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LS 401 – Leadership Seminar  
Jack Burns: Personal Leadership Philosophy Paper  
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### Intro:

What is leadership? I laugh when I think of the number of times I have heard this question asked during my experiences studying leadership theory. It seems no one knows, or at least that everyone only wants to *hint* at what they think it might be. This might be a problem for some, but not for me. I've seen leadership. I know what it looks like. I've seen it in practicality and I can describe it for you here.

Admittedly, I have not occupied any positions as an RA, CDA, roles in ministry, or really anything else outside of being a soccer player and a friend. And furthermore, I have to warn you: I will NOT be giving you fluff, idealist fantasies, or minute details that open up my philosophy to critique. Although I welcome critique (really, I do), I want to state upfront that *this* is leadership to me, a grassroots approach that could solve the world's problems if taken seriously.

This leadership paper is dedicated more to describing how I intend to employ leadership based on observations thus far in my life and as they relate to leadership theorists we have studied. Because much of my experience is grounded in theory, much of what you are about to read is a critique on the shortcomings of the theories we have seen. Essentially, I want to show you my thought process, in a linear fashion, for how I came to this conclusion in order to best understand how I arrived here.

### Illustration: Niko Varlamos

Niko Varlamos was my mentor for the summer by means of a leadership internship where I acted as an assistant soccer coach to U12 boys and girls, U16 girls, and helped conduct various private camps each morning. He proved that having fun doing your job is one of the most important aspects when choosing a career – he *just plays soccer... all day*. But just as importantly, if not more so, he focuses his leadership skills – without any formal training or academic background – by providing his players whatever basic skills that are needed to play, puts them into environments that challenge them, gives them only a few simple rules from which to govern themselves, provides both a platform from which learning can take place while also providing the harsh realities they needed to face, and in the end, came up with a slogan that I will carry with me for the rest of my life: “The kids just want to play.” By playing, they had fun, and by having fun, they learned. It became a self-looping cycle from which a true love for the game could

prosper, and from which life lessons could be learned. Working adults would do well under such a doctrine.

Although all of the principles Niko used were without an academic background in complexity theory, chaos theory, or leadership in general, he exercised them perfectly because they are entrenched in our deep-rooted intuitive sense of doing what's right in a group dynamic. This is how the management of tomorrow should see their jobs: adaptive in nature, but also caring; able to address complex problems without having unrealistic expectations from which to lead through; learning that, when done right, proliferates further learning; and ultimately, inspiring change while leading in a rewarding way that allows constituents to have fun doing what they do best.

Commented [JB1]: This is good.

### Origins: “I want to be a philosopher king” syndrome

I am a visionary. I see things through an idealist lens and grapple onto that vision as if it is reality. I attribute this to be one of my greatest strengths as well as one of my greatest weaknesses. I say this because, as we all know, hope and optimism are important instruments towards instilling excitement towards a goal (vision), however, lacking a true sense of reality can mirror exactly how disastrous the potential consequences can be. As a visionary I have spent a majority of my life dreaming up complex ideas and abstract processes dreaming that one day I would change the world. But before anyone would listen to my ideals, I found, I needed influence, or what I thought of as synonymous at the time: power.

One of the fundamental struggles I have with leadership deals with what has historically been described as the “enlightened leader” concept. Some of the earliest mentioning of this theory can be attributed to Plato and his *Philosopher Kings* theory – via the *Ship of State* metaphor that likens the governance of a city-state to the command of a naval vessel – which ultimately argues that the “only men fit to be captain of this ship are philosopher kings, benevolent men with absolute power who love true knowledge as opposed to simple sights or education” by saying that “a philosopher is the only man who has access to potentiality in its purest form.”(C.D.C.). What better way to lead society than from a 40,000 foot perspective where one can see all and perceive all more completely (complimented by perfect academia and test scores I might add)? Although there is a tone of mockery in how I address this issue, it is actually something I still struggle with.

One of my utmost weaknesses as an individual is with regards to intolerance towards others. Part of this weakness can be attributed to the fundamental assumption that I feel I am more intelligent than most

people. Sorry for the air of cockiness, but when it is realized that I have had more opportunities for experience and education than an overwhelming majority of the world's population, it is no surprise that in an honest evaluation of myself, I come to this conclusion.

With this in mind, my past is riddled with a struggle in dealing with people that I judged as incompetent and, unfortunately, I would subsequently dismiss them. Moreover, and under the realization that these people will one day be filling jobs in corporations and institutions that will undoubtedly drive the direction of the world, I prayed for an enlightened leader to "show us the way" so avoid this reality through the "enlightened one's" extensive experience in dealing with problems, an arsenal of solutions to pull from, and a vision of unwavering success. For a while I even thought I could be this leader. As I studied leadership further, however, I have come to learn that no one person has enough experience or knowledge to tackle the toughest problems that society will inevitably face, which is essentially the platform from which I will start and an issue that will be elaborated at length throughout the paper.

