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# Voice of Leadership

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## Demystifying the six misunderstandings about servant leadership

By Assegid Habtewold

### 1. Servant leadership is a new age movement.

The concept of servant leadership isn't new, and most certainly, it isn't the product of our age and generation. It is as old as human history. In ancient times, many philosophers, poets, and writers admired the serving kings and masters.

In the beginning of the first century, Jesus of Nazareth underlined the importance of serving. He embodied servant leadership by serving the physical, emotional, health, and spiritual needs of his followers. At one point, he even washed the feet of his students.

In recent history, leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and Nelson Mandela dedicated their lives in serving the social and freedom needs of others. Leaders like Mother Theresa left their comfort zone and devoted their lives to serve the physical, health, and emotional needs of the needy.

However, the father of modern era servant leadership who first coined the term in the late 60's and early 70's is none other than Robert K. Greenleaf. He advocated the leader as a servant in his classic work "The Servant as Leader".



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### 2. Servant leadership is irrelevant to the corporate world.

Servant leadership has been well embraced within the religious, academic, and research circles. It attracted a great deal of interest from leaders, scholars, and students from these circles. Unfortunately, some reports show that servant leadership hasn't gained the attention and priority it deserves, especially from the corporate world.

Nonetheless, though their number is fairly small, there were and still are some great corporate leaders like the former CEO of Herman Miller- Max DePree. In his extraordinary book 'Leadership is an Art', DePree said, "The first responsibility

of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant." There is no wonder why employees of this wonderful company take ownership and serve it back with great commitment and delight.

Like Herman Miller and other similar corporations, today's businesses should adopt servant leadership as one of their leadership styles, and enjoy its full benefits. However, in order to experience the full-scale benefits that come from adopting servant leadership, the following requirements and more should be met:

- Service should be one of the shared values of the organization.
- The corporate culture should be able to

## Demystifying the six misunderstandings Cont...

create conducive atmosphere for servant leaders to flourish.

- Training and development programs should incorporate the theme servant leadership.
- The promotion system should consider serving as one of the important parameters.
- The incentive system should favor the serving leaders, and more...

### **3. Servant leadership is all about meeting the physical needs of people.**

Some people limit the scope of servant leadership as if it is all about meeting the physical needs of people. Some even narrow it down to washing feet. In many parts of the world, unlike in the agrarian era, the contemporary generation doesn't have this need every night. I am not criticizing the act of those who practice feet washing as a sign of humility. I rather admire their commitment and they should continue to do it but here, I am putting things in perspective, that is, servant leadership's scope should go beyond meeting the physical needs of people.

The real needs of the generation are beyond meeting physical needs. The 21st C generation is overwhelmed with so many new challenges specific to the information age, and therefore, servant leaders should also serve the intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of their constituencies.

### **4. Servant leadership is serving once and then getting service forever.**

Some people think that you should first serve (follow) before you take leadership. Leadership begins in our childhood, the moment we take some responsibilities in our family. We shouldn't wait forever to take leadership, and become a servant leader. On the other hand, there is no scenario where someone follows (serves) once and then remains a leader afterwards. Following someone's lead continues in the life of the leader. As much as the latter has people under his influence, he is also a follower of someone somewhere. That is to say, there is no precedence, and tit for tat in servant leadership. It is a lifetime commitment where a servant leader serves throughout her leadership journey.

### **5. Servant leadership is about extinguishing any fire of need that comes on the servant's way.**

One of the invaluable services in an urban setting is its fire department. Wherever there is a need to fight fire or accident, they are there to serve. I watched some episodes that allowed me to appreciate the critical roles firemen play. In some circles, they believe that servant leaders are fire extinguishers. They should be where there are needs. Such servants will quickly burnout. A servant leader should serve from his strength. The firemen had lots of choices to make but they chose a particular service for which they have passion and strength. A servant leader doesn't mean she goes out to serve everyone, everywhere, and on everything. A servant leader should know her mission, and that should dictate whom & where to serve, and the kind of service she should render.

