Governance, Synergistic Power and Coaching:

Towards the Democratic Organization

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Abstract

Current governance/leadership models are shaping up to be increasingly horizontal. In these models, leaders and individual contributors use their power in organizations in new ways, suggesting an evolution in the way power is used. This evolution is reflected in reduced use of coercive power, temporal delimitation of power and decentralization of power. It is proposed that these three conditions will produce a qualitative change in the way organizations will be managed. They promote a more accurate incarnation of Dêmos-Kratos or the power of the people. In tomorrow's organization, leaders and individuals use their power synergistically to create with others rather than to eliminate others. It is proposed that this form of power use requires higher levels of personal development. Coaching as a movement plays a strategic role in helping leaders develop their synergistic power.

Governance, Synergistic Power and Coaching: Towards the Democratic Organization

With globalization, decentralization and the increasing number of partnership institutions and transient networks, governance models in the 21st century are shaping up to be flexible and increasingly horizontal. Governance is defined here as the process through which an organization or society steers itself (Paquet, 1998). One way of studying an era's forms of governance is through an analysis of its common leadership models. In general, leadership models suggest structures of power relationships between the different sub-systems of a system or an organization. Implicitly, all leadership models propose ways in which the power within an organization is to be exercised. This article proposes to articulate the basic values conveyed by current governance/leadership models, bringing to the forefront the presence of an evolution in the way power has been used. Secondly, this article explores the role of coaching as a movement within current governance/leadership models.

Influencing Dynamics in Leadership: An Overview

Traditionally, leadership implies exercising influence over others in order to achieve organizational or group goals. (Kanungo, 1998). Leadership phenomena are studied from different perspectives one of which is power use or influencing dynamics. Early leadership and management models focussed on the unidirectional nature of leadership influencing processes. The leader or manager influenced employees to comply with organizational rules and achieved organizational goals by exercising full control over resources, within the command and control management model.   This model greatly shaped the thinking of much of the twentieth century management theoretical perspectives. However, towards the latter part of the century new leadership models highlighted the transactional nature of leadership influencing processes. According to Hollander (1986), leaders demonstrate their competence and loyalty to a group in

exchange for the employees' compliance to organizational goals.   The followers' power is recognized as important force in the transaction but it is still subordinate to the leader's power and the relationship is highly transactional. According to a third leadership model, the Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1997, McClleland, 1975), leadership goes beyond the reward-punishment exchange relationship characteristics of the command and control and transactional models.   The relationship in transformational leadership is generative of new forms not previously conceived by some prescriptive role exchange formula. The transformational leader is a coach who uses his influence to build with others and to help them be their best. By the same token, followers, linked by commitment rather than compliance, go beyond what is expected of them and breakthrough results are achieved (Bass, 1997)

Transformational leadership models seem to carry a call for greater awareness of the reality of others in positioning oneself. This shift from the transactional to the transformational is also expressed in the desire to expand one's horizons by genuinely opening up to others, e.g., learning from others, regardless of formal positions in the organization. The leader, as depicted in transformational leadership models, is neither someone who shapes reality all alone and who dictates it to others, nor someone whose reality barely touches that of others as in the transactional models, but someone who cocreates new broader realities with others.

Influencing Dynamics in Transformational Leadership
Many current popular and scientific leadership writers have included, in one way or another, the transformational leadership values in their models. Each author will propose some set of values but they all include in their sets respect, service, openness, and authenticity. The processes and structures they suggest for implementing these values basically comprise dialogue, teaming, community building and networks. In the following section, I will show the prevalence of transformational leadership models in current thinking on influence dynamics by presenting a quick overview of some popular and well-known leadership literature.

Block (1993), for example, perceives the leader as a steward who serves and enables others within horizontal organizational structures. In Covey's work (1989), the leader is genuine and attentive. For Goleman (1995) too, the leader is sensitive and empathetic, thus attentive. According to Pinchot (1998), the leader is the co-creator of generosity-based communities.   Bennis (1996) states that the extraordinary leader is attentive and open to others, especially to those who suggest different views of the emerging reality. For Parikh (1996), who developed a leadership model combining eastern and western values, a good leader aims for harmony between economic objectives, ethical principles and ecological concerns. And for Drucker (1998), the value essential to running an organization smoothly is accountability, a value that implies consideration for others' reality. This "others" can be a colleague, the organizational goals, certain social realities or global necessities. In their 1996 book "The Leader of the Future", Hesselbein, Goldsmith and Beckhard suggest that the leader of the future will not be at the head of an organization but at all the levels. In the same line of thought, Ulrich (1997) describes future leadership as a shared resource not monopolized by a sole individual. He adds that tolerance of ambiguity and global thinking will replace local focus and the pursuit of simplistic solutions. More recently, Drath (2001) from the Centre for Creative

Leadership posited leadership as an emergent relational process rather than coming from a single individual: the leader. In all these views, the leader exercises power by acknowledging and respecting a broader reality that includes ''others''. I will argue next that this way of leading, and specifically this way of using power reflects an evolution in the way humans have been using power in all sorts of organizations.