### **Present State: No Enlightened Leaders nor Mob Rule, but *influence***

If we can agree on the assumption that the enlightened leader theory alluded to earlier will not work, we must look to the other end of the leadership spectrum: mob rule. This is the state of governance that Aristotle faced and where Socrates saw his demise. While neither of these purist forms of government could reasonably function due to their own respective weaknesses, it brought about a critical aspect of leadership that still dominates the political spectrum as well as many organizational realms: citizen representation.

Because of the obvious efficiencies that come with having representatives in office rather than having individuals vote on every matter pertaining to the state of the society, representative democracies flourished. To gain these offices, politicians had to present an adequate image that they were going to fulfill the stated needs and wants of the masses more willingly and purposefully than competitors vying for the same positions. Before long, it became an art: those that could appeal to the masses the best had influence over the direction of the society because they had influence over the individuals that make up society. Today, many books are dedicated to the topic including [The 48 Laws of Power](#), [The Art of Seduction](#), [The Psychology of Persuasion](#), and many more.

What should be taken from this side note is that, regardless of how intelligent a leader claims to be (or really is for that matter), unless people feel they are being represented accurately, there will be no

authority granted to the position of power in question. Therefore, to clarify some vocabulary, influence (the ability for one person to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task) is a derivative of power (a measure of an entity's ability to control the environment around itself, including the behavior of other entities), while authority recognizes the legitimacy of power (a justification) (Wikipedia, Power). Although slight differences exist, for the purposes of this paper and under this understanding, influence, power, and authority may be used interchangeably.

Hopefully we have established by now that if anything is to get done in leadership, it stems from a person's ability to influence those around him. This clearly illustrates that there are two distinct groups in this equation, leaders and followers, and that *influence* is the essential precursor to any leadership function between the two groups. However, this still begs an important question yet to be answered: how exactly is it that a leader can gain this influence?

*Definition 1: Leadership is the ability for leaders to exert influence over followers.*

## **Self-Interest, Transactional Leadership, Transforming Leadership, and Morality**

### **Self-Interest**

To answer this, one must look at the issue from the self-interest perspective of the followers in question. What I mean is if one is to enact influence over others, a leader must perform a function that is relevant or important to that specific individual or group of individuals. In Robert Green's book, The 48 Laws of Power, he illustrates this point in Law 13: "When asking for help, appeal to people's self-interest, never to their mercy or gratitude" because "he [or she] will respond enthusiastically when see[ing] something to be gained for himself [or herself]" (Green, 95).

Although the usefulness in pushing one's own agenda can be seen visibly by means of acquiring support, or essentially a power base, it doesn't adequately integrate morality into the overall concept. In fact, it readily accepts manipulation – a word that is typically associated with a negative connotation – as a necessary means of gaining influence, at what is likely to be, another's expense.

### **Transactional Leadership**

This is exactly the problem that James MacGregor Burns writes of in his book Leadership, the flagship leadership literature for the subject. However, he refers to this type of leadership as *Transactional Leadership* because it deals largely in exchanges. These are often characterized as being short-lived,

often one time only, and are usually equally valued (jobs for power, tax breaks for votes, etc.). In fact, this illustrates an important aspect in the debate of leadership versus management. While management deals with productivity, efficiency, and incentives, it has no roots in deep rooted visions and takes no account of workers' long-term aspirations. Instead, it concerns itself with compensation based incentives to drive "work." According to Burns, in transactional leadership adaptability is the rule – getting in to a position of power is the main goal – regardless of moral conflicts.

Leadership, therefore, cannot be reduced to seemingly coercive power forms that tell only of utter dominance or superior intellectual capacity – a leader's job is not simply to maintain his or her position of power at all costs. The elitists in any of these situations is hardly establishing a form of leadership and is more likely framing a source of control from which to "govern," control, and manipulate.

### **Transforming Leadership**

James MacGregor Burns' remedy for this exchange based leadership, coined transactional leadership, is *transforming leadership*. *Transforming leadership* can be distinguished from transactional leadership on the premise that the former deals with morality. Burns says that "to appeal solely to 'lower' or artificially sustained and intensified needs is to subject followers to *manipulation*," whereas "transforming leadership ultimately becomes *moral* in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 458, 21). Where transactional leadership's foundation was irrelevant with morality, transforming leadership uses a value system from which to govern the direction of the group.

**Commented [JB2]:** Burns would not agree with this. He thinks both transactional and transforming leadership need to be morally elevating.

Similarly, Professor Jack Burns of Whitworth University has constructed a model of X1 and X2 where X1 is "an honest assessment of where an organization is with regard to fulfilling its mission and values" and X2 is "what the organization might look like if it were fulfilling the organization's mission and values (J. Burns, 220). Importantly, the slope from X1 to X2 is "uphill" and requires those following this path towards X2 to overcome numerous obstacles of varying difficulties in order to reach an X2 that is constantly changing. Any movement that is not along the path towards X2 will make the journey steeper, or essentially more difficult.