### **6. Servant leadership is about feeding/serving others first.**

Servant leadership is a selfless style of leadership but can a servant leader undermine his/her own needs and go out to meet the needs of others without a consequence? Can that kind of approach remains sustainable and relevant in the long run? I like Tim Elmore's metaphor entitled "The starving baker". This baker is a servant who is busy feeding others while neglecting to eat himself, and in turn ended up starving. In order to generate lasting impact and serve continually, servant leaders should also look after their own needs, especially their personal development needs.

I tried to deal with some of the misunderstandings about servant leadership. Let me ask you two questions: What other myths do you think should be dealt to free servant leadership from unnecessary misunderstandings that downplay its great roles? What will be the future prospect of servant leadership in the 21st C? Write to us your answers briefly and we will share with our readers.

This is now time to read the meat of this Issue. In this Issue, we have excellent writers and interviewees who will help us understand the importance of servant leadership, the characteristics of a servant leader, how to benefit from adopting servant leadership within our business, and many more insights, stories, and wisdom...

Once you read these wonderful contributions from wonderful servant leaders, let's hear your feedback. We will be happy to feature your comments and opinions.

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**"If leadership serves only the leader, it will fail. Ego satisfaction, financial gain, and status can all be valuable tools for a leader, but if they become the only motivations, they will eventually destroy a leader. Only when service for a common good is the primary purpose are you truly leading."**

**Sheila Murray Bethel**

## “Who” are servant leaders?

By Mona Singleton

Who are the people that make the best leaders? A lot depending on the context and the environment however the answer is intelligent people with a heart to serve other people. It's the servant leader. Why are servant leaders so valuable? Servant leaders are “others-focused” rather than “self-focused”. If you needed to complete an urgent and critical project on time, who would you prefer to lead the effort? Someone who is committed to the cause or simply a “hired hand” who is there primarily for a pay check? Who would you trust most to follow the project through to successful completion?

What really sets a servant leader apart from average leaders is the essence and quality of a person's character. It's their belief in who they are serving and why they are serving them that drives them to give the best of what they've got. How many leaders do you know who consistently give their best and will stay on mission?

Servant leaders are somewhat rare, relative to the entire leader population, yet you can find them. It's not unusual for a servant leader to maintain a low profile in an organization. They are usually not glory seekers and don't crave the spotlight. Where would you expect to find them? It's not uncommon for servant leaders

to migrate to the public or non-profit sectors. There are some that also serve in for profits as well. Just look for the productive and dedicated people who almost always have time to help. They're the people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and dive in rather than sit back and give orders.

What makes a servant leader so valuable and unique, is their intention to give rather than to get. They have a passion for service and contribution rather than a need to dominate and consume.

If you are looking for people who can inspire, serve, and grow other people in your organization, look for servant leaders. You'll be glad you did.

For more information and discussion on servant leaders, please feel free to join the “non-profit servant leader” group on LinkedIn. Join the conversation!

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servant leadership powerful.

**PRO Leadership:** In your view, what makes Servant Leadership similar or different than other leadership styles such as charismatic, transactional, and so on?

**Glenn:** Servant leadership is similar only in the end result, which is that others choose to follow. It is very different though from the other types of leadership you mention in that it is based on enriching and empowering others rather than having power over them. Servant leaders earn influence with others rather than having power over them and that makes the relationship with people who choose to follow more meaningful and more beneficial.

**PRO Leadership:** How do you know whether someone is a servant leader?

**Glenn:** Servant leaders embrace a general philosophy of taking a sincere interest in others before they expect others to take an interest in them. They are typically the kind of people who are always willing to pitch in, always available to assist someone unconditionally, and always looking for ways to share their talents and resources voluntarily with people who can benefit from them. They are relationship builders not just power brokers.

**PRO Leadership:** Do you think Servant Leadership is relevant in the 21st Century?

**Glenn:** Servant leadership is the most relevant leadership that exists today. Unfortunately, our society has embraced leadership styles which denigrate the mutual respect leaders and followers should have for each other. I think the tide is changing though and that servant leadership is becoming a more attractive way for leaders to be effective.