Leadership and Power Use: A Developmental Perspective

A look at the past of modern and ancient civilizations reveals that almost all the great civilizations were built on the use of brute force, whether they were modern time's colonizers or antiquity's emperors and generals. Brute force subjugates others by suppressing differences. Today, autocratic regimes and military invasions and occupations continue to exist, but the general trend has been towards a reduction in the use of coercive power in achieving personal and organizational goals. Slavery, military invasions, piracy, and corporal punishment are reprehensible and/or illegal according to international laws and accords. Also, autocratic regimes in many countries are being replaced with democratic governance systems. I propose that these socio-political changes reflect an evolution in the collective thinking that affects the way leaders exercise their power in organizations. The reduction in the use of coercive power and the sanctions against it is the first fundamental manifestation of this evolution. I have identified two other key manifestations: temporal delimitation of political power and decentralization of power.

Most modern democratic political systems (e.g. the American system) impose limits on the period of time during which one person can lead an organization. This temporal delimitation wards off the possible dangers associated with "absolute" or unlimited power. Another advantage is the creation of opportunities for as many individuals as possible to develop and participate in leading an organization. If this trend continues, it is possible that the governance models will place temporal limits on all hierarchical positions and not only on some key political positions.   Some organizations have already begun using this concept in their management practices. For example, at Semco, the CEO's position changes regularly.: four people rotate through the job every year. At GE, certain leadership positions are shared by two managers.

A third change signaling evolution in the use of power by humanity pertains to the site of power. As the 21st century dawns, successful organizations are increasingly decentralized in managing their affairs. Today, many multinational organizations are to a large extent managed locally and not by a central headquarters. The political systems in the Anglo-American nations are also heading towards horizontal management methods involving several local power centers. Moreover, international trade treaties and other agreements between organizations are going to promote the growth of networks and partnership institutions with flexible boundaries, where the site of power changes according to relatively local variables and not according to a formula predetermined by a central authority (Paquet, 1998). Moreover, as argued by the Centre for Creative leadership (2001), in a world that is globally connected and increasingly complex, "leadership from a leader or a centre is much less workable now than it was in a world where people stuck more or less in like-minded groups." (p..7)

The overall characteristics of power use within currently proposed governance models indicate the beginning of a real paradigmatic change. In this paper, I have articulated three of these characteristics: reduction in the use of coercive power, decentralization, and temporal delimitation of power. I propose that this set of conditions will produce a qualitative change in the manner in which the organizations of the coming century will be managed. Specifically, these conditions will promote a more accurate incarnation of Dêmos-Kratos or the power of the people. Within truly democratic organizations, individuals – leaders and "followers" – function at a higher level of personal development. Expressed differently, to create and sustain a democratic organization, people must move to higher levels of personal development. I will argue that transformational leadership requires higher levels of personal development and particularly a move from exercising power over others to leveraging power with others.

Transformational Leadership and Personal Development

According to several models of personal development (Jung, 1968; Piaget, 1975; Levinson, 1978), the individual progresses from egocentrism towards altruism. In other words, the individual evolves from a narrow definition of self and a concept of the world that is self-centered, towards a broader definition that opens up to others and includes them. Hence, in assuming a position, the individual becomes more capable of considering and taking into account others' different realities. From this perspective, the individual's openness to differences increases with personal growth. Furthermore, persons who reach higher levels of personal growth (self-actualization) become relatively more altruistic and concerned with social and world causes, as shown by Maslow's study (1975) on actualized personalities.

The transformational leader enjoys greater openness to differences. For him or her, differences are included and not suppressed. This leader is empathetic, open, generous, tolerant and a co-creator. He or she uses power to build, develop and serve and not for shaping others in his or her image, for oppressing or exploiting. He or she co-creates a vision with others that appeals to higher values in the followers so to gain commitment from followers without sacrifice of their personal values. If individuals who reach a higher level of personal development demonstrate greater openness to differences (Others) when positioning themselves, and if transformational leaders create by including and enabling others, then transformational leadership represents by necessity a higher level of personal development.

