a popular leadership style that is used by many organizations including the military. It is appealing for police managers to apply this type of leadership since law enforcement is a para-military organization. Due to its simplicity and clear communication guidelines, it is a common type of leadership style that is used today. Whittington et al. (2009) stated that "transactional leadership occurs when a leader exchanges something of economic, political, or psychological value with a follower" (p.1861), opposed to transformational leadership which embraces the idea of a collected vision and gives the subordinate the satisfaction of accomplishing something as a team and not for self-satisfaction.

In order to understand how to become a transactional leader, one must realize that certain behaviors are necessary. Singer and Singer (2001) stated that "Transactional behavior is comprised of two factors, contingent reward and management by exception" (p. 387). According to Judge and Piccolo (2004), "transactional leadership has three dimensions; contingent reward, management by exception-active, and management by exception-passive" (p. 759). Transactional leadership behavior requires the employee and supervisor to establish a relationship that must be clear, specific and have agreed upon situations which will help the

employee to be successful in the company (Whittington et al., 2009). From the above definitions, it is easy to see why transactional leadership is appealing. This type of leadership is very direct and straight forward but lacks the inspiration and motivation that makes transformational leadership so effective and appealing.

To be a transactional leader one must motivate subordinates by exchanging a reward for a service rendered (Singer & Singer, 2001). This works best for specific job tasks that are to be performed. Singer and Singer explain that "the concern is to clarify subordinates' goals and to arrange contingent rewards as inducements toward goal attainment" (Singer & Singer, 2001, p. 387). Transactional leaders have a clear set of goals and must let their subordinates know what they are as well as what is expected. Epitropaki and Martin (2005) explained that "Transactional leaders appear to facilitate employees' process of self-categorization and manage to create some connection between the individual and the organization" (p.571). In transactional leadership it is imperative that one must not get emotionally attached to the employees. Whittington et al. (2009) stated that "the goal is to enter into a mutually beneficial exchange, but not necessarily to develop an enduring relationship" (p.1861).

A study conducted by Singer and Singer (2001) showed that transactional leadership is not as effective as previously discussed. Singer and Singer (2001) discovered that "transactional leadership behavior was not cultivated in law enforcement and that may be due to the fact that contingent reinforcement is already provided for by formal contract and structure" (p.393). In law enforcement, there is usually a high maturity level when new officers are hired. Officers are highly motivated when they join so a reward for doing a good job is not expected or necessary.

In a study conducted by Pieterse, Knippenberg, Schippers, and Stam (2010), they argued that “transactional leadership can be negatively related to innovative behavior since it is focused more on in-role performance and less on stimulation of newer activities” (p.615). Police officers understand that their job is not clear cut and they work in a fluid environment. Transactional leadership does not allow for this type of work environment and therefore is not a good idea for police managers to use that style.

Andreescu and Vito (2010) conducted a study that compared the transactional style and transformational style of leadership and the results suggested that the participants that were surveyed favored the transformational style of leadership. This is largely in part because the subordinates want their leaders to be effective, efficient and most importantly, take care of them. They also found that the transformational leader creates a significant change in the lives of people and organizations because it is not based on a give and take relationship like the transactional leadership model dictates (Andreescu & Vito, 2010).

Situational leadership is another popular leadership style in law enforcement today. The situational leadership model is taught in many police management trainings such as The Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas and the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration. It is not taught as an absolute for law enforcement but rather as an option to other styles of leadership. Situational leadership is not suitable for the dynamics of law enforcement, especially when dealing with the vast amount of personalities and number of subordinates in a supervisor's range of control.

Transformational leadership, however, does fit these dynamics and allows for a one size fits all approach to law enforcement management.

Hambleton and Gumpert (1982) stated that situational leadership is based on the "amount of direction (task behavior) and the amount of socio-emotional support (relationship behavior) a leader must provide given the situation and "the level of maturity" of a subordinate. The concept can be applied effectively to groups as well as individuals" (p. 226). Situational leadership is done on a scale type rating that is relatively simple to understand. According to Hambleton and Gumpert (1982), "the basic concept is for a manager to provide constant direction and low socio-emotional support to a subordinate with low maturity and as the subordinates maturity level increases the manager begins to reduce task behavior and increase relationship behavior" (p.231). This concept is very easy to use and understand which makes it appealing to many managers. Hambleton and Gumpert (1982) wrote that "Hersey and Blanchard took the position that the "best" (or most effective) leadership style is situation specific; if the situation is changed the "best" leadership style for the new situation may be different from the one used successfully before" (p. 226).

Situational leadership may be effective for private industry, which is task specific, but not for law enforcement. In a study conducted by Vecchio (1987), it was surmised that without compelling empirical evidence the validity of situational leadership is hard to endorse. Law enforcement is unique in its very nature and does not lend itself to specific tasks to be performed on a daily basis. Another criticism that came out of a study was "those who instruct others within leadership training programs should, as a matter of professional honesty, advise their trainees that situational leadership still lacks

strong empirical grounding, and its alluring character should not substitute for the lack of empirical substantiation" (Thompson & Vecchio, 2009, p.846).

Situational leadership is not suited for law enforcement because it is too complicated for one supervisor to handle, when the supervisor to subordinate ratio is very high in this profession. When the law enforcement community believes in the same mission and has a solid mutual vision it will directly affect the community they serve by emanating a positive attitude and job satisfaction by the officers. This will help the community to understand the goals and visions of the department and invites them to join in and embrace the same vision.

RECOMMENDATION

Transformational leaders are the glue that holds successful police agencies together. Research is clear regarding the level of success that transformational leaders have and the level of satisfaction their employees have. It is important for law enforcement agencies to have their leaders trained in and practicing transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is a natural type of leadership and really comes down to treating subordinates the way subordinates would want to be treated.

It is important to learn other management styles and theories that have been established. By comparing the different styles and theories one can have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of each one. After examining transactional leadership and situational leadership it became clear that both of these are viable and highly effective leadership styles. Both of these styles have great strengths and are effective in their own rights as well as useful in certain environments.

However, it was interesting to learn that transformational leadership is closely related to the transactional style of leadership and that without transactional leadership the transformational style would not have been brought about. The major differences between the two are that transactional leadership is more authoritarian in nature and does not require a relationship between the manager and the employee. Transactional is effective in a military style setting but is not effective in a law enforcement environment. In law enforcement the structure and duties are fluid and require a trust and bond that is fostered in the transformational leadership style.

The situational leadership style is very interesting as well as task and behavior oriented. It is highly effective in the private business environment and works best when the manager to employee ratio is low. Situational leadership is not effective in the law enforcement setting because the tasks are ever-changing and behaviors vary depending on the situations that law enforcement officers are subjected at any given time.

As previously stated transformational leadership is undoubtedly the best style to be used in law enforcement. Transformational leadership is not only beneficial to the manager but also highly beneficial to the employee. It allows for growth and trust between the manager and employee. Through transformational leadership the manager and the employee form a bond that encompasses an agreed upon vision and allows them to serve the department's mission as a team.

Law enforcement officers have a unique job that requires self-reliance and critical decision making. There must be a solid bond between the manager and employee to be effective and work as a true team. As police managers it is very important to utilize

the transformational style of leadership. Through transformational leadership not only will the department, as a whole, benefit but the community they serve will also benefit. Law enforcement relies on the community they serve to work with them and support them. The support is a two-way relationship that can be accomplished when transformational leadership is practiced. This type of leadership will spill over into the community they serve and as an end result everyone involved will embrace the same goals and vision. Law enforcement officers consider their profession to be a family and the community they serve is an extension of their family. The transformational leadership style fosters family values and nurtures growth.

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