**PRO Leadership:** Many organizations think that Servant Leadership isn't relevant for their organization. They believe that it isn't possible to care and serve employees and at the same time put the organization's mission, needs, and survival first. They don't see a win-win scenario out of this leadership style. Do you agree with this claim?

## Interview with Glenn K. Garnes



**PRO Leadership:** Do you consider yourself as a servant leader? If yes, tell us a little bit about when you began that journey and some of the reasons why you decided to become a servant leader?

**Glenn:** I do consider myself a servant leader. For me, what that means is a conscious choice to seek out opportunities to contribute to my community through the things I can do for others. The result is that I attract people with whom I then have influence. The fact that they make the deliberate choice to follow me based on their experience with me is what makes

## Interview with Glenn K. Garness Cont...

**Glenn:** Organizations who do not believe in servant leadership are operating from a place of scarcity mentality. How can it not be possible to influence employees to care about your company if they are convince you do not care about them? This mentality is simply the result of the failure to think accurately.

One of my favorite thought leaders is a 19th Century psychologist by the name of William James. Dr. James says "the deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated". We all have it and when you satisfy someone's craving to be appreciated you not only make them feel relevant, you inspire and gain their trust and respect, resulting in their willingness to do the things you would have them do without having it be a power struggle. Organizations that don't get that typically have lots of costly turnover and lots of missed opportunity.

**PRO Leadership:** How can organizations benefit from Servant Leadership?

**Glenn:** By embracing it. An organization who is willing to create a culture of caring and a nurturing environment for employees will ultimate build unshakable loyalty to their companies. Mark Twain says "really great people make you feel that you too can become great", and I like to think that is true of organizations too.

**PRO Leadership:** Do you have any particular leader in your mind that you think is an exemplary servant leader?

**Glenn:** Actually, some of my favorite servant leaders are not big names in society. They are the average citizen who does not spend time seeking recognition or notoriety. Therefore, you do not hear much about them. Many of them are sports coaches, teachers, business people who are community oriented, and people who generally have it in their hearts to do what is right. That means making the most of themselves and

sharing with they know with others.

**PRO Leadership:** What are some of the considerations in raising servant leaders in an organization?

**Glenn:** Organizations who wish to raise servant leaders must first reward the behaviors that lead to the end result. Being on the lookout and acknowledging people who do more than they are paid for, and being clear about what types of things will be rewarded helps.

It also helps if leadership at the top makes servant leadership their own way of life. People are more inclined to follow what you do not what you say, so being a servant leader is the best way to create servant leaders.

**PRO Leadership:** What are some of the roles and contributions of servant leaders for the success of their organizations, and toward the growth/development of their people?

**Glenn:** Servant leaders elevate the enthusiasm and production of the people who follow them. They create a culture of personal growth in the people who follow them, and that translates to organizational growth as employees themselves become more competent and more relevant to the mission of the company. Ultimately, they create a spirit of loyalty and cooperation at all levels within a company and that creates an environment that people consciously want to be part of.

**PRO Leadership:** Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

**Glenn:** Ultimately, servant leaders are people who want to participate in the evolution of humanity by helping the people around them to reach their full potential through inspiration rather than through fear of consequences for

under-performing. The thing I like best about servant leadership is it's the best way to edify the potential of humanity.

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Glenn Garnes is the founder of Abundant Society, an online empowerment community consisting of people who commit to invest in themselves through personal development and who seek association with others who are making that same commitment. Glenn is a retired attorney who has been on a journey of personal development since graduating law school in 1986. Glenn retired from the practice of law approximately 12 years ago and has devoted his life beyond law to helping people achieve more for themselves through personal development. Glenn believes we all have a duty to ourselves and our communities to be the best we can be at who we are and what we do. Glenn fulfills his mission by providing personal development training in the Abundant Society program.

## Contribute

Toward the upcoming two VoL themes:

1. Communication in Leadership, deadline- July 22, 2013
2. Character in Leadership, deadline- October 22, 2013

You can contribute:

- Article,
- Story/quote/anecdote,
- Tips for leaders &
- Get interviewed...

For more info, visit the Magazine page from our web site.