Personal Power in the Democratic Organization

I have focused so far on the question of how leaders use their power in leading others. The question I will address now is how individual contributors use their personal power under these conditions. Under these conditions where the role of central sources of power in producing and managing organizations is diminishing and where partnerships and networks are emerging everywhere around the world, the role of the individual contributor is also changing. The individual contributor now participates more in creating and managing resources, assuming greater responsibility in decision-making (i.e., more power). Furthermore, given that the behavior within networks is not governed by explicit laws or regulations dictated from without, the network members rely on their judgement to ensure the network's proper operation. Experts on network characteristics postulate that belonging to networks and abiding by their

standards are voluntary. The operating "rules" and the dynamics inside these groups are implicit and access to the resources provided by them is facilitated by trust-based relationships (Nohria and Eccles, 1992). It follows that the more these new organizational forms assume importance in how a society works, the more the individual relies on the ability to be self-regulated, i.e., self-motivated and self-determined, therefore, less managed.

In presenting above some personal development dynamics, I showed that, according to several experts, the individual evolves from egocentrism towards altruism. At this point, I can add that the individual also develops from dependency and conformity towards autonomy and self-regulation. According to research by Kolberg (1984) on moral development, in the primary stages of development our behaviors are motivated by the fear of being punished and the desire to please, while our personal values and conscience dictate our behaviors at advanced stages. Therefore, on the path to personal growth, the individual heads for higher and higher levels of responsibility and self-regulation.

Since relations in the new democratic organization are not of a dominant-dominated nature, dictated once and for all by a central authority, the characteristics of the person who has reached a high level of personal development (e.g., self-motivation, moral autonomy) become vital in tomorrow's organizations. Here the relations are maintained through mutual respect and the feeling of responsibility, dialogue and exchanges, in the service of common goals that are continuously being defined. In this context personal power is expressed through increased self-generation and self-regulation.

The New Power: Synergistic Power

The individual in the new democratic organization asserts his or her power by contributing more to generating and managing resources and by reconnecting with a personalized work ethic, while possessing access to an unlimited number of possibilities of interacting and exchanging with others. Like the role of transformational leaders, the role of individual contributors in tomorrow's organizations encompasses a growing consideration of others and increased autonomy. Both the leader and the individual contributor use their power *with* others rather than *over* others, i.e., synergistically. While many thinkers have identified Intellectual Capital as the most important resource in the organization, I believe that Synergistic Power will be most needed in tomorrow's organization.

Without Synergistic Power, the ability of formal organizational systems to bring about the desired changes within the organization remains limited. For instance, without real respect for everyone in the organization regardless of position, the organization will not be successful in leveraging knowledge to innovate and create wealth. Similarly, formal control processes, such as the enactment of laws, will prove to be increasingly inadequate for creative management of all the exchange possibilities, especially if the market forces continue to play a key role in the organization's management. A recent study (Jackson, 2000) that investigated the influence of clear corporate codes on managers' ethical conduct found that clear corporate policy had little influence on managers' reported ethical decision making. It was the perceived behavior of managers' *colleagues* that influenced attitudes towards decision making of

managers. It was not the formal authority of certain rules and regulations that guided managers' behaviors but the perception of others' practices. Another large study on the role of the power motive in management effectiveness conducted over the past 10 years showed that the source of power is shifting from the individual to the group. The study, which involved eighteen organizations and representing eight industries, showed significant differences between leaders who used their power to motivate, drive and influence and those who co-created new realities (e.g., a new vision) with others. The latter group, called, interactive leaders, derived their power form the group. They produced better results and created higher morale in their organizations. (Burnham, 2001).

Coaching: Another Technique?

More and more leaders and organizations are using coaching to achieve personal and organizational growth and development. As a technique, coaching can be defined as a conversation based personalized learning process in which an individual, with the help of a coach, discovers and builds on his or her resources to attain new personal and professional achievements in a context of trust and mutual respect. In this article, I focus on coaching as a movement rather than on the technique.

To the cynics, coaching is just "another" technique for increasing productivity and profit. In light of this mindset, coaching, is only a transient fad. I take the position that, as a technique and a movement, coaching plays a role whose purpose include but goes beyond increasing productivity. I propose that coaches will contribute to the development of Synergistic Power and their role will be needed for a long while. But before expanding on this position, the basic assumptions of the coaching movement will be articulated.

Coaching: Basic Assumptions

1. Every person has untapped potential, unrecognized strengths and unconscious weaknesses.

2. Openness to the potential, to the implicit and unconscious sphere is useful and necessary for the optimal functioning of the organization and its members.

3. Coaching creates a change in a person's thinking, particularly if it is developmental coaching that involves the whole person and not just an isolated behavior. This structural change expands the ability to perceive and create new forms, including deeper introspection and a new self-concept.