### **Morality**

One of the major problems associated with James Burns' theory of leadership is from where the ethical codes and moral values originate. Which brings up an important question: whose values are the correct

ones to use? Although James Burns uses Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a base – one which we can reasonably agree on for some validity because of its universal applicability to human conditions from a needs-based standpoint – it leaves many gaps in its implementation of a wholly governing body of values because it leaves out important, yet intangible values like honesty, courage, and justice. Although, because it provides a linear path from which leadership can satisfy objective, humanistic needs (importantly, ending with morality at the uppermost pier), he is credited with being one of the first leadership theorists to incorporate morality.

Other theorists, many of whom are in this room, attempt to define leadership in accordance with Christian ethics. Although I, myself, come from a traditional Christian background, I do not believe this is enough to satisfy a universal code of ethics from which leaders can base their judgment because it is too narrow in scope. Although the values are largely universal, the message carries other cultural implications that may have a negative effect of the leadership being practiced. Because people have enduring differences, values, experiences, and ultimately perceptions of reality, there is inevitably going to be conflict. Too often this conflict results in a defensive mechanism where constituents form alliances, coalitions, and power bases will develop a *power map* of a situation in order to “*protect what's theirs*” and also “*ensure survival,*” relatively speaking. This type of self-driven agenda in an organization defines what Fisher and Ury termed *the fixed pie*, where one person's gain is at the expense of another person. But as the economy becomes more globalized with the increased speed and ease of communication for individuals, a more objective platform is needed to incorporate all the varying perspectives if such conversations and relationships hope to continue.

A remedy for this problem can be found in CS Lewis' book *The Abolition of Man* where he identifies what he considers universal laws, or *Tao*. The concept is applicable because it provides a platform for discussion on the basis that there are universal laws found in all walks of life including – what used to be considered different – religions, belief systems, and cultures. Furthermore, it alleviates the tension found in exceptions to the rules for each major system being studied: universally, cultures have rules; these rules have exceptions to the rule; and also exceptions to the rule have exceptions. For example, almost universally, murder is considered wrong. However, as an exception, many cultures accept that murder is an ok act as a punishment to another murder (capital punishment). And finally, as an exception to the exception, murder is seen as valid when it is committed as an act of self defense. This more anthropological approach to understand value systems puts emphasis on similarities rather than differences.

Lewis basis his theory on the assumption that:

*"it is at least arguable that every civilization we find has been derived from another civilization and, in the last resort, from a single centre -- 'carried' like an infectious disease or like the Apostolical succession" (91-92) because "this conception in all its forms, Platonic, Aristotelian, Stoic, Christian, and Oriental [are] alike, [and will] henceforth [be] refer[ed] to for brevity simply as 'the Tao'" (page 31).*

*Definition 3: Leadership is the ability for leaders to exert influence over followers incorporating agreed upon ethical standards so as to avoid conflict.*

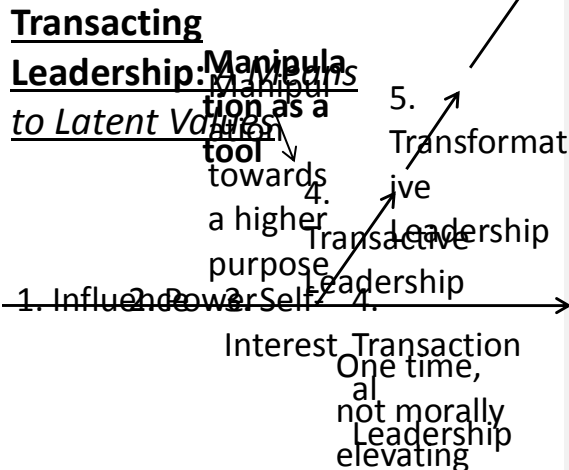
### **Transacting Leadership: A Means to Latent Values**

*Application – the Gray Area & Where MY Philosophy Fits Into This Mess*

This is tricky. But in order to be an effective leader, one must have influence over a potential follower. In order to have influence, one must be able to appeal to their self-interest. Because I attempt to rebrand what was regarded as a short-lived process in transactional leadership into an important part of a longer process, I have renamed it into *transacting leadership* because of important differences between the two. The new *transacting leadership* should be a tool from which leaders use power bases (other than coercive for obvious reasons, largely in that fear should not be a primary way of establishing trusting relationships) to manipulate the follower. "The essential strategy of leadership in mobilizing power is to recognize the arrays of motives and goals in potential followers, to appeal to those motives by words and action, and to strengthen those motives and goals in order to increase the power of leadership" (Burns, 40). An important component within this concept is taken from what Jack Burns translates into the difference between manipulating the person versus manipulating the environment.

**Commented [JB3]:** Nice citation. Rare is the student who will actually go to Lewis' book and find out what he said. Maybe I should add that book to a course somewhere.....Hmmm, got me thinking....

Sometimes, though, the leader and follower have seemingly different values. Although this may seem to be the case in many situations, sometimes they may be more similar than was originally thought. It is possible for these values to be hidden, or unconscious, latent values. It is in this context that the leader's job may include arousing and motivating the latent values within the groups over which his or her authority presides. "It is in large part, [a leader's job] *to make conscious what lies unconscious* among followers" (Burns, 40).