## Servant Leadership and the Healthy Ego

Alix Moore



### New Rules for an Old Game

There is no doubt that the rules of business are changing. Corporations and institutions are no longer able to get away with serving the needs of their few stakeholders at the expense of the wellbeing of the many individuals in their businesses and their communities. As the world's priorities shift, business leaders who embrace the precepts of servant leadership are effortlessly positioned to grow and succeed in integrity and unity with their employees and customers. In this article, I will unpack a key characteristic of the servant leader: the balanced ego. Just what is a balanced ego, why do you want one, and what role does servant leadership play in the development of a leader's ego? Those questions and more are addressed below.

### What Is A Balanced Ego?

Ego fire is the fire of creation. The ego energy is what drives us to create products, services, businesses, new churches—you name it, ego fire is part of the inception and fruition of any new creation. A business leader can achieve success using that ego fire in an unbalanced way, but it's possible to be more successful and a great deal happier if your ego is balanced.

A leader whose ego is healthy and balanced is a deeply grounded and secure individual, one whose sense of self-worth is unshakable. He does not need to be continually praised and validated, because he knows that he is competent and successful, no matter what obstacles he may encounter. A leader with a balanced ego has stepped out of the win-lose mentality. He knows that we are all connected: if one benefits, all benefit. If one loses, all suffer. Therefore he is committed to finding the higher ground where solutions and innovations serve the whole business community, even if that community is the entire planet.

A leader whose ego is healthy is a tremendous asset to her superiors. They know that she can be counted on to be honest, committed, and accountable. She can be trusted. A leader with a healthy ego is relaxing to work with, as her boundaries are clear. A business problem is not taken personally; a personal problem will not be shared inappropriately in the business. She presents as confident and emotionally stable.

An ego-balanced boss is trusted by his colleagues and employees. They know that their suggestions and concerns will not be met with anger, disapproval, or misappropriation, but that they will be heard in a neutral and caring way, and that action will be taken.

The leader whose ego is balanced manifests a high level of personal and professional integrity. What you see is what you get. There is no hidden motive or subversive subtext. He walks his talk.

### What is Unbalanced Ego?

Unbalanced ego is deeply insecure. No matter how many things a leader might achieve, his unbalanced ego will never feel that he has done enough. Deep inside he may feel unworthy, like a fraud or a fake, or even unlikeable. That inner

insecurity can show itself as low self-worth or it can hide behind bravado. Ungrounded, insecure ego is a detriment to success in business and in life. It presents as a lack of boundaries, a lack of integrity, emotional volatility, dishonesty, and a focus on short term gain without consideration of the long term cost. Working for or with someone whose ego is unbalanced is exhausting. She might blow in the wind, telling different stories to different people in an effort to please everyone. She might respond to failure with anger, take credit for ideas that are not hers, or spew her personal frustration or sadness over all those in the vicinity. Those whose egos are unbalanced talk too much, or too little.

### This Is Your Ego Speaking!

Unbalanced Ego Says	Balanced Ego Says
It's my way or the highway! I'm a great team player, as long as you're playing on my team.	My truth is just one truth. What wisdom do you offer?
I'm not good enough!	I am well, and all is well in my world.
I'm so great!	Each of us brings different strengths to the workplace. I honor your strengths.
I hope they like me!	I love myself; it's okay if others don't like me.
I need to get this account before someone else does.	If I don't get this account, something better will come along.
It's me against you, us against them.	We are all connected. What benefits you benefits us all.
Success at any cost.	Integrity leads to success.

## Servant Leadership & the Healthy Ego Cont..

### How to Heal an Unhealthy Ego

Did you recognize yourself in any of the statements above? If so, you might be wondering how to heal your own ego, or help your employees or supervisors balance their egos. The only person whose ego you can change is your own, but as you stand in your own healing you present an example of balance and integrity that can invite others around you to invest in their own healing.