4. To survive in today's world people and organizations must continuously learn new behaviors and sometimes quickly. This sense of urgency is necessary not only for inducing movement but also for being able to meet the continually changing requirements and client needs.

T*he Strategic Role of Coaching*

Most of the writings on coaching deals with the methodological (how) and the pragmatic (benefits) aspects of the technique (Dotlich, 1999; Flaherty, 1999) . Some authors have presented coaching as a management/leadership approach (Evered and Selman, 1989, Crane, 1999). The focus in this coaching literature remains on the role of coaching as a technique that facilitates, first and foremost, achieving objectives, and that fosters personal and professional development. This article focuses on the philosophical scope of coaching as a movement. The question that I am raising is "what are we changing and what is the coaches' strategic role in this change?" More specifically, what are the collective goals that we are attempting to reach by using coaching at this time in our socio-economic and political juncture?

Coaches have always helped their coachees set and reach breakthrough results. I propose that at the dawn of the 21st century, coaches will help their coachees pursue breakthrough goals but which will have a social, ethical and ecological scope. If the advisors of the 20th century reinforced humans' individualistic dimensions, the coaches of the future will build the person's synergistic ones, to redefine the self in new ways.

Essentially, coaching increases personal power by increasing self-knowledge and by putting the person in touch with his or her potential or sources of creativity and self-generation. Coaching will continue to perform along these principles but will also develop the person's Synergistic Power: the ability to build with one another, to exchange, to include, to co-create communities, the ability to expand one's sphere by including others and not by eliminating them, ultimately, the ability to re-create what we normally consider as "Self".

Even though some coaches continue to function according to individualistic leadership models, the majority will draw inspiration from synergistic models such as the transformational leadership models. These models in turn are based on new concepts of the human being as a "dialogical" or transpersonal being.   The dialogical being goes beyond the polarized being. It is situated in geographic, cultural and ethnic contact zones between the local and the global, the present and the future, the individual and the collective (Herman and Kempen, 1998). Relying on these new concepts of humanity, today's coaches will no longer be able to limit themselves to individualistic coaching models in which the contract is made strictly between two persons associated by a neutral relationship. Henceforward, the coach is the co-creator of Synergistic Power and not a "mercenary" in the service of some narrowly defined goals set by the client alone

Coaching Challenges

Coaches face several challenges. First, the current and futuristic leadership models that inspire their interventions are qualitatively different from the leadership models that inspire many present-day leaders. Those who hold organizational power and those close to the current centers of power tend to react ambivalently to the coaching movement that they also support financially. This is explained by the fact that the individualistic mindset is still present in our collective thinking and especially in that of many individuals presently holding positions of

organizational power. Second, the power broadly defined as "political" often imposes limits on the power redistribution resulting from coaching or at least this is the perception of many.

Co-developers of Synergistic Power, the coaches of the 21st century help to create communities of collaborators and not invaders. This project constitutes the greatest challenge for the coaches of the 21st century because many people are still resigned to the idea that humans are naturally narcissistic and competitive. But is our thinking not evolving? Is it not possible that human nature is ready to move on to another stage of its development? The most phenomenal progress we experienced towards the end of the century was in telecommunications. Telecommunications reduce the distance between people and between countries and ultimately, might we hope, will contribute to the creative reduction of differences, not by brute force but by negotiation.

Summary and Conclusions

This article has addressed the ethical scope of the new forms of governance by articulating the central values of current leadership models. The key value conveyed by these models is respect for others and the basic method of interaction is exchange. If we experienced greater self-awareness during the Renaissance, what we will experience in the third millennium will be greater awareness of others. This openness to others and to differences suggests an evolution in collective thinking. The modern forms of governance possess three characteristics stemming from this openness to others: a decrease in the use of coercive power, a temporal delimitation of political power and the decentralization or spatial delimitation of power. As a result, the individual will participate more and more in the governance process by relying on self-regulation mechanisms. Self-regulation falls within the province of Synergistic Power.

In the current and future socio-economic and political context, the Self is perceived as being dialogic or transpersonal. The coaches of the 21st century can draw inspiration from this concept of self and the modern leadership models to take on the role of codevelopers of Synergistic Power.

Coaches face three fundamental challenges: the ambivalence of those holding the power and of those close to it vis-à-vis the coaching movement, political interference, and the popular belief according to which human beings are naturally egoistic and competitive. This article suggests that our collective thinking is evolving. In this new Century, this evolution will manifest itself through a more responsible use of power and a more realistic incarnation of demos-kratis. At this level, the coaches will play a strategic role as co-creators of people's Synergistic Power.

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