**Transformative Leadership – Checkpoints to Ensure the Pursuit of a Vision**

Still, I would like to take James McGregor Burns' theory of transforming leadership one step further. Because his theory acknowledges that X2 is a continuous process that cannot be reached because it is always changing, I would have to fundamentally disagree. I think that by ignoring the smaller series of transformations that take place, essentially the learning that each obstacle (or test), provides new grounding from which an honest assessment should occur. Therefore, *transformative leadership* allows for more solidified metrics to be instilled in the process of goal setting and performance evaluation towards resetting a new X2 objective for the group, organization, or institution at hand. Although only minutely different in extremities, *transformative leadership* gauges performance based on the benchmarks set at each obstacle to ensure that the direction of the group is still headed in the right direction, in accordance with the followers' motives and goals, while being aligned with the core competencies and but also with information being received from the external environment.

*Definition 2: Leadership is the ability for leaders to exert influence over followers, by appealing to self-interest through transacting leadership, in order to provoke what may have been a subconscious value through which a constantly reevaluated shared vision can be established using a generally accepted set of universal ethics and moral values.*

Commented [JB4]: Nice



### **Experience: Transformative Leadership in Practice... at Practice**

Under the originally stated example of leadership, as produced by Niko, these assumptions are easy to put into place. The origins for players meeting up with Niko deals with self-interest. In order for players in Spokane to play soccer, they need a team. The basic transaction that stems from this deal is that an agent, the Spokane Shadow, accepts payment in return for grouping similar aged players together. This is an equal value exchange where morality is irrelevant (transactional leadership).

In order to breach any defensive mechanisms that players will put up at varying degrees, Niko, in order to be able to enact change or growth, must have influence over his players. This typically comes from power bases like access to information (strategy and proper technique), legitimate power (because they have already made an agreement and payment to submit to his authority), referent power (charisma or personality traits), or reward power (awarding playing time or captaincy) and usually appeals to a player's self-interest. Although these don't involve morality, it would be easy to see how manipulation of a situation, like using restrictions during play (using only the left foot, two touch soccer only, etc.) or changing the physical dimensions of the field could easily change the dynamic of the game. This manipulation of the playing environment can help a coach illustrate important concepts in the game (by arousing subconscious values to be made conscious).

However, as the group begins to form and identify with one another, conflict will invariably arise due to varying experiences and objectives. This is where a leader, whether it be a team captain or a coach, finds one of his or her most important duties. The key here is to develop a vision for the group so that the group can dedicate its time and energy in one direction, the similarities of the group, rather than focus on the tensions inherent in the group's differences. The idea here is that, hopefully, as the group progresses towards its stated objectives, new objectives are created through a learning process. In this soccer analogy, the objectives may be to win games, but more specifically, could also be improved technical abilities, higher levels of fitness, or a greater understanding of game strategy.

Importantly, though, these are objectives that the leader may understand to be important, but is not yet perceived to be important by the followers, or players on the team. Therefore, part of Niko's job, and subsequently the team's ability to perform, comes from his ability to arouse what should be important to his players' growth. Transformative leadership, then, seeks only to place a greater emphasis on

reevaluations after each objective, or growth after each obstacle towards X2, has been met in order to better assess, based on the current situation, where growth should occur next.

### **Finding X2 – Leadership’s Ability to Identify and Solve Problems**

Not every problem is easily solvable. In fact, if a leader has to be involved, is likely to be the exact moment when the problem could not be solved easily. When these situations arise, harsh realities must be faced, usually making the individuals involved uncomfortable, but will ultimately end with those individuals growing.

#### **Comfort: Humanity’s Barrier to Growth**

Predictability and control may be what are most appealing with regards to human comfort, or equilibrium, in a constant setting; however, it does not directly translate into a way of sustainable competition or learning. Although Fredrick Winslow Taylor’s solutions developed a reductionist method to break apart the components to develop a deeper meaning of unrelated parts as a way to understand the whole and subsequently “~~one-best-method~~Scientific Management,” this paradigm can no longer stand the test of time for simple reasons (Lewin and Regine, 36). Namely, the business environment itself has changed where “the change is not only real, it is also accelerating, driven by rapid technological innovation, the globalization of business, and the internet”, but also because it ignores the unassailable common denominator that is human emotion and influence (Lewin and Regine, 4).