If you want to shift your own emotional gears, to find that place of complete integrity and unshakable self-worth, then there

is no better way to do it than to embrace the precepts of servant leadership. A true servant leader does what is best for the community, and is unsurprised when rewards and benefits float back to him. One whose commitment is to the good of the greater whole cannot help but receive blessings commensurate with or exceeding the blessings he or she bestows. It's just the way the universe works.

Not sure how to get started? All change begins with a clear intention. Try this affirmation: "I offer the love in my heart and the work of my hands to this place and these people. Let me be shown how I may serve."

And let the magic begin!

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Alix Moore is an accomplished teacher, writer, and public speaker. Her passion is understanding the energetic aspects of our daily lives, and sharing tools that facilitate living a life of joy. Her most recent book is *The Gift: How My Horse Taught Me to Teach the Toughest Children*. Alix practices servant leadership in her position as the president of the Montgomery County chapter of the Maryland Writers' Association. When not writing or presenting, Alix can be found raising chickens, training cows, or harvesting vegetables on her sustainably managed homestead in Clarksburg, MD. Alix can be reached via her website <http://www.alixmoore.net/>

## Interview with Yolanda N. Mullings



**PRO Leadership:** Do you consider yourself as a servant leader? If yes, tell us a little bit about when you began that journey and some of the reasons why you decided to become a servant leader?

**Yolanda:** Yes, I would consider myself a servant leader. As I started my undergraduate education, I realized that I wanted to be in a

field where I could help others. I was initially interested in food technology and development but throughout my educational journey I realized that I really enjoyed the people aspect and that led me to management. Working in the healthcare industry is what really made me a servant leader. I realize that my role in the organization is one of service and I know that my daily efforts make an impact on the employees that I work with as well as the patients that I interact with. I would also contribute my servant leadership to a coming from a family of health care professionals. Whether it was as a nurse, a tech, or a housekeeper in a nursing home or hospital, my family members always took pride in serving their patients and making a daily impact on the lives of the patients.

**PRO Leadership:** How do you know whether someone is a servant leader?

**Yolanda:** I know that someone is a servant leader by their approach to dealing with people. As a leader you cannot have the style of "Do what I say, not what I do". As a servant leader you must lead by example. This cannot be punitive. I find that when you see a leader that is willing to listen to the needs and concerns of the staff and then follow through

with those concerns, you have a servant leader. As managers, we are servants of the employees that report to us. By meeting their needs and giving them the tools and empowerment to do their jobs, we are good stewards for the organization. It is better to have open communication as this can only build trust between an employee and the leader of the group and ultimately the organization.

**PRO Leadership:** Do you think Servant Leadership is relevant in the 21st Century?

**Yolanda:** Yes I do think that Servant Leadership is relevant in the 21st century. In the past, organizations knew who their workforce was because when a person got a job, they stayed in the job until they retired. Now, we have four different generations working side by side in the workforce. The younger generations are not as loyal to any company as generations in the past. The workforce has changed in that if an employee is not happy, they will take their knowledge, skills, and abilities to another company that can meet their

## Interview with Yolanda Cont...

needs. Some of these needs that the workforce now expects from an employer are flexible work schedules, benefits, and salary. If an organization builds servant leadership into their culture in the workplace, the employees will have some intrinsic value added to their work. They will feel a sense of pride and empowerment. This will lead to employees going above and beyond in their specific roles and the organization will ultimately benefit.

**PRO Leadership:** Many organizations think that Servant Leadership isn't relevant for their organization. They believe that it isn't possible to care and serve employees and at the same time put the organization's mission, needs, and survival first. They don't see a win-win scenario out of this leadership style. Do you agree with this claim?

**Yolanda:** No, I do not agree with this claim. The servant leadership theory can be beneficial to any organization in that it allows the employee to feel as though they are valued. Employees are more likely to buy into any new policies and strategies because they feel that their participation is a value added to the organization as a whole. I feel that organizations that make their employees feel as though their voices are heard and their actions make a

significant impact on the business are more likely to be successful. The survival of any organization is completely dependent on the employees that make the operations run on a daily basis.

