A photograph of a large, two-story building with a central entrance, likely Hugonote College, taken at dusk. The building has a prominent central gable and a sign above the entrance that reads "HUGONOTE COLLEGE A.D. 1907". The sky is dark blue, and the building's lights are on.

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#INTEGRITASZA MONTHLY

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Integrity Leadership with Purpose: Substance over Style

By Prof Erwin Schwella

When considering leadership, it is required to consider the context, challenges, concepts, competencies, capacity and change connected to leadership and connecting leadership to society.

The following quotes of Dr. Nelson Mandela provides a good start in this regard:

“A leader...is like a shepherd. He stays behind the flock, letting the most nimble go out ahead, whereupon the others follow, not realizing that all along they are being directed from behind.”

“If you want the cooperation of humans around you, you must make them feel they are important – and you do that by being genuine and humble

“It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build.”

Leadership does and can make a significant difference.

And it does so with substance, rather than a particular style as there are more than one best style to lead for success than an only one-size-fits-all, style. It is also evident that although there may not be one best style of leadership, there is one worst style. This style is the bullying, destructive, selfish, uncaring and even narcissistic style of bad and toxic leaders. This destructive style is sure to deliver disaster in society and in societal institutions and organisations.

Leading with integrity and professionally to constructively, effectively, productively add and ethically and equitably share value, requires individual competence and compassion from leaders. This individual leadership compassion and competency imbedded in integrity based institutional capacity also requires of the organisation to incentivize good leadership and discourage bad unethical and immoral selfish leadership.

As this is the case, a more directive or more empowering style, with more or less participation and more or less command and control is not conclusively materially conditional for leadership and organizational success. A fit-for-purpose leadership style given the particular context and challenges can be selected on the basis of what is required by the situation. This is the contingency approach applied.

However, if leadership is fundamentally toxic, selfish, malevolent and corrupt, mere style does not count for much. Therefore also, if leadership is fundamentally competent, professional and compassionate and based on integrity and ethics, any reasonable style supports, but is not a deal-breaking condition for leadership success and organizational performance.

Competent, compassionate and caring leaders behave in professional ways to create desired futures. These desired futures are grounded in the co-creation of an inspiring vision for the institution and a conducive context to perform within for the individuals and teams in the organisation. These individuals and teams, inspired by collective leadership, then have to produce and share the public good co-created within the organisation with all stakeholders in society and shareholders in the company. This also, but not only requires that there will be talent management, succession planning, and employee engagement. However, the success of these activities is not based on only technicist tools of the human resources toolkit, but on inspirational and visionary attitudes and an aptitude to serve and share with competence and compassion.

In this way leadership also creates desired futures through inspiration and service and then links this to the human resources dimension rather than the other way round. This visionary and inspirational co-creation and sharing of public value serves the purpose better than mere compliance with technicist organizational techniques. It is a question of what is substantive and priority and what is mere technicist in support of the purpose to create desired futures and share the benefits of these desired with society through organisations and their members and stakeholders.

Organisations which do not approximate the communities and clients they serve, will not sustainably serve and support their communities of stakeholders in societal, organizational or personally sustainable ways. Not being inclusive and diverse wreaks havoc on institutional legitimacy and organizational empathy as well as personal trust. To be inclusive and to reflect the diversity of stakeholders is therefore not a compliance issue but actually a substantive survival demand. The exclusive and unrepresentative will not survive. Leadership which excludes and divides will not suffice, and organisations which divides and excludes will not sustain. At least not in a sustainable long-term way.

Human, and other resource philosophies and practices which serve and support inclusive shared vision and inspiring co-creation and sharing of public value with integrity as value will thrive.

Human, and other resource philosophies and practices which set up exclusive and selfish servitude and self-enrichment with individual dishonesty and institutional corruption will not survive. It is all about purpose and sharing rather than about the self-serving promotion of selfish own interest.

Great managers and leaders lead for the greater good with integrity, competency and compassion. This requires dedication to purpose and discipline in the implementation of the work towards this purpose. Failed managers and leaders lead toward servitude in their selfish own interests with corruption and lust and greed. This results in disaster and destruction.

Integrity is dignity. Corruption is deadly. Integrity impacts. Corruption kills.

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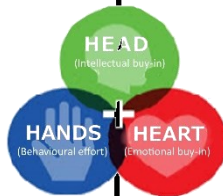
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Registration: Friday 18 Februarie 2022 and payment of R3,500.00

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2. Wednesday **4 May** from 14:30 till 18:30
3. Wednesday **11 May** from 14:30 till 18:30

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Registration: Friday 3 June 2022 and payment of R3,500.00

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2. Wednesday **15 June** from 14:30 till 18:30
3. Wednesday **22 June** from 14:30 till 18:30

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