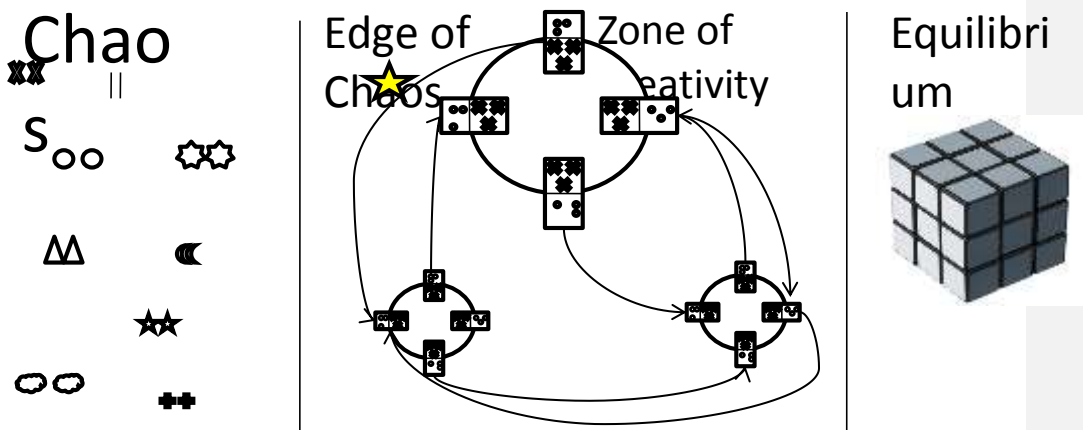
Contrary to the Tayloristic view of management, which was driven by precise metrics and a mechanistic view of employee work, the future of management lies in the relationships that occur within an organization and not merely of the interdependent components as before. Some companies fail because “managers focus exclusively on producing goods and services” and forget that “if people are treated as machines, not as people, they are unlikely to give loyalty and trust – they will not give their best” (Lewin and Regine, 12).

#### **Chaos & Complexity: Creativity Built Upon a Foundation of Trust**

In complex adaptive systems, unknowable by a Newtonian understanding of how the world, and consequently business, works, “agents interact, and when they have a mutual effect on one another something novel emerges... In human organizations this translates into agents as *people*, and interactions with mutual effect as being *relationships* that are grounded in a sense of mutuality: people share a mutual respect, and have a mutual influence and impact on each other” (Lewin and Regine, 9). A

genuine care like this, breeds loyalty and trust within the people of the organization, thus, “making them more willing to contribute to the needs of the company... which enhances relationships, [and] in turn, companies’ creativity and adaptability” (Lewin and Regine, 10). “The essence of the underlying contract is mutual trust” (Lewin and Regine, 12).

Much of complexity theory, therefore, focuses on the interactions among “agents” with one another, but an important emphasis should also be put on how these agents respond to external change. It is also important to note that even the craziest organizations need some structure and some stability if they are to survive. Therefore, a complex adaptive system can exist in one of three states: chaotic, stable, and in the zone of creativity. It is at this zone of creativity, or *edge of chaos*, where order emerges due, not to centralized management or planning, but as a result of the interactions of the system’s agents. The



other two states of existence are the result of too little or too much structure that will potentially thrive in the short-term, but ultimately fail to compete.

**Survival: The Ability to Deal with External Threats**

Leadership and management buried underneath the Newtonian way of thinking during the last century were not well suited to deal with market demands. In breaking a process down to a science, or a procedure, and expecting workers to strictly obey said procedures, there is little wiggle room for the employee to experiment and search for new ways of operating to meet the stated objectives.

If the group cannot adequately face the harsh realities at hand, the organization will likely die because harsh realities usually involve external information, or active forces, playing a role on the disruption of the equilibrium within a group. Basically, as trends change and processes within competing firms become more efficient, companies that ignore external information, whether it comes from a market competitor, an invading army, or a catastrophic natural disaster, will, as a result, not survive in the long run. Although equilibrium is important for efficiency purposes like a manufacturing plant or McDonalds (thanks Jen), even those markets need to be able to incorporate new ideas or face the all too common fate of letting “yesterday’s successes become tomorrow’s failures” (Bolman and Deal).

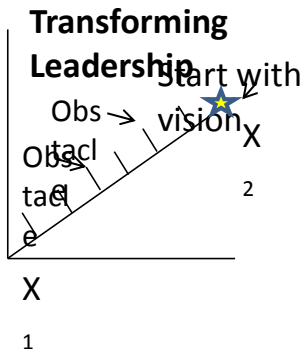
In fact, by stifling creativity and structuring the environment for precise, planned action, employees are not likely to design creative products that are based on market trends, they will not have the freedom to make the processes more efficient, nor will they be able to make a smooth transition once the company does decide to change core competencies. The danger in all this stems from the possibility of a business becoming a closed system, or so engrained in the “way to do things” that they essentially leave out external information so as to maintain comfort – or equilibrium – while losing out on ways to stay flexible and adaptive to the markets they intend to serve. Even in an industry like McDonalds (again, thanks Jen), if employees are not allowed to be creative – even in the most structured environments – a company may potentially leave out process improvements or other service improvements that may eventually become competitive advantages with regards to adaptability (to customer preference, or the cost of doing business).