**PRO Leadership:** How can organizations benefit from Servant Leadership?

**Yolanda:** There are many ways in which an organization can benefit from servant leadership. Empowering your direct reports to do their job without fear or mistakes really opens up dialogue. Developing staff is key to benefiting from servant leadership. It is important that the goals of an individual employee align with the goals of the organization.

For example, if the individual's goal is have ninety five percent customer satisfaction with their service and the organizations overall goal is to have ninety percent customer satisfaction for a quarter, and then I would say that the employee's personal goal and the organizations goal have aligned. Even if the employee's personal goal were below the organization's quarterly goal, the employee would know that it was the expectation of the organization that they met that standard.

Holding employees accountable is a great quality of servant leadership because all staff is there to make the organization successful as a whole.

**PRO Leadership:** What are some of the considerations in raising servant leaders in an organization?

**Yolanda:** Some considerations that must be made in raising servant leaders in an organization may include the mission, values, and culture of the organization that you are with.

**PRO Leadership:** What are some of the roles and contributions of servant leaders for the success of their organizations, and toward the growth/development of their people?

**Yolanda:** Some of the roles and contributions that may contribute to the success of their organizations would be continuing education and leadership development. As leaders it is important that we are continually trained in new leadership styles and techniques that we can pass on to our staff so that they may develop and in turn contribute positively to the organization.

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Yolanda is an Alumnae of Rutgers University, and University Of Phoenix. She is a native of Newark, NJ and loves serving and developing the skills of others. Yolanda works in the healthcare industry as Patient Services Manager. She is also the VP of Membership for the Holy Cross Words Toastmasters club in Silver Spring MD.

**“Servant-leadership is more than a concept, it is a fact. Any great leader, by which I also mean an ethical leader of any group, will see herself or himself as a servant of that group and will act accordingly.”**

**M. Scott Peck Peck**

**“There is great joy in leading with authority, which is serving others by meeting their legitimate needs.”**

**James C. Hunter**

## Transervative Leadership



In my years as both an academic and leadership development professional, I have experienced first-hand the intersection of theory and application. I understand the concept of isolating a construct in order to develop a research stream and I understand the pace of business which sometimes precludes a prescriptive leadership model from 'sticking.'

After sifting through to many 'organizational' leadership models, I began to look at social change leadership. Organizations, after all, are just as complex as the larger societies in which they interact.

In lieu of a 'new' leadership paradigm, I began to explore what I consider one of the oldest, and most effective, social change leaders - the style and approach of Jesus as he effected lasting change that continues to shape societies and cultures 2000 years after his death. Jesus provides a model of offering groups a creative vision of their future, serving individuals and addressing their immediate needs, and challenging human systems – culture, values and norms – in which he had no real authority.

In order to reflect the dimensions of Jesus' leadership, and rather than creating a new construct, creating a new

construct, I took the liberty of combing leadership types that seemed to align with Jesus' approach – transformational leadership, servant-leadership and adaptive leadership – into one word: Transervative Leadership. This is my humble attempt to convey the essence of leadership as dimensional and complex, especially important in our increasingly globalized context.

First, transformational leaders focus on inspiring and influencing groups / organizations to a 'higher morality' which lends itself to deeper social responsibility and is future-focused in terms of the group.

Next, servant-leaders focus on inspiring and leading at the individual level – addressing immediate needs with an eye toward the future of the individual. This provides credibility for the leader, builds interpersonal relationships, and provides for the needs of the future.

Finally, adaptive leaders are focused on systems, in both the present and the future. The adaptive leader is adept at foresight competencies and is able to combine both transformational and servant leadership to shape and lead the global future. The adaptive leader leverages what does support the new vision, yet challenges pieces of systems and cultures that prevent movement toward the envisioned future and offer new ways of 'being and doing.'

When I consider these goals and dimensions, I readily see Jesus as a transformational leader, preaching to crowds, sharing parables that ignite intellectual stimulation as members seek to understand the underlying message and begin to think differently about a better future and new morality. I also see Jesus as a servant-leader, engaging in dialogue, one-on-one with others, especially non-believers and doubters. I see Jesus healing individuals, changing the way others perceive the human

By Dr. Barb Niels

dignity of outcasts and building interpersonal relationships to effect lasting change. I see Jesus' overarching goal as a catalyst to get people to go beyond their own self-interests and support the interests of the larger community.

