

NV Grand Lodge Short Lecture Series

MASONIC LEADERSHIP—THE TRANSFORMATION SERVANT LEADER

Researched by R. Montana Williams, PM

Introduction

Recently, some masonic leaders have been discussing the leadership gaps that appeared in many of our lodges, our appendant bodies, our communities, our vocational professions, and in our homes. Many brothers have received instruction or bore witness to different leadership methods during your lifetimes. Please understand that this discussion is not intended to deliberate the many recognized leadership styles, but to focus on the fraternity's leadership theory that is the core of our masonic values and by augmenting it with an additional methodology can bear fruit within our Masonic bodies and our lives. Presently, we have numerous resources that discuss leadership within the lodge, but as brethren we should always strive to educate and engage ourselves and members, helping achieve personal growth and excel both inside and outside the fraternity. I will offer you that blended approach and five practices which applies to all aspects of a Brother's life. First, I want to draw a comparison of two leadership styles and how if blended they exemplify the virtues of Freemasonry.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is the very essence of Freemasonry and a foundation since time immortal. Although the first published definition of servant leader did not occur until 1970, Freemasons defined it long ago through our principal tenants of *Brotherly Love, Relief, and Truth*. Robert Greenleaf defined the concept as timeless when he published: "The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first." Though serving others, the servant leader inspires others to aspire to his cause. This is sharply different from one who is adopts the leader-first style which desires power and the acquisition of material possessions.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is deeply rooted in change whether individual, organizational, or societal. It focuses on helping good men become better men, in its ideal form, creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing newly made masons into leaders within their lodges, communities, and professions. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity to our Masonic Brotherhood. It includes being a role model; challenging followers to take greater ownership for their work, and an understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses, so a leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance.

Servant/Transformational Masonic Leader

Now reflect on what was just described, servant and transformational leadership. For example, understanding leads you to a reflection from the Entered Apprentice Charge which trusts you with responsibility to God, your neighbor, and yourself. To serve God and esteem him, to your neighbor act upon the square, do unto him as you would that he should do unto you, to yourself be an example to your profession by avoiding all irregularities and intemperance. Above all you are charged to practice benevolence and charity. These acts serve others and set an example, motivates, increase morale, and enhances individual or organizational performance in a variety of ways. By combining both theories, we can develop ourselves and aid our brethren in that

continuing journey from the rude and natural state of the Rough Ashlar to the refined state of the honed Perfect Ashlar.

Theory to Reality—Application of Servant/Transformational Leadership

From theory to reality involves application, So, let's discuss transitioning from theory to practice, but before that it is important to provide context to the practices I am about to share. In leadership gurus Kouzes and Posner, you will find a foundation for the servant-transformational leadership process which is applicable across freemasonry. Unbeknownst to me, just a few months early Most Worshipful D.A. Bruce, Past Grand Master of Masons in Alberta Canada gave a speech at the "All Canada" Conference in Winnipeg in which he laid out five leadership practices common to successful leaders and necessary for the survival of Freemasonry in the 21st Century. It so happens that those principles were identical to those described in my textbook. Those practices became the crux of my leadership philosophy going forward. As such, I would like to share the practices outlined by Most Worshipful D.A. Bruce and Kouzes & Posner's (2007) book along with some examples that you can apply in lodge or in life:

Leadership is not about personality; it's about behavior—an observable set of skills & abilities.

1. Model the Way

Leaders establish principles concerning the way people (constituents, peers, colleagues, and customers alike) should be treated and the way goals should be pursued. They create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow. Because the prospect of complex change can overwhelm people and stifle action, they set interim goals so that people can achieve small wins as they work toward larger objectives. They unravel bureaucracy when it impedes action; they put up signposts when people are unsure of where to go or how to get there; and they create opportunities for victory.

- a. Sets a personal example of what is expected.
- b. Makes certain that people adhere to agreed standards.
- c. Follows through on promises and commitments.

2. Inspire a Shared Vision

Leaders passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Through their magnetism and quiet persuasion, leaders enlist others in their dreams. They breathe life into their visions and get people to see exciting possibilities for the future.

- a. Talks about future trends influencing our work.
- b. Appeals to others to share dream of the future.
- c. Shows others how their interests can be realized.

3. Challenge the Process

Leaders search for opportunities to change the status quo. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. In doing so, they experiment and take risks. And because leaders know that risk taking involves mistakes and failures, they accept the inevitable disappointments as learning opportunities.

- a. Challenges people to try new approaches.
- b. Searches outside organisations for innovative ways to improve.
- c. Asks 'What can we learn?'

4. Enable Other to Act

Leaders foster collaboration and build spirited teams. They actively involve others. Leaders understand that mutual respect is what sustains extraordinary efforts; they strive to create an atmosphere of trust and human dignity. They strengthen others, making each person feel capable and powerful.

- a. *Actively listens to diverse points of view.*
- b. *Treats people with dignity and respect.*
- c. *Supports decisions other people make.*
- d. *Gives people choice about how to do their work.*
- e. *Ensures that people grow in their jobs.*

5. Encourage the Heart

Accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishments. They make people feel like heroes.

- a. *Praises people for a job well done.*
- b. *Expresses confidence in people's abilities.*
- c. *Creatively rewards people for their contributions.*
- d. *Recognizes people for commitment to shared values.*
- e. *Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments.*
- f. *Gives team members appreciation and support.*

References

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