

Leadership

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Do You Have a Traditional Organization or a Leadership Organization?

From *Building the Leadership Organization* by Terry Anderson, PhD

A Leadership Organization creates and sustains a leadership-centred culture where *leaders develop leaders*, from the top down and the inside out.

How is the Leadership Organization different from Traditional Organizations?

A Leadership Organization prepares the leaders first. Eventually everyone in the organization learns to work on the organization to improve it, as well as work in it to sustain it.

People can learn to see their individual contributions in the context of the organization as a whole if they are given feedback about their work unit. People want to learn how the internal and external customers are influenced by their work, and how their decisions and actions contribute to or detract from the financial or service quality of the organization. It is clear that the Leadership Organization is not ordinary and that even though it is not a quick and simple transition to make, it is necessary to move forward into a preferred future.

Traditional organizational characteristics are compared with the key attributes of the Leadership Organization in this chart.

The Traditional Organization	The Leadership Organization
Controls its organizational design	Co-designed by those who work in it
Assumes it knows what is best	Assumes that what is best is always changing
Delays change as long as possible	Responds to change immediately
Clings to old paradigms	Anticipates change in advance whenever possible
Takes a linear approach	Uses a systems approach
Forms vertical command hierarchies	Forms collegial team relationships
Thinks work is boring repetition	Thinks work is meaningful self-expression
Believes people are cogs in wheels	Believes people are collaborators, team mates
Focuses on past and present	Focuses on moving toward ideal future
Is sufficiency-oriented	Is continuous-improvement oriented
Is bureaucracy-oriented	Is people-and-idea oriented
Practises management by objectives	Practises strategic, accountable, intuitive leadership
Values traditional gender roles	Recognizes and rewards competency
The organization structure has multiple levels	The organization has cross-functions: information access and role clarity
Management is secured by position power	Leadership is secured by credibility
Problems are attacked	Problems are prevented
Organization conforms to rules	Organization uses creative problem-solving for continuous improvement
Decision-making comes from consultation	Inter-team brainstorming and decision-making are achieved as a team
Accountability to boss is key	Accountability to team is key
Self-interest orientation is prime	Quality and customer-service orientation are prime
Believes dollars are top priority at all costs	Understands that intelligent, creative people produce more dollars
The Rich Get Richer, the Poor Get Poorer	Wealth and reward are distributed by contribution

Research suggests that leaders and their teams must be developed before a learning organization can be built and move from *Good* to *Great*. Implementing Transforming Leadership can help you be a catalyst to transform your organization and its leaders toward the Big 3.

1. Enhanced performance
2. Profitability
3. Spirit in the workplace

What is The Leadership Organization?

Definition: The Leadership Organization creates and sustains a leadership-centred culture where leaders are equipped to develop leaders at all levels of the organization, from the top down and from the inside out.

To the extent that this is effective, it will result in the development of all people in the organization who, in turn, will have developmental impact on their families and communities.

Developmental impact occurs because learning occurs. Learning occurs because leaders are competent, caring, creative, and honest.

The Leadership Organization is based on commitment by visionary leaders to the development of people by providing opportunities for on-the-job learning that lead to spiritual, intellectual, interpersonal, physical, financial, and emotional growth and well-being. The obvious rationale for facilitating the development is that realizing the potentials of people is a worthy endeavour.

From a business point of view, it results in higher personal, team, and organizational performance.

The Leadership Organization has, at its helm, leaders that are developmental change agents and/or transformation specialists. These leaders act as exemplars in the move to lead more fulfilled, service-oriented lives that make a positive difference in the lives of the people who will, in turn, affect their organization's success the most. This is the way for

organizations to regain the loyalty of the many who have grown distrustful and disloyal as a result of layoffs, restructuring, re-engineering, and other change initiatives.

Therefore, in a Leadership Organization, those in senior positions are the first to make the commitment to long-term development. With consultative assistance, they assess, plan, develop, and evaluate their own personal and executive team capabilities. They learn how to become better leaders and how to develop other leaders directly through their own mentoring of protégés and/or through the development of organization-wide programs that integrate learning leadership with the management functions of the work itself.

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You can accelerate yourself and your teams more powerfully into the future through this breakthrough organizational transformation and continuous improvement process.

After the development of the executive team, there are identifiable steps that a Leadership Organization goes through to effect such a large scale and long-lasting organizational transformation.

1. Shift paradigms from managing the business *status quo* to leading performance teams toward the realization of a preferred future.
2. Develop and communicate an inspiring vision of an ideal future that will motivate individuals and teams. Involve others in creating this vision; people get behind what they help create!

3. Assess the needs, wants, fears, and problems the organization has (including those of the internal and external "customers").
4. Set realistic, achievable transition goals that, when accomplished, will realize the vision of a preferred future.
5. Strategically plan and implement step-by-step changes and remove obstacles to realizing the new vision and goals.
6. Prepare, train, coach, and/or mentor key (willing, ready, and able) leaders to develop self-leadership capabilities in all members of the organization.
7. Research and/or track the outcomes of change initiatives. Report progress at regular strategically timed intervals throughout the process so that movement toward the vision can be celebrated, and unexpected obstacles removed or managed.
8. Engage intentionally in continuous developmental learning that results in ongoing personal, team, organization, family, and community development.

These steps are vital to the long-term health of any organization. Without developed leaders, without a strong team at the helm, the organization will have no vision or no spirit or will be a house divided against itself. It will not as easily endure the storms of change we are now beginning to face. ▲

Dr. Anderson coaches Organizational Transformation. He has developed and field-tested the Transforming Leadership model that reveals a proven systems-based approach that will enable companies to Build a Leadership and Learning Organization.

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