I also recognize the risks Jesus took in challenging the prevailing society as an adaptive leader. Without human authority he began to expose the values and norms that would keep people from understanding and achieving the eternal future. In doing this, he had to be prepared for backlash – to find people wanting to put him 'in his place.' He took that risk and paid the price.

Two modern examples that illustrate the concept of Transervative Leadership include Catholic Relief Services and a CEO I worked for many years ago:

Catholic Relief Services is organized specifically to address global humanitarian issues and crises. In dealing with humanitarian issues, CRS has a three-pronged approach. As an example, in addressing which includes:

1. Providing immediate relief (e.g. release from captivity) for the victims of the slave trade – getting them out of slavery and providing skills and resources to avoid the lure of unscrupulous people (servant-leadership)
2. Long-term elevation of slave victims and potential victims through education, a vision of a creative future and programs to affect a new way of participating in society (transformational leadership)
3. Working to address / confront laws, cultural norms and obstacles to the new vision of a society free from social injustices – leveraging what is working with what must be changed (adaptive leadership).

These prongs are intertwined – distinct but not separate – and occur simultaneously.

## Transervative Leadership Cont...

And, CRS collaborates with other organizations, Christian and secular, to affect change, recognizing that shared leadership may shorten the curve of change and broaden the net of social impact.

As a corporate example, years ago I worked for a large distribution organization. The organization had been family owned for more than 100 years, and had been established in a rural area in Texas with men who were used to working from early morning until late night. The organization had recently become a wholly-owned subsidiary of a global distribution and retail organization. The family CEO had retired and was replaced with a new CEO who was challenged to create an organization that would attract talent and grow in step with the larger organization. The test for the new CEO was to determine how to hang on to the best of what worked and move the organization from a very paternalistic style of leadership to a more collaborative culture. In hindsight, I find that his style was Transervative.

His approach encompassed Transformational leadership as he established a new vision for the organization and shared information that had never been shared before. He initiated corporate transparency so that employees could see the current picture and be inspired to a greater future. He brought in consultants and provided the resources for five-day leadership school, beginning with the front-line leaders. He wanted front-line leaders to understand a 'better' more humane and ethical style of leadership. The leadership school still continues to this day – almost 20 years later!

This CEO also represented the best of servant-leadership as he began to establish rapport with individuals, walking around and getting to know the corporate staff. He asked people about their interests and strengths and

leveraged those, while offering individual incentives and recognition. Finally, as an adaptive leader, he had to begin to challenge the old guard. He was the new man, with credibility by title only. He was viewed as an outsider, especially by the long-term employees who felt threatened. With an eye on the future, the CEO understood the organization would not be able to compete for employees if the old culture could not be influenced. It was at this particular juncture that the CEO experienced the most resistance. Sadly, the Board of Directors (e.g. the old guard) replaced the new CEO after 18 months. While the CEO did not succeed during his tenure, I understand that his vision has come to fruition.

This CEO did not put his life on the line as Jesus had, but he certainly knew the risks for his career and he took them anyway. His desire to transform, serve individual and challenge the culture – adapting what was working while seeking to change the obstacles to move into the future. It seems that his ability to combine these dimensions of leadership came from an internal compass...an understanding that to lead with a one-dimensional leadership style would not have catalyzed the necessary changes.

As I move into consulting with corporations, I believe this Transervative model will offer a creative way to leverage the many dimensions of effective leadership. Transervative leadership is an approach that can be learned through insight and foresight in order to shape and lead a global future.

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Barbara Johnson holds a doctorate in strategic leadership from Regent University. Prior to returning to academics, Dr. Johnson worked for 12 years in corporate leadership development and as an HR Director of a franchise for five years. Her experience,

including successes and frustrations, led to a deep and personal exploration of leadership. The concept of Transervative Leadership came as an unexpected flash of insight while pondering the Beatitudes and the ways in which Jesus offered a new morality, recognized the dignity of the individual and challenged the social structure to adapt and change values and norms.