*The most important lesson in complexity science, therefore, is that complex adaptive systems generate emergent, creative order and adapt to changes in their environment, through simple interactions among their agents.*

**The Contradiction: To Start with a Vision or With the Conditions?**

Peter Drucker defined vision as “the glue that holds companies together” and is a “shared vision of the future” – and that it was for the CEO to generate that vision. However, before action can be taken, one must consider how to capture the diverse experiences and enduring differences of constituents involved under one metaphorical umbrella, or X2, this shared vision of the future. This is where the contradiction begins.

It has already been stated that part of achieving X2 is overcoming obstacles in order to reach a vision or end goal. However, other leadership theorists lay valid claims when they say this is backwards. Ronald Heifetz, for one, disagrees with Burns. Previously, and in accordance with Burns' definition, values or a



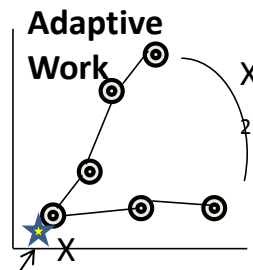
value system could not be viewed in a cross-culturally consistent manner because of the limitations of varying belief systems, societal experiences, and varying perceptions of reality. Instead, much of what this involves is learning to face reality in the face of conflict and varying interests: "Adaptive work consists of the learning required between the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face" (Heifetz, 22). Therefore, according to Heifetz, "getting people to clarify what matters most, in what balance, with what trade-offs, becomes a central task" (Heifetz, 22) as is the "inclusion of

competing value perspectives" that may be essential to adaptive success (Heifetz, 23).

Furthermore, because formal leadership cannot see the entire picture when solving an organizational problem and because finding solutions to complex problems involves multiple parties, "multiple vantage points" must be explored in order to properly seek out a solution that satisfies the needs of all parties with share in the problem. In a more traditional approach to

management, interpretation of information and data was left for senior employees or professionals. However, by leaving only a few people interpret the data, there is a high probability that the observer will "observe only a very few of the potentialities contained within the data" (Wheatley, 66). It is exactly because each individual, group, or coalition contains a perspective, or "a piece to the puzzle" in the problem that each must be probed for information so that a solution can be reached that accurately represents all the interests.

Furthermore, by including so many varying perspectives, there is the potential for a solution to be found amidst those that are seemingly *closest to the problem*.



Starts with problem

The last critique that Heifetz has for Burns is with the emphasis on vision. Heifetz believes that "terms like transformational leadership" force leaders to become arrogant and grandiose in our visions" helping us to "flee from harsh realities" because they do not involve enough "reality testing" (Heifetz, 26). The

basis for this argument is found in Heifetz's assumption that "a vision must track the contours of reality; it has to have accuracy, and not simply imagination and appeal" (Heifetz, 24). Basically, Burns theory of leadership has the problem solving aspects wrong, backwards, in fact, because it tries to establish the end goal before the true problem-event has been properly diagnosed.

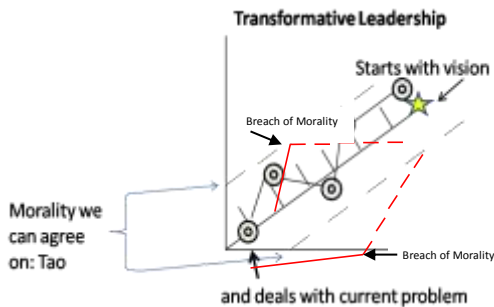
**The Solution – Transformative Leadership**

This is exactly where *transformative leadership* takes over. Because *transformative leadership* employs a series of benchmarks after each obstacle, accompanied by a new assessment of how the firm stands against internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats, Heifetz would not be able to critique so heavily. Instead, Heifetz would be forced to realize that at each evaluation, a new problem would be identified (seeing where people stand against an ultimate reality that must be faced) by obtaining information from those that are closest to the problem (multiple vantage points) and eventually formulating a new, relevant goal (rather than attempting to form a long term, "grandiose" shared vision).

Furthermore, it should be remembered that in order to extract these experiences from those closest to the problem, a relationship must exist that is based on mutual respect that creates a flow of information between leaders and followers, but also between colleagues. As long as each new goal is established within the contours of the accepted morality and code of ethics, *transformative leadership* employs the best of the *transforming leadership* theory from Burns, as well as the *adaptive work* from Heifetz, while essentially employing concepts from Chaos and Complexity Theory from Wheatley and Lewin & Regine.

Additionally, organizations will find that by using Transformative Leadership when approaching simple or difficult problems, they can enact change by moral agreement. Because Transformative Leadership stresses overarching moral agreements between constituents based on CS Lewis' Tao, the major ethical definitions are already cast. However, where Transformative Leadership becomes a game changer –

again without applying any one type of religious pressure, which, as we saw can become an increasingly difficult problem with greater diversity of the workforce – is in its ability to establish the subjective morality that comes from those that make up the firm. In dealing with complex problems as they arise, harsh realities can be dealt with using



criteria specifically established by the very members assigned to the problem solving team. This kind of cooperation and understanding acts as a further catalyst towards promoting trust as it is essentially a cornerstone for subconscious, and inevitably conscious, agreement while also an essential component for the reduction of conflict in a group [setting](#).

**Commented [JB5]:** This is creative, elegant, and interesting.

Often times, leaders attempt to solve problems by simply taking unethical shortcuts. These unethical shortcuts are represented by paths outside the aforementioned morality. Although they may make a jump towards X2, leaving a lessened slope towards the stated goal, they must first be illustrated using a steep sloping line leaving the impression that it has been performed at the expense of someone or something else. The other option outside of the agreed upon morality is commonly seen as “throwing money at a problem” – something that many people often accuse the government of doing when attempting to solve a complex issue. Although this may not have the same distressful level of moral or ethical dilemma, it can be reasonably argued that it is an inadequate use of public or private funds, potentially wastefully, ultimately leaving the problem to be dealt with at a later time, probably more difficultly (hence the steeper slope at a later point). This is in itself a dilemma on its own simply to a different degree on the same spectrum.

#### **Culture: A Method for Creating Meaningful Work**

Wheatley depicts a successful organization as one that combines self-evaluation and reflection, vision, accountability and support, and tests as the way to change organizational culture (130). It is not so much about specific roles, but *culture* which serves the entire organization and can help congruence in energy, decision-making, and provide calm during catastrophic moments. It is only because an organization’s culture, which Wheatley refers to as “self-knowledge”, which encompasses everything from *identity*, *information*, and *relationship*, can an organization take an honest assessment of what it stands for, what it intends to reach, and how it intends to do so. This can only be meaningful, however, if the organization pursues this path through participation – a collective identity from which each individual effort becomes highlighted and meaningful. So how does a leader make things meaningful? Ownership. Basically it is another way of saying that “people support what they create” because “it simply doesn’t work to ask people to sign on when they haven’t been involved in the planning process” (68). “It [reality] is revealed to us only through an active construction in which we participate” (Wheatley, 65). Another way of looking at this is to see *ownership* as a [segway-segues](#) of appealing to an individual’s self-interest, an essential component of the linear process that is leadership.

Participation and the flow of information, however, are only possible when the traditional, rigid hierarchical structure is removed. The more structured a company is, the tougher it is to communicate between levels of workers and managers. But since quantum physics demands that everything be seen as a “whole system” with the stress being on working relationships between roles rather than separate, individual roles, organizations too, then, must consciously decide to remove unnecessary bureaucratic tendencies in exchange for simpler structures that increase the likelihood of communication and multilevel networking, and as a result, greater participation. Rather than view hierarchy as good or bad, though, organizations should focus on creating “structures [that] come and go as they support the work that needs to get done” (Wheatley, 70). This brings us right back to the model of chaos: an organization must construct a balance between efficiency and creativity based on their particular product or service.

Culture is something that is hard to build and even harder to change once in place. However, culture is important because it is the “way things are done around here” in an organization and basically dictates how the organization is run, as well as pioneers a path in which the company is heading. Through freedom information and participative management, organizations can establish a culture that is responsive to market trends in ways that represent many subjective realities in an attempt to become objective, and can do so in loyal and supporting ways because the employees care about what is going on because they took part in the planning process.

#### **Leading By Example – Leading With or Without Authority**

Regardless of whether an individual finds him or herself in a position of authority, that person still has an inherent ability to influence the group. Leading without authority is where, most typically, I find myself. After an honest assessment of my strengths and weaknesses as an individual, I found that I play a constructive devil’s advocate and bring new, and sometimes abstract, ideas to the table. Being an active player like this, regardless of the level within a firm, is an important aspect of culture. This is better understood in complexity science under the strange attractor metaphor.

#### **The Strange Attractor Metaphor**

When looking at a strange attractor under various magnifications, one can see that the largest fractal, what is considered the system (or the organization), is made up of itself to create the whole. When looking at an entire organization, these individual fractals (potentially the workers), are what make up the system. Therefore, it is critical that each subunit be cohesive with the theme of the overall fractal, otherwise, as explained earlier, the differences will be magnified and the end result chaotic by the



traditional definition. After all, “it is not any one solution that matters, but the composite picture of those behaviors that emerges after countless iterations” and from which “the whole of the system emerges” that is important (Wheatley, 128).

“By observing the behavior of a production floor employee or senior executive, you can tell what the organization values and how it chooses to do its work” (Wheatley, 129). By this definition, the best organizations will give a customer the same consistent quality at every service level of operations. In organizations where “leaders do not practice what they preach, there are terrible disabling consequences” including “employees with less commitment to the ~~institutions~~ institution’s goals, customers, and clients” (130). It in these organizations especially that “there is not choice [for executives] but to walk their talk, else faced the amplified consequences in their most valuable asset – their workforce (129).

### **My Experience: A Winning Model, a Winning Mentality**

Still operating under the assumption that growth requires change and discomfort, it is a coach’s job as a leader, to push the limits of his or her players, both physically and emotionally. Although a stable environment is important for learning, finding the boundaries of that specific environment is critical in pushing players to be better. Just as is described in the bit about the various *zones* as they pertain to chaos, a leader must carefully assess his or her players and determine the appropriate level of discomfort so that the greatest level of growth can occur, without “turning players off.” If the boundaries are set too ambitiously, players will feel as if the expectations are unrealistic, and therefore, *tune out* of the program. Contrarily, if a coach does not push the players enough, he or she will have lost out on both time and important developments, or worse, fail to excite them enough to continue their playing career. Total chaos in a team is a sure-fire way to lose commitment because of the inherent disorder that occurs from lack of organization; however equally detrimental to a team is being too stagnant and stable because, as time passes, competing teams will learn new skills and strategies to compete and win – if the team is not learning at the same rate, they will not survive the competition in the long run.

Another example of how soccer players incorporate creativity into playing can be found midgame. The game of soccer is very fluid, and at times, decisions must be made instantly during play. Only so much planning and research can be done before playing, and often times, major changes must be made mid-match, without the help of a coach, in order to be implemented before it is too late. This is one of the

greatest competitive advantages in the sport but one of the most difficult to train: if players are going to be able to make these kinds of adjustments mid-game, it usually requires a mentality that must be taught, practiced, and lived.

When realizing that Niko intuitively practiced methods of chaos theory every day, it is no wonder that his teams do so well in local and regional tournaments (he's still working on the national scene, though). All you would have to do is watch his coaching to understand why his players have developed so well – it's poetry in motion. Much of this success is because he *embodies* the sport. He has lived it, he eats it, he plays it all day, has a reputation to back his success, and can still juke out every player on the field. Niko garners respect in his game with his skill, but even more so in his attitude to win. As a fierce competitor and lover of the sport, Niko provides a model for players to follow. Acting in this manner, Niko provided a framework model for an *ideal* player that younger, developing players can relate with.

The games that [enables-enable](#) this kind of learning are simple and are illustrated by the game played most frequently: 4 v. 4 King of the Court – winner stays. The rules are simple: don't hurt anybody, you can't use your hands, and if you lose? You run (or worse, you sit on the side, watch, and wait).

Niko starts out each session with 15 minutes of technical work. The leadership function in this step is in that he is equipping his players the basic tools needed to succeed in the game. However, this obeys the basic tendencies of chaos theory even more in that, in order to win, the challenge is put back on the individuals. They are forced to play in creative ways using concepts, game-play, or patterns that may be largely unfamiliar in order to win. They may have been taught or spoken of, but the application is largely up to the player in question. At first, this is an overwhelming task for kids and is usually met with "I don't know how to do that yet" or "I can't, it's hard." But part of the importance of pushing the responsibility back on to the players is that it empowers them and in doing so establishes a trusting relationship between the player being trusted and the leader giving the trust. This is exactly the theme of leadership as has been described in this paper: harsh realities must be faced in order to overcome the obstacles along the way in order to grow as an individual. Once an obstacle has been overcome, confidence surges and trust is put into the player/coach relationship. Over time, this *relationship equity* plays an important role in the degree of willingness to overcome new obstacles as they emerge.

As the players' skill levels improve, it is imperative that the leader, which may be the coach, but may also be a committed, passionate player urging teammates on, pushes for more consistency, increased

use of new technique, or for greater effort. This is an important function because as players become increasingly more comfortable with the environment they function in, the objectives must be reevaluated to make sure that its boundaries are continuously being pushed to its limits to maximize learning potential. Often, this environment is uncomfortable for new players because it is something they have little or no experience with. As time goes on though, players begin to trust in the process, the information being given to them by the authority figures, and eventually transforms into a culture of trust and growth. This culture is characterized by *transformative leadership* in that it provides a platform for discussion of which objectives – stated by individuals in the group – relate to immediate problems the team is facing while functioning within a previously agreed upon set of parameters, vision, or X2 to move toward.

In creating this kind of culture among his teams, Niko has basically created a culture of accountability (players holding one another responsible for their task) and has jump started a learning process for any new players that enter the team at the beginning of each season. Almost immediately new players see the work ethic inherent in the program and are either weeded out (apparently having a different vision than the one that is shared by group members) or pick up the pace of the peers in the group.

But maybe even more importantly, creating this kind of culture has allowed players to take ownership in the sport they play; by holding one another accountable and helping in the development of the stated vision, players have buy-in – they have some *skin in the game* so to speak. As they grow in the sports' mentality, the coach will ask their advice on strategy as it relates to individual player ability. By participating in these ways, players have found meaning in what they are doing and are subconsciously setting the preconditions for success – the metaphorical original variable in the strange attractor equation – while realizing that any team can win on any given day in the world of soccer, further illustrating the concept that planning and analysis can only go so far in predicting a group's ability to succeed.

**BUT,**

*...At the end of the day, the kids just want to play...*

**Commented [JB6]:** In this paper, your fertile mind, not just your capable bright mind, but your mind that is able to take ideas and grow them is at work. I love it when a student writes and I have something to think about that may new and exciting additions to my knowledge. This is such a paper.

Grade: 98

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