### Sponsor a Seminar

Sponsor a one-day interactive seminar for your team or the leadership of an organization you support. The seminar is relevant for both novice and seasoned leaders. The nine leadership building blocks are fundamentals leaders from all walks of life should be well acquainted with, develop, and practice.

Participants will use the workbook, which is filled with lots insights, thought provoking questions, assessments, individual and group assignments, and the opportunity to reflect and write down the new realizations they will make at the end of each building block.

**Below are some of the sponsorship, we are looking for:**

- 1. Conference hall,**
- 2. Costs to print and bind the workbook,**
- 3. Refreshments, and**
- 4. Lunch**

**To read the learning objectives, benefits from participating in this seminar, check this link: <http://www.proleadership.org/?p=351>.**

## Tips on Applying Servant Leadership to the Workplace

By Carolee Noury



If you ask me, being oriented to servant leadership is one of the healthiest approaches to life. The world is a much better place when your focus is on relationships and people. Money doesn't reduce stress nearly as much as friendships do.

We've become quite short-sighted in business in the United States. With such a tight economy and stragglng job market, no one is looking much farther than the end of his nose. Business is being built around the next five years, not the next thirty. This means many things, but the worst are:

(1) older (more senior and highly paid) workers are being closed out- forget the experience and finesse they bring to the business; and

(2) the workplace is almost entirely profit-driven, often ignoring the customer and worse, breaking down the employees- more work, less respect and attention, and less movement in the form of raises and promotions.

Supervisors who focus solely on the bottom line have enormous blind spots. There is so much to gain from appreciated, respected employees: **loyalty** to company and therefore pride in the product (sales!), **less turnover** leading to less money/time lost training new

people only to lose them, and **happier employees** contribute to more positive (and healthful) workplaces.

Some tips for people who struggle to embody the servant leader supervisory style:

1. When the employees are lacking: praise what they're doing right, thank them individually when you observe a job well done, watch for the above and beyond instead of expecting/ignoring it. When supervisors practice praise, loyalty and the desire to uphold that positive view are born. Then, address the problem indirectly (without naming names) whenever possible. For example: You are all doing such an excellent job of promoting our new dinner specials, please keep up the good work. And remember to suggest a specific drink- your tips will get bigger- and I will be grateful. (Isn't that better than carping about the servers forgetting to sell those drinks?)

2. When someone is angry: hear her out, let her complain without judgment, offer neutral support (you don't have to agree or take her side), ask her what she thinks is the best solution. That is what empowerment looks like: diplomacy and sharing the problem and solution.

3. Know your employees: greet them by name each day, ask them about family/pets/books/school- whatever it is that makes them tick. If you don't know, then you need to talk to them and find out.

4. Reward them: no money for something big? No problem. Get donuts or coffee or pizza. It won't break the bank and it's a tangible way to say thanks. Or send them home an hour early on Friday. It's the gesture.

5. Above all, remember the Golden Rule: One should treat others as one would like others to treat oneself. Quite simply: be the boss you'd like to report to.

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Carolee Noury is a local career counselor and writer. She says her job is to guide people to career happiness. She lives in Rockville with her husband and two children. Carolee serves on the boards of the local Parent Teacher Association and the Maryland Writers' Association. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Psychology at Hartwick College in Oneota, New York, and her Master's Degree in Community Counseling at George Washington University's Graduate School of Education and Human Development in Washington, District of Columbia. Carolee's most valued reward of servant leadership is the strong sense of community it fosters.

### VoL- Podcast

**PRO Leadership is in the process of launching a monthly Podcast- VoL Podcast. We will soon begin to interview leaders on various topics.**

**Though VoL Podcast is a monthly podcast, it will be transformed into a bi-monthly, and then a weekly podcast. You may get involved and support toward the success of VoL- Podcast by doing one or more of the following:** 1). If you are a leader and would like to share your insights, wisdom, and stories, we would like to interview you, 2). If you know an exemplary leader whose experience may benefit other leaders, you may suggest him/her to us, & 3). You may also support the podcat by spreading